

**Great River School**  
School District #4105



***Engaging intellect, shaping character, building community***

**MISSION**

Great River School, an urban Montessori learning environment, prepares students for their unique roles as responsible and engaged citizens of the world.

**GOAL**

Great River School is the public school of choice for highly motivated students.

**VISION**

Great River School is a place where college bound students are excited and inspired to learn. Great River School encourages students to ask complex questions and seek new and difficult challenges. Great River School combines academic and social experiences in a culture of civility and trust through peaceful practices. Great River School is a place where students feel safe to express and challenge themselves. Every student at Great River School is a valued member of the community. The exceptional Great River staff teach teamwork through cross-country travel, experiential learning, drama, the arts, and micro-economic ventures while helping students set individual academic goals.

**CORE VALUES**

Great River School believes in the following:

- Montessori Education
- Community, Interdependence, and Sustainability
- Civility, Grace, and Courtesy
- Diversity
- Growth through Challenge

***Education should no longer be mostly imparting of knowledge,  
but must take a new path, seeking the release of human potentialities.***

***Maria Montessori***

**Great River School Board Meeting  
July 15, 2009**

**Agenda  
6:30 pm – 8:30pm**

1. Welcome and Introductions. Confirmation of agenda.
2. Consent Agenda.
  - A. Approve June Meeting Minutes
3. Election of new board president. Transfer of meeting from Cory Olson to new board president.
4. Election of other board members: vice-president, treasurer, and secretary. (Fifth member of executive team is named at the pleasure of the board president.)
5. Establishing meeting schedule for 2009-10
6. Lease and Building addition update
7. Director's update
8. Reports from Standing Committees:
  - A. Finance Committee – Cory Olson
    1. SBS Summary
    2. Summary Income Expense Statement
    3. Balance Sheet
    4. Fund Balance Estimate
    5. Cash Flow Analysis
    6. Check Register
    7. Check Register Resolution
    8. GRS Building Committee and bonding
    9. GRS Foundation
  - B. Personnel Committee
  - C. Fundraising and Development – Mary Gantenbein/Lydia McAnerney
  - D. Nominations Committee
  - E. Community Advisory – Mark MacGregor
9. New Business
10. Adjourn at 8:30 pm

**July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009**  
**Meeting Minutes**

1. Welcome and Introductions. Confirmation of agenda.

**Present:** Cory Olson, Mary Gantenbein, Andrea Martin, Christina Beck, Neal McMahon, Candy Husemoller, Deborah Schlick, Paulette Zoe, Michael Flood, Kira Donnelly, Kate Diehn, Andrea Christensen, Ben Moudry

**Absent:** Mark MacGregor, Sarah Lawrence-Lupton

2. Introducing Dean Walczak - our new finance person. He has been working with Avalon for 3 years and also works with River Heights Charter School.

3. Report from Finance Committee: by Cory and Dean

This was moved to the beginning of the meeting for Dean's sake.

Our projected end of year balance is -35,000. Cory believes that we'll do better than this. This is in line with the budget we passed this spring.

Cash flow will return to our financial statement next year.

**Motion 09071501, to approve the check register**

Offered by Andrea Christensen

Seconded by Candy Husemoller

Motion passes unanimously.

4. Board Election: by Cory

The elections occur with friendly discussion. Michael declines his nomination to secretary, due to family illness. Paulette graciously accepts nomination as secretary, expressing interest in passing on the position when appropriate. Other positions are elected as follows:

- President: Deborah Schlick, nominated by Neal McMahon, seconded by Andrea Martin. Unanimously elected.
- Vice President: Neal McMahon, nominated by Kira Donnelly, seconded by Michael Flood, unanimously elected.
- Secretary: Paulette Zoe, nominated by Andrea Martin, seconded by Andrea Christensen. Unanimously elected.
- Treasurer: Cory Olson, nominated by Ben Moudry, seconded by Kira Donnelly, unanimously elected.
- Ben Moudry Appointed to Executive Committee by the new President.

Discussion follows regarding future board schedule. It is agreed to hold the meetings Wednesdays at 6:30pm. The next meeting is set for August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2009. The executive committee will typically meet one week prior to the board meeting, usually in the morning. A full schedule for the year ahead will be presented at the August board meeting.

5. Building Update: By Ben and Christina.

- Lease update: we've been going back and forth with CSDC. They are not taking any of our suggestions. Cory has a few ideas on how to proceed to make progressing in obtaining a lease that meets our needs.. Christina has many concerns about the current working of the lease.
- Communication with CSDC has not been timely.

- **Motion 09071502** that the Executive Committee executes the lease on behalf of GRS.
  - Offered by Candy Husemoller
  - Seconded by Andrea Christensen
  - Passes unanimously.
- Building Addition: more elaboration to follow in Directors update.

6. Directors Update: By Christina

- Christina has received many letters and had many conversations with staff about current concerns and issues.
- We hired a math teacher! Zach Schultz, depending board approval, will be our new A2 math teacher.

There is a discussion on the GRS hiring process, and the role of the board goes on for some while. This will be clarified at the August Board Meeting.

- **Motion 09071503** to approve the hiring of Zach Schultz,
  - Offered by Michael Flood
  - Seconded by Andrea Christensen
  - Conversation: Neal looks into the board bylaws regarding hiring
  - Passes unanimously.
- Update on the hiring process for Art, Spanish, and Music positions. Because none of the applicants who have applied have Montessori experience, we are beginning the process filing for limited licenses for our existing teachers.
- Financial update: we are meeting to work out processes and procedures. More on this to be presented at the August Board Meeting.
- There is a Volunteer Day this Saturday and we are hoping for a good turnout.
- Summer staffing update: Leticia is here 4 days a week, Andrea is here with a lighter load in July but will be here full time in August, and Karen is here 4 days a week.
- Summer Hours: T-F, 9-3.
- Transportation update: this is still being looked at with MDE.
- Board Member Training: MACS has a board retreat/training. Neal and Deb are going to work with Christina to keep this moving forward

7. Foundation/Building Update: By Cory

We are looking at options for purchasing the building, and a bank loan is one option. We would need to start up a non-profit building corporation. The bank loan would be an option, more simple than the bonding.

We have started taking donations with our non-Profit: The Great River School Foundation is working!

8. Enrollment/Funding Update – written up by Lydia.

We currently are enrolled at 265 students.

We need to take a formal action on our enrollment targets and the process of over-enrollment and taking new students. This is scheduled for the August board meeting.

9. Nominations committee – no new business.

10. Community advisory – (Mark is absent.)

11. Personnel Committee – will be on August agenda to clarify committee roles and responsibilities.

12. New Business:

- a. Board Books. Neal will help put together a book for current board members.
- b. Neal raises a question about the about conflict of interest resolution required for all board members. When do we sign this? Everyone will need to sign a new conflict of interest. This will happen in the months ahead.
- c. Andrea Martin raises a concern over our school's lack of a policy book, where all our policies are held. This needs to be created. It will probably be part of the Board book that Neal is preparing.

13. **Motion C01090715** to approve June Meeting Minutes

Moved by Candy Husemoller

Seconded by Andrea Christenson

Unanimously approved.

14. Motion to adjourn.

Moved by Kate Diehn.

Seconded by Andrea Christenson.

Unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.

Consent Agenda  
July 15, 2009

**C09071501 The Great River School Board approves the minutes for the June 25, 2009 meeting.**

Offered by:

Seconded by:

Adopted this 15th day of July, 2009 by \_\_\_\_\_ GRS Board vote.

---

**09071501 Check Register approval.**

The Great River School board approves the check register for June, 2009.

Offered by: Andrea Christenson

Seconded by: Candy Husemoller

Approved this 15th day of July 15, 2009 by unanimous GRS Board vote.

---

**09071502 Executive Committee Authority to Execute Lease**

The Great River School board grants the Executive committee authority to execute a lease with CSDC on behalf of GRS.

Offered by: Candy Husemoller

Seconded by: Andrea Christensen

Approved this 15th day of July 15, 2009 by unanimous GRS Board vote.

---

**09071503 Approval to Hire Zach Schultz**

The Great River School board approves the hiring of Zach Schultz.

Offered by: Michael Flood

Seconded by: Andrea Christensen

Approved this 15th day of July 15, 2009 by unanimous GRS Board vote.

---

## July 15, 2009 Head of School Report to the Board

Respectfully submitted by Christina Beck

### Current Priorities:

- Establish clear decision-making process
- Clarify committee roles/mandates
- Attendance policy: streamline and add effectiveness and accountability
- Compensation structure/ thaw salary freeze
- Graduation requirements/course offerings: How do they align?

Insurance: I met with Jon Hanson, our rep from Bremer. He said that our umbrella of 5 million is higher than is typical as is our aggregate of 3 million.

Brought this to CSDC and have secured permission to decrease both to 2 million. Amount of savings is still unclear.

Lease: Cory, Christina and Andrea met to discuss Jennifer Early's comments on the lease. Language and advice was also solicited from another attorney Charles White. Christina submitted our comments to CSDC on Wednesday, July 8 and entertained their response on July 15.

### Building:

First construction meeting was held on Tuesday, July 7. Current projected date for substantial completion is set for early October.

We have a new project manager from MORCON: Pat LeMay

Cleaning company will be doing painting over the summer in lieu of the usual cleaning.

Ben, Leticia, Lydia and I planned work to be done for the upcoming workday and beyond.

Working to coordinate building services related to HVAC and temperature control issues. Met with Tom Bailey & Bryce Fairbanks on separate occasions for assistance in prioritizing projects and expenditures. Tom will be called on as needed and is content with that strategy.

Personnel: Proposal to hire Zachary Schultz as our new A2 math teacher. Zach was one of four final candidates interviewed by Christina, Ben, Kira and student (Rose). He taught at Hmong Academy last year and was very successful. I gave practice ACT Math tests to my Juniors last year. At the beginning of the year, the average was 66% and the last test they received their average was 87%. In 2007 Hmong Academy had one student pass the state MCA Math test. In 2008, I had 7 students pass the test.

I have completed the necessary posting for the visual arts, music and Spanish positions. None of the licensed candidates who applied have any Montessori experience or training. I recommend we sign the limited license applications for Sam O'Brien and Zach Scott and apply for a community expert certificate for Enrique Garita

### Finance:

Two meetings have been held to date with Leticia, Christina and Dean. Revised financial procedures agreed upon in this small group are ready for review.

I have *begun* to comb through the expense side of the budget to see where we might glean some savings with the primary goal of unfreezing salaries for FY10 and making sure we have enough money to adequately maintain the building/grounds.

### Upcoming:

July 16 9-11:30: Faculty meeting

July 18 9-3: Community Work Day

Legal Updates workshop and Montessori Whole-School Management course for Christina (Aug 2-7)

### Follow up on action items from last month:

Amended/increased hours the summer schedule for administrative staff as concern was expressed at the last board meeting.

I have explored the issue of transporting students. Information received from Kelly Wosika at MDE needs further review/clarification before we can draft a formal policy.