



## **Board of Directors - Annual Retreat**

**Location: Bear Creek Nature Center**

**245 Bear Creek Road, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80906**

**Date: July 30, 2022**

Zoom Link:

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/71874817156?pwd=V2c1N1BzeGNNcHJEV3RsV25PRENSZz09>

*Mission: Mountain Song Community School, as a member of the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education, is a public charter school that utilizes developmentally appropriate holistic education to nurture the body, mind, and heart of each student.*

Attendees: Brooke S., Teresa W., Molly W., Rebecca K., Patrick C., Scott D., Jennifer B., Binah R., Ashley P., Katie H.

Public: John B., Kirsten M., Michelle F.

### **9:00 - 9:15 - Convene Meeting - Brooke**

**Welcome/ Reading of Mission Statement/ Check In (one word)**

9:18 Scott moves to approve the agenda. Patrick seconds. Approved Unanimously.

### **9:15 - 9:30 - Sign Attestation that Board Member has read:**

- **Conflict of Interest Policy**
- **Grievance Policy**
- **Board Handbook**

9:19 Will sign during break. Board members review all documents in Board Home folder

### **9:30 - 11:30 - Board 101 Training - John Brendza, Colorado League of Charter Schools**

9:20: John- CDE modules- can complete online and get certificate. Preferably- have a facilitator run trainings as we are doing today. Poor governance by Board and poor financial oversight often the cause of Charter Schools shutting down. Reviewed Board Responsibilities.

Reviewed Legal Responsibilities: Module 1 (copy in Board folder). Conflict of Interest: Decisions made by Board members focused on what is best for all students in our school, not just my student. Grievance policy for parents and for staff. Board members should direct grievant to source and to Grievance policy. Any Committee should follow same policies and expectations of Board. Committees report to the Board and send requests to Board to make decisions. The only decisions Committees make is what recommendations to give the Board. If there is a Board member issue, this should be addressed during a Public meeting, not Executive session.

Reviewed Open Meetings Law: Three or more Voting members meeting together must allow members from public to attend. Best Practice to post notice and agenda for work sessions as well as business sessions. Law: must post notice when Board is conducting business. Should post dates for every session for the year (on website-1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday). Letters of warning from CSI with every violation of Open Meetings Law- Three letters in one calendar year result in one lower point from CSI. Only Committee required by law is School Accountability Committee (SAC). Board should acknowledge any mistake and how to fix it moving forward.

Executive Session: Must record, only can turn off during discussion with attorney. Can be verbal statement by attorney or signed statement. Always let aggrieved party know that you will discuss in executive session, but they can request public conversation- request signed statement. In agenda- document CRS code- ex: "discussion of parent/staff grievance." Executive Director- decides suspension. Expulsion recommendation- made by Board (defer to legal counsel). No Votes during Executive Session. Go around table and site each members position, or can ask if anyone objects. Keep recordings for 90 days. Use separate recording device. Can use digital recording. Student records, Personnel records, and Attorney-client privilege records are not public record. Talk about Charter Contract once a year (agenda item- 20 minutes) at the beginning of the year (Katie will make sure this is on Board calendar). School required to carry insurance that covers Board member liability. Reach out to John if Board has any questions.

Reviewed Basic Responsibilities: Mission and Vision, Financial Oversight (best practice- Talk about Budget each meeting. Request G&G do a short training as overview of each financial document- Each September), Selecting School Leader, Ensure adequate resources, Ensure legal and ethical integrity and maintain accountability, Ensure effective organizational planning (Strategic Plan- keep updating, revising), Recruit and orient new board members and assess board performance (continued training- look to CSI and John for continued training, look for new potential Board members- areas of expertise needed), Enhance the school's public standing (one page-10 facts about school to share with public, attending school events), Determine, monitor, and strengthen the school's programs and services (School finances, academic progress, day to day functioning, having monthly discussions about programs-ask questions, ask how Board can help support programs), Support the school leader and assess his/her performance (student performance- 50% of annual Executive Director evaluation, Goals for Board inform Executive Director Goals that inform Staff Goals).

Strategic plan- Generally stated, concise, and followable. Limit to no more than 5 goals with 2-3 Objectives each. Leads to operational plans through Committees and Head of School. (Finance 25%, Student Performance 50%, Governance and Operations 25%- CARS report yearly CSI evaluation). Monthly discussions and reports on Goals. Include quantitative and qualitative measures. Post plan in school.

Reviewed Governance responsibilities (Board), Operational responsibilities (Executive Director), and Partnership responsibilities (Board and Executive Director).

### **11:30 - 11:45 - Orientation to School Committees, Descriptions, Chair Responsibilities**

11:50: Table Committee Discussions until Tuesday's meeting.

### **11:45 - 12:00 - BREAK/Gather Food**

### **12:00 - 12:30 - Working Lunch Outside - Back to School Nights and School Events**

12:15- Back to school nights on August 10<sup>th</sup> (kindergarten) and August 11<sup>th</sup> (1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>). Board member attendance requested if able, with Board member to speak, and table with recruitment materials - Committee Descriptions and Sign-up sheets (Name, email, and phone).

## **12:30 - 2:00 - Site Development Plans and Discussion - Michelle Fisher**

12:38- Strategic Development Goals: Optimize Bond Funds (\$1.2 M) Long term growth, Grants. Farm: USDA & EPA Grant (\$150,000-\$200,000). Playground: GoCO Grant (\$100,000). Whittier Building: \$5M BEST Grant (\$1.2 Matching funds). Off Site Expansion: Bond Fund (\$3M over next 3 years with enrollment growth- can only go to building). Reviewed Timeline for improvements. Life, Safety and Security issues- being looked at and assessed for Best Grant.

Reviewed Farm Improvements: including addition of water spigots being added this summer, shade structures for classroom, gathering, and theater space, greenhouse structures with possible aquaponics (self-sustaining dome).

Reviewed Playground improvements: Natural Playground elements to front and back of school, conceptual design overview.

Reviewed Whittier Improvements: Fire alarm, Sprinklers, Elevator, HVAC, Entry Security, ADA Restroom at Clinic, Card Access for exits, Boiler Replacement. Possible Additions: Cafeteria, Commercial Kitchen/Teaching Kitchen, SPED Classrooms.

Reviewed Proposed Additional Location: 2 story addition in back of school to include cafeteria and additional classrooms. Will allow room for subject teacher classrooms.

Catalyst Synergy: Commercial Kitchen & Exterior Culinary Arts Classroom, Compelling & Effective Programming across all academic disciplines, Expanded Opportunities for grant funding and strategic partnerships, Community Building: Gather around food, theatre, celebration, Cultivate New Revenue Streams (renting space, etc.).

Off-Site Expansion: Kindergarten expansion off-site, early childhood program, future high school (3-10 year plan). Estimated costs: House: \$350,000-\$450,000 (\$270/sf for 1300sf), District building: \$3-\$3.5 M (\$85-\$100/sf for 35,000sf), Church or Office Building: \$2M-\$3M (\$200-300/sf for 10,000sf).

Next steps: Develop and Write Grants, Project Enrollment and Operational Costs, Document Development Options, Review Development Plan with Stakeholders, Evaluate Potential Revenue Streams.

## **2:00 - 3:45 - Board Goals for 2022/2023 and Strategic Planning with support of John Brendza and Michelle Fisher**

Draft of Board Goals for Strategic Plan:

1. Maintain Financial Viability to Ensure Mountain Song's Future Growth.
  - a. Facility Expansion
  - b. Enrollment Expansion
  - c. Current Reserves
  - d. Homeschool Program
2. Student Performance:
  - a. Head: Maintain Academic Performance Status
  - b. Heart: Social-Emotional Health of Students
  - c. Hands: Cultivate, Develop, and Support Special Subjects
3. Governance and Operations:
  - a. Board Professional Development
  - b. Policies Reviewed and up to date
  - c. Maintaining Outsourcing Responsibilities
    - i. Financial

- ii. HR services
    - d. Continue Nurturing Teacher Leadership Council
    - e. Ensure Compliance of Operational Deadlines
    - f. Teacher Retention
    - g. Homeschool Program
- 4. School and Community Culture
  - a. Restructure Parent Council to Support School and Community
  - b. Community Events
  - c. Communication
    - i. Social Media Policies
  - d. Homeschool Program Support

- Draft: Put Goals in Document. Each Committee write sub-goals. Executive Director write Goals. Half-day work session. Brooke will work on setting up group of stakeholders to draft goals.

Improve Middle School Program: Extracurriculars- Waldorf-inspired and unique. Become best at what we currently offer.

**3:45 - 4:00 - Close**

4:01- Scott moves to adjourn meeting. Rebecca seconds. Approved Unanimously.