

NORTH SIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOL
Board Meeting Minutes
April 13, 2021

Present: Board Members: Kathy Anderson, William Ball, Ryan Bumb, Mike Carpenter, Stacy Erker, Byron Francis, Brian Gross, Tracee Holmes, Alison Nash, Liza Weiss, Ken Rinderknecht.

School Administrative Staff: John Grote, Sara Paracha, William Randall.

Teachers: Abby Bennett, Hennessey Chism, Megan Rose, Gabriella Thompson

Others: Tad Hartmann, UMSL.

4:30 pm - Meeting officially called to order by Kathy Anderson via Zoom.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the

February 9, 2021 Board Meeting were reviewed and approved by unanimous vote of the Board, with no corrections or comments.

Public Comment Period: No one was present for public comment.

Executive Director/Administration Report: John Grote spoke briefly about a North Side core principle of utilizing a family style (emphasizing relationships) versus a specialist style of operating - stressing a group approach in educating and working with students. John also reported a bit of a Covid setback; 2 students, a 3rd grader and a 1st grader, have recently tested positive, forcing two classrooms to have to go to virtual learning for a period. Both Covid infections came from adult family members, not North Side staff or other students. The quarantining, extensive cleaning of busses and other appropriate measures were taken.

John reported that Martine McGull, current Assistant Principal, has been chosen as the Elementary School Principal for the 2021-22

school year. Jetan Totton, with over 20 years experience in the St Louis Public School System, will replace Ms McGull as Elementary School Assistant Principal. John reported on the numbers of teachers not returning to North Side next year for various reasons, a number of them because they are relocating. 5 new teachers have already been hired for positions next year and other interviews are taking place.

John also presented the number of sections by grade planned for next year: preK - 2; KG - 4; 1st grade - 4; 2nd grade - 4; 3rd grade - 5; 4th grade - 5; 5th grade - 5; 6th grade - 4; 7th grade - 3; 8th grade - 3. The hope is to be able to add another KG section. John feels newer teachers are adapting to North Side culture, and students are mostly in line with school culture as more are returning to classrooms. Middle School (MS) enrollment was 172 students, down slightly from what was expected. The hope is for 200 students in MS this coming year. Discussion was held regarding the need to explore and further develop methods to maintain and increase enrollment in the future.

John advised of the need to be exploring options for how to best utilize Federal money North Side is able to access through Covid Recovery acts. The funds should be targeted to immediate needs, to be applied in ways to help students recover from setbacks resulting from the effects of Covid and the necessitated remote learning.

Finance Committee Report: Brian Gross reported that the Finance Committee met last week and worked on a budget draft for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2021. A budget draft is expected to be ready for the May Board meeting. Will Randall reported YTD revenue received is a little lower than expected, but some revenue payments come in late in the fiscal year. Construction costs have been a big part of expenditures for this year. Capital Campaign contributions will end up resulting in over \$900,000 raised.

The Finance Committee will be working with administration to help determine best/most

appropriate uses for Federal funds received. North Side is definitely receiving \$1.7 million in ESSER II (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief) funding. It is anticipated ESSER III (supplemental funding) may bring an additional \$2 million. There is an obligation to let the Federal government know how the money is being used.

Check registers for February and March, 2021 were reviewed and approved by unanimous Board vote.

Byron Francis provided an update regarding the status, and potential impact on North Side, of the St Louis desegregation case filed in the 1970's in U.S. District Court of Eastern Missouri. The case is still ongoing and pending in the 8th Circuit.

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Development Report: Sara Paracha discussed various parts of her written Development Report provided to Board members, including grant requests submitted, pending or in progress.

Board members were encouraged to vote daily on-line for the Ladue News Charity Awards, which could result in a magazine feature on North Side plus use of the Ladue News Instagram page for a day. Outreach is being made to all Capital Campaign donors, Leadership Circle donors and monthly donors. With \$763,674 raised to date for the Capital Campaign, the goal was met for the guidelines for the Kemper Foundation grant application, which was submitted in March. The last conversation with Kemper indicated the \$150,000 could be paid in one lump sum rather than over 3 years.

Sara reported having sent out post cards for recruitment of potential students to 80 to 100 households. John indicated word-of-mouth from current students' families has always been North Side's strongest means of recruitment, and that perhaps developing a formal recruitment program may be a good use of some Federal money.

Sara reported the Top Golf fundraiser hosted by

Young Friends netted \$4,472. The money will go toward providing caps and gowns for the 8th grade graduation. The Young Friends Board will also be hosting a teacher appreciation happy hour from 3:30-5:30 on May 5 at the Angad Arts Hotel. Board members are invited and encouraged to attend. Another North Side event, to address 7th graders' high school preparedness and 8th graders' college/career intro, is to be held on May 21 at the St Louis Marriott Airport Hotel.

Sara also provided updated information regarding planning for the May 13 Virtual Gala, including details about the 45 to 50 minute program, ticket sales and food/signature cocktail party packs, wine pull and art work sales, etc. Early ticket sales end on April 26, all ticket sales end May 3. Gala Sponsorship contributions are still being sought, and Board members are encouraged to consider having a Host Party for the event.

Facilities Report: Ryan Bumb reported construction at the new classrooms at the

Middle School has been completed.

Strategic Plan Report: Ryan Bumb advised the schedule for developing the Strategic Plan has been moved back a month. The various focus groups are to be meeting over April/May/June, the Strategic Plan Committee is to begin finalizing the plan in July, and the hope is to complete the new Strategic Plan in August. Focus group/committee areas are outlined in Ryan's email of April 13.

Kathy Anderson urged that every Board member be on at least one focus group/committee, to help spread out the work load. Goals and themes outlined in Amy Scharff's notes are:

- Stabilization of academics, operations and finances coming out of Covid;
- Rebuilding of school culture at the Elementary School;
- Continued maturation of the Middle School;
- Preparation for new Executive Director transition.

Governance Committee Report: Byron Francis reported there has not been a recent meeting of the committee. This will be done soon. Recent Board member resignations have brought about the need to add new Board members. Byron urged all to let him know of any prospective Board member recommendations.

Parent and Community Relations Committee Report: Alison Nash had no specific news to report. She has received no information from Lamechia Bradford whether a recent NPO get together took place. Alison discussed the prospect of receiving community support from the Links Incorporated Archway Chapter through the donation of a Positivity Bench to North Side.

High School Placement Committee: Kathy reported on the committee's working to develop processes to aid our 8th graders in moving on to high schools. Helping very much with this work has been Tom Mackowiak. Kathy also alluded to the May 21 event at Marriott Airport

and the plans initiated this Spring to help prepare 7th graders for moving forward with their educations.

Educational Leadership Committee Report:

Kathy commented on Ebony Duncan Shippy's having to resign from the Board due to the Research grant she is working on at Washington U. Consideration may be needed to having the Executive Committee work on Executive Director evaluation.

Search Committee: Kathy remarked that a Search Committee for a new Executive Director after John retires does not really exist yet, nor has anyone volunteered to be the Committee Chair. All are welcome to volunteer for the committee.

New Business: Discussion was held regarding the need to approve the Parent Involvement Plan which was emailed to all yesterday by Kathy. It is a DESE requirement that such a plan be approved by the Board. It was determined some revisions may be needed, so

approval was deferred until next month's meeting.

Teacher Appreciation Week begins on May 3. Ideas were discussed regarding what the Board can plan to do to honor teachers.

Kathy touched on the fact that Stella Erondu, North Side's Founding Principal, is retiring. Various ideas were discussed regarding how to honor Stella's years of wonderful service. Board members were asked to continue to consider any further ideas and present them to Kathy.

At 6:15 PM the Board Meeting was adjourned to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel issues.

At 6:33 Executive Session was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Ken Rinderknecht, Secretary