

West Michigan Academy of Arts and Academics

17350 Hazel Street, Spring Lake, MI 49456

Touching Hearts....Reaching Minds

Board Meeting – Tuesday, May 23, 2023, 6:30PM

MINUTES - Approved

- I. Call to Order** – President Andy Alt called the meeting to order at 6:34 PM.
- II. Roll Call – Declaration of a Quorum** – Present: Andy Alt (President), Brooke Karl (Treasurer), Melisa Sass (Secretary), Sara Heacox (Trustee). John Hayes (Vice President) arrived at 6:35 PM. Absent: Tim Tiefenbach (Trustee). Also present: Joanna Bennink (Director), Courtney Stahl (GVSU Rep), Liz Johnson (Business Manager).
- III. Pledge of Allegiance**
- IV. Reading of West Michigan Academy of Arts and Academics Mission Statement**
Empowering students to reach their ultimate personal success through the unique integration of arts and academics.
- V. Board President Report** – A. Alt read a statement regarding the school leadership search process. The Board has contracted with Pete Haines from Michigan Leadership Institute (MLI), to assist with this process.
- VI. Public Comments** – A. Alt stated the Board will listen to public comments for 30 minutes at the beginning of the meeting, as well as their standard public comments at the end of the meeting. He also stated each comment is limited to 3 minutes.
 - Dana Clark Oatman 1670 Ritter Dr., Norton Shores, MI 49441 – Commented that there was no way to communicate with the Board regarding the letter that was sent to families, and is opposed to full service management.
 - Sarah Coyle 18603 174th Ave., Spring Lake, MI 49456 – Commented about the direction the school is going, and that parents have not been asked for feedback.
 - Michele Contreras 18525 Zuni Dr., Spring Lake, MI 49456 – Commented that we are turning into a traditional school, and is concerned about full service management.
 - Anna Griffiths 2133 Jensen Rd., Muskegon, MI 49444 – Asked what the catalyst was to bring in a management company.
 - Emily King 2689 Strand Rd., Muskegon, MI 49445 – Commented she started working here this year and has 4 kids and is supportive of the school.
 - Rachel Fiedler 9886 Cleveland St., Nunica, MI 49448 – She has a child in TK and complimented Ms. Chicoine.
 - Michelle Phipps 18306 148th Ave., Spring Lake, MI 49456 – Asked why this process has been secretive.
 - Lance Fiedler 9886 Cleveland St., Nunica, MI 49448 – Commented that the management companies presenting to the Board do not have good reputations.
 - Jenny Nail 2108 Ruddiman Dr., N. Muskegon, MI 49445 – Her kids came to the Academy after homeschooling for a period of time and volunteered and then was hired in.
 - Diana Sahr 13638 Pine Ct., Grand Haven, MI 49417 – Asked about the financial impact brining in a management company will have.

Holly Kendra 921 Moulton Ave., Muskegon, MI 49445 – They are new to the school from Washington, loves the community feel, and feels there needs to be more support and not a management company.

Phil Ferguson – Spoke about custody issues with his child.

Gregory Bohland 2332 Sandford St., Muskegon Heights, MI 49444 – Has two kids here, feels Ms. Chicoine has done a great job, and is not in support of a management company.

- VII.** Presentation from CS Partner Solutions – CSP presented their full service model to the Board. The cost would be 10% of State Aid.

Presentation from Choice Schools – Choice Schools presented their full service model to the Board. The cost would be 10% of all gross revenues.

- VIII.** **Public Comments for Agenda Items Only** – There were no comments regarding the agenda.

- IX.** **Approval of the Agenda** – A. Alt moved item XI, added public comments at the beginning of the meeting, moved presentation of management company presentations. A motion was made by J. Hayes, supported by M. Sass to approve the agenda as amended. All in favor 5-0, motion passed.

- x. **Correspondence** – Emails from parents and staff were received regarding the leadership structure and have been responded to.

- XI.** **Approve Board Meeting Minutes: March 28, 2023** – A motion was made by M. Sass, supported by B. Karl to approve the minutes as written. All in favor 5-0, motion passed.

- XII.** **Board President's Report**

- a. Update on Leadership Reorganization Efforts – Moved agenda item.

- XIII.** **Director's Report**

- a. Highlights of Written Report – J. Bennink reported we are 100% compliant for Epicenter.
- i. Staff curriculum – Information will be presented at the June Board Meeting.
 - ii. Community picnic – Is May 31. Reps from the GH Community Foundation will be there to help present the mural project.
 - iii. Enrollment – current is 446.12, 470 for the next school year, TK and K are not set because the teachers are in the middle of testing for placement.
- b. MSTEP & MAP Testing Update – 99.1% of the students have completed the MStep, MAP and Delta testing is still ongoing. Data will be presented at the June Board Meeting.
- c. Enrollment Update – J. Bennink was asked how the enrollment numbers compare to the seat numbers. We are still within the seat numbers.
- d. Building Maintenance/Cleaning Update – Dave Berube will present at the next Board Meeting.
- e. Technology Update – Rex Thelen from the OAITC provided J. Bennink with proposals that include additional cameras inside and outside, electrical work, some of the section 97 money can be used towards this project, the equipment would become part of our existing system. Five total bids were considered.
- f. School Calendar – There was discussion whether to start before or after Labor Day. If we start before Labor Day, we will be required to hold a summer program. The

summer program will be covered by grants. Staff prefers a before Labor Day start. A motion was made by M. Sass, supported by S. Heacox to approve the 2023-24 school calendar before Labor Day. All in favor 5-0, motion passed.

- g. Summer School Planning – J. Bennink reported that having a summer school will not require additional work, we will use the Bunk curriculum as in the years past.

XIV. Management Company Presentations

- a. CS Partners
- b. Choice Schools Associates

XV. Committee Reports

- a. Finance, Facilities, & Audit
 - i. ESSER Overview – L. Johnson provided the Board with an overview. She stated that changes would occur to align with the final budgets.
 - ii. Final 22-23 Budget – L. Johnson reported the final budget will end with a positive balance.
 - iii. Draft 23-24 Budget – Assumptions include a student count of 450, an increase of \$250 / pupil to the foundation allowance, staff raises, 7% increase in health insurance, various capital projects, ending with a positive balance.

XVI. GVSU Report

- a. Upcoming Board Member Trainings
 - i. June 29th – Best Board Practices – Efficient Governance Committee Structure – B. Karls reappointment approval will go before the GVSU Board of Trustees.
- b. Compliance Status Update – J. Bennink reported we are current with submissions.

XVII. Potential Topics for June 27, 2023 Board Meeting

Review of Management Company presentations, interview process, budget approvals, possibly more meetings in June, organizational meeting, firm up capital project costs, presentation from Rex Thelen

XVIII. Public Comments for Non-Agenda Items –

Michelle Phipps 18306 148th Ave., Spring Lake, MI 49456 – Asked the Board if there could be crisis intervention for students on the weekend and if each classroom could have emergency supplies. She also expressed concern for kids because there are no consequences for behavior, boys have made sexual comments with no consequence and the school is dirty.

Candice Tease 17729 N. Shore Rd., Spring Lake, MI 49456 – She is a mom first, secretary second, she has a 5th grader who has benefited from being at the Academy.

Diana Sahr 13638 Pine Ct., Grand Haven, MI 49417 – Commented that her daughters class size has increased, there is a lot of emphasis on special ed but not for the academically advanced students, and would like to see programs for the advanced kids.

Kristen Hardesty 17305 Hickory St., Spring Lake, MI 49456 – Asked that the Board does not make this decision lightly and don't bring in a management company.

Andria Dust 15634 164th Ave., Grand Haven, MI 49417 – Commented that the first management company did not speak to parents, and both companies do not have good reviews.

Steph Berg 14885 Leonard Rd., Spring Lake, MI 49456 – Commented she was not impressed with the management companies.

Krista Gravois 1688 S Brooks Rd., Muskegon, MI 49442 – She has two kids here, and is drawn to the small class sizes and the arts.

Tonia Patterson 15821 Vine Ave., Spring Lake, MI 49456 – Commented the differences in the two management companies and does not know why changes are occurring.

Lance Fiedler 9886 Cleveland St., Nunica, MI 49448 – The parking lot needs repair, there are cheap alternatives to add more security, and talked about hiring security staff.

Caren Ayers 16263 Taft Rd., Spring Lake, MI 49456 – The programs at the Academy is what brought them here, asked if the Board needed more support from families, would like to see more transparency.

Ratino Moore 12735 144th Ave., Grand Haven, MI 49417 – Asked how we got here.

Kristi Whalen 13834 Bittersweet Dr., Grand Haven, MI 49417 – Commented about leadership, and that ISD's offer a wide range of free services that the school could tap into.

Megan Merkins 10274 Wilson Rd., Nunica, MI 49448 – Asked what the issues were, and perhaps staff and parents could help.

- XIX. **Adjournment** – A motion was made by J. Hayes, supported by M. Sass to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 PM. All in favor 5-0, motion passed.

MS
6/15/2023