

Inavale Community Partners
Board Meeting Minutes
March 5, 2009

Convened 7:15pm

Present: Nikki Lancaster, Marilyn Dilles, Tanya Freeman, Payton James-Amberg, Morning McCreary, Kathy Brewer, Kathleen Westly; joined later by Jen Renée, Leah Gorman, Chana VanOrden and Christine Horning

Public Comment: Marilyn Dilles informed Board of LBCC Library Technology program, suggested the possibility of getting a student intern to help with M CCS library. She has spoken with an interested student. Jenny Swanson would be likely contact person once Marilyn leaves for Europe. Marilyn also has some information from the State of Oregon committee on Education, which she will pass along to us.

School Calendar: Discussed the proposed calendar for the remaining school year. 509J has made some changes to the district calendar because of the missed snow days and budget cuts. Jen has proposed that M CCS stay with the calendar as laid out at the beginning of the year. Motion made to stick with the original calendar (Payton), second (Morning); passed fists of fives.

Report on 6th Grade Reconfiguration: Payton and Kathleen gave an update on 509J School Board decision to deny M CCS to add 6th grade for 2009-2010. Board member John Turman made a motion, which Anne Schuster seconded so that the request would be discussed by the board. Primary reasons given were lack of test results/evidence that we are being successful with present grades; belief, especially with commitment to continue Lincoln MS that there are strong, viable, natural options for Muddy Creek students, which eliminate the need for 6th in M CCS, concern about transition after 6th to other schools when peer groups have already formed, recognition of value M CCS adds to district in giving elementary choices, especially where district schools are overcrowded, but need is not felt for MS, where there exists plenty of capacity. Some willingness to readdress this reconfiguration in conjunction with the charter contract renewal was expressed.

Teacher Hiring: Discussed need to hire a math aid for 1 - 2 _ hours per day. Leah and Kriste have split math by ability, with the higher-level group at 28. A math aid will help to further differentiate the math instruction time. The funds to pay for the aid will come from the money reserved from the matching donation drive. Motion made to approve creation of a new position for a classified staff math aid for up to 15 hours per week (Kathleen), second (Morning); passed fists of fives.

Advertising: Kathleen presented Gazette Times ad sizes, costs and deadline for the Spring Education Insert. Discussed whether to take out a 2x4 or 2x2 ad, and the discount we will receive if we also commit now to the Fall Insert. Ed Insert also includes a non-discrimination notice, which will fulfill our obligation to publish our non-discrimination policy. Motion made to authorize a 2x2 ad in the GT for both the Spring and Fall Education Inserts (Payton), second (Morning); passed fists of fours and fives. **AI: Kathleen and Jen** to work up ad copy. **AI: Chana** contact Qwest to have Muddy Creek listed in phone book.

Parent Teacher Organization Discussion: Tanya suggested that we need to facilitate the formation of a PTO to give parents a venue for participation in the function of the school. Kathy said a lot of such activity is already happening, but in separate work groups. Payton is concerned with making yet another meeting for people to attend. Tanya suggested a blog on the M CCS website to raise participation; agreed this is a good idea - may have blog capability soon. Kathleen suggested using the newsletter as the venue for notifying people of ways they can be involved, and to encourage them to come forward with their own ideas. **AI: Kathy** will include such in weekly newsletter.

Class size/Configuration Discussion: Reviewed input provided by Kriste on multiage classrooms, and why she advocates that M CCS purpose to offer a multiage experience, especially for the 1-2-3 grades. This input is attached to these minutes. Payton asked Leah for her take on how it's working for a teacher, like herself, who is new to a multiage approach, to be able to deliver the academics. Leah is generally positive about multiage, especially with a second 1-2-3 class at M CCS, where she and the other teacher will be able to team teach a variety of subjects, thereby grouping by ability, as with the math. She also values the stability, planning and relationship building that are possible in this context. Payton pointed out that this is an important discussion philosophically for the board, so as to set direction for the school - are we choosing to be a multiage program, or are we simply configuring classrooms to match enrollment?

Tanya asked Leah for her opinion on the challenges we will face in recruiting a new teacher for a 1-2-3 classroom. Leah said she gets the full range of reactions from teachers about the multiage approach. She believes there are teachers who will be very drawn to this program. Additionally, Leah trusts Kriste's leadership in this, and recognizes that Kriste sees the multiage approach as important and successful.

Morning asked if the class size of 22 has been the right size; Leah said 22 has been fine. Next year, she would like to see built-in days for focus on assessment early in the year so as to appropriately place students in ability groups, then to reassess mid-year so students can be moved as needed.

Through this discussion, it was agreed by the Board that we embrace the multiage classroom configuration model because it fits our vision for the school. We anticipate that this will mean a stand-alone Kindergarten, (2) 1-2-3 classrooms and (1) 4-5 classroom. This adoption is based on several factors, including, but not limited to, the following:

- the developmental grouping which encompasses 1st - 3rd grades (as described by the Montessori educational philosophy)
- the desire to have the top level of each multiage class correspond to state standard testing grades
- the social and developmental advantages of multiage classes for students
- consistency of curriculum delivery
- stability for staff
- enrollment flexibility
- differentiation from other 509J schools

Motion made (Payton) to adopt the classroom configuration model of (1) kindergarten classroom, (2) 1-2-3 grade classrooms and (1) 4-5 classroom for M CCS, second (Tanya); passed fists of four and fives. **AI: Board** needs to revamp mission and vision statements to reflect this purposeful direction.

Firtex Update: Somewhat behind schedule, in that contractor should have been chosen by now, but have not been out to bid yet. Kim Patten from district is contracting the service. Kathleen reviewed the email from Greg Lecuyer regarding our agreement for the payment of the Firtex project. **AI: Kathleen** will contact Greg to change wording so as to incorporate entire project. **AI: Jen** will follow up with Kim on progress.

Hiring/rehiring of Staff: Discussed need to have letters of intent from returning teachers and staff. **AI: Tanya** will draft a letter from the Board requesting this. **Tanya and Jen** will meet to discuss. Discussed timeframe within which we need to receive these letters. Agreed to request an answer by March 31 for teachers (letter to be sent out prior to Spring break), and May 21 for classified staff (letters, written by **Jen**, to be out by May 1).

5th to 6th Grade Transition: Jen updated board on the meeting held for parents of 5th graders about their transition to middle school. Jen Schroeder mailed letters to M CCS families today regarding options for 6th grade. This includes an extension on the deadline to file a transfer application to the Lincoln Middle School program. Jen has spoken with the principal at Lincoln, and M CCS students will be included in Lincoln transition program.

Creative Drama Club: Jenny Swanson is forming an after school creative drama club for those students interested and able to attend. Suggested donation will be \$1 per session to cover cost of materials/supplies. Club will be held Mondays, from 3:15 - 4:00. Also discussed ways to get interested families plugged into the many 4-H clubs in the area. Will try to get a list for the newsletter.

Playground committee: Has formed; a number of interested participants. **AI:** **Jen** to check with Zach regarding the roof evaluation, and the playground inspection log, which should be kept at school.

Transportation committee: Jen Schroeder confirmed that it is time to discuss adding stops to next year's route for M CCS.

Meeting Minutes: Read over February 5 and February 19 meeting minutes. Motion to adopt February 5, 2009 minutes (Payton), second (Morning); passed fists of fives. Motion to adopt February 19, 2009 minutes, as revised (Payton), second (Morning); passed fists of fives. **AI:** **Kathleen** send approved, signed 2/19/09 minutes to Phyllis Guile in ODE as support to enrollment waiver request.

Treasurer's Report: Payton reviewed balance sheet as of March 5. Decision point: we need some funds to cover general ICP expenses. Payton suggested using gym usage fees for this purpose, and that they be transferred to ICP account. Motion to commit gym usage fees to ICP general fund (Payton), second (Christine); passed fists of fives. Payton requested clarification of her job description, as to which entity for which she is being paid to perform work. Agreed that the 10 hours per week for which she is paid is for M CCS work. Payton presented Spending Plan L2. Discussed the changes, and purchasing needs for the classrooms. Motion made to approve L2, to become Grant Budget M1 (Morning), second (Kathleen); passed fists of five.

Grants Coordinator: Elisa Fairbanks has agreed to be the M CCS grant coordinator. She will create a spreadsheet of grant opportunities so they can be sorted by variables. **AI:** **Kriste**, **Leah** to forward grants we've been awarded for the hard copy files. **AI:** **Angie** to forward playground grant opportunities. Elisa plans to have the grant system organized by mid-April, will present to the Board. **Thank you, Elisa!!** Christine asked how teachers will be plugged into this process. This will need to be decided.

RACI(D): **AI:** **Tanya** will send an email to Kriste to ascertain if she has what she needs for now, given the update to RACI(D) made in the 2/28 meeting, and if not to let us know what she needs.

Board Quorum Issue: Discussed need to have Anita as an inactive board member until her return, so that we will generally have enough board members present to make a quorum. Motion made to make Anita an inactive member until her return (Kathleen), second (Payton); passed fists of four and fives.

"How is MCCS doing" Conversations: Discussed Board's desire to check in with all staff to get their input on how MCCS is functioning, and how life at MCCS can be improved. **AI: Christine** will conduct these conversations, and will draft an email (and have Jen review it) to request time with each staff member to do so.

Grange Update: "SHIPO" meeting to review the application to place the Grange building on the National Historic Register was held. As a whole, the committee thought the building should be saved, but thought the application needs significant revision. They felt the building itself has enough merit, but thought the case for placing it on the register because of its community significance was weak. Liz Carver, the professor from UofO who wrote the application was there. As far as Payton knows, there was no decision made as to how the application will be revised.

Calendar:

- Next meetings:
 - RACI(D) Meeting - Monday, 3/9 10:30 - 2:30
 - Regular ICP Board Meetings - 3/19, 4/2
- 509J Board Meetings:
 - March 9 - Christine
 - April 6 - Kathleen
 - May 4 - Tanya
 - June 22 - Morning
- Strategic planning meeting in Spring with Mark and Lou - need to schedule.

Adjourn 11:05pm

Minutes submitted by Kathleen Westly