

GRS Board Minutes  
September 24, 2008

**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  
September 24, 2008**

**6:30 pm – 8:30pm**

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Judy called the meeting to order at 6:30.

Judy, Paulette, Angela, Craig Longtine (parent), Dave Zdenek, Mary Gantenbein, Cory Olson, Tom Carrigan, Mark McGregor, Corinne Anderson(parent), Kate Diehn, Kira Donnelly, Leah Brennan Magnuson (student board member), Andrea Christensen, Mark Lenz – MLA Architect

**2. Introduction of new member** – Kate Diehn, new teacher member from St. Paul Conservatory; Leah is a senior who will represent the student body along with Cece Spencer

**3. Consent Agenda.**

- A. Approve August Meeting Minutes
  - B. Appointment of new member
  - C. Approval of new check signature
- Resolution 08092401 approved unanimously.

**3. Annual Report discussion and approval**

Our sponsor, Hamline University has seen a copy of this report and given feedback. See the attached resolution Resolution 08092402 as passed by the school board.

**4. AYP/report card update**

Great River School has again made AYP.

**5. New attendance policy discussion and approval**

Changes in the attendance policy include one hour of detention for three tardies to class. Parents will be called to inform. Fewer letters will be sent home. Five class attendance policy remains the same.

Resolution 08092403 was passed unanimously.

**6. Search process update**

Tom thanked Andrea Martin for taking on the role of Interim director. October 4 the search committee will meet to put out concrete steps forward for defining the role of the director and setting time parameters for the hiring of the director. Judy will send a letter to the community to inform about the hiring of Andrea Martin and the plan for moving forward.

**7. Update on expansion planning process**

Mark Lenz, MLA here to discuss current status. Ben Moudry gave a quick background of current interest in building expansion. Have had a building meeting to discuss working with Mark Lenz based on recommendations from MDE and Charter School Development Corporation. Teachers were invited to discuss ideas of how each level would use space. Students observed schools with Ben and Mark to gather ideas that they would see pertinent for our building plans. Ben and Mark then sat down to look at drawings that Mark put together. Mark came to present the drawings to the board for awareness. Within the next two weeks another meeting will be scheduled.

Ben also gave an overview of the history leading to this track of doing an addition to the space.

Mark: Goal of August 09 for space to be ready for use. Bid sometime in January; break ground in Spring 09. Groups to work with include Port Authority. Proposed 5500 square feet addition. Looks like a second floor is possible with existing structure, this will also be true of new addition. We are running out of space in accordance with Port Authority. Will be better off with thoughts of building up, good to plan for stairs now. Could create a design element for roofing over bike racks and dumpsters. Mark presented two options with inclusion of a flow between existing and new buildings.

Discussion ensued regarding options, furnishings, windows, floorings and other details.

Next part of the process: a selected group of students and parents will meet. Board needs to make decisions and look at the longer term factors. Watch emails for possible follow up meeting to make a well-informed decision.

#### **8. Conflict of interest forms**

Each board member needs to complete the conflict of interest forms.

#### **9. 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

Two months is 17% of the way through the year. At current month we are \$55,000 negative. For the year we are \$28,000 in the negative. This is the same pattern over the past few years. The audit is going on right now. Why we are negative: we pre-pay a month of rent. Revenue – pretty typical month. Purchased services under General Education line is at 77% due to fall trip expenses. Equipment in General Education is due to the purchase of computers. Dues and memberships is athletic fees. We are where we need to be. We did dip into the line of credit at a cost \$120 of interest to school. That has been paid back. Month to month expenses have not changed.

Missing invoices are a major issue. The debit card will only be used for purchases over \$100.

7. Check Register Resolution – passed unanimously

##### B. Personnel Committee – Tom Carrigan see above regarding search process

##### C. Building Committee – Ben Moudry – see above regarding building plans.

#### **D. Fundraising and Development**

Mary G. will assist Tom with this committee. Lydia is working on writing handwritten notes for follow up on pledges. RevTrack will be our new provider for parents to be able to donate and pay fees on line. Hopes to finalize database within the next month or so.

A number of parents are on a committee to have a Beatles Bash festival as part of the CAPP grant funds. Goal is to raise \$5000. Many fun activities are planned.

#### **E. Nominations Committee**

No activity at this time. Upon researching the idea of changing to a system of no ballot for uncontested elections, Judy found that the recommendation is to send out the ballot to remind parents and community members of the election and to keep the community well informed.

#### **F. Parent Involvement/School Support Committee**

Mark is going to work with Lydia and Lee Olson on this. The main emphasis will be to more aggressively involve members.

#### **G. Strategic Plan**

Date of next meeting needs to be set by Judy before the October board meeting.

#### **10. Director's update**

Fall trips were great. Four of our students were commended scholars from National Merit Scholars. Adrienne, our office manager, has resigned. We have about 45 applicants for the job. The audit is the week of October 6. The lunch program has started. Andrea is learning the systems, staff and students of the school.

#### **11. Use of school in summer**

There is a group Ben knows through the Montessori community which is interested in using Great River building for 2-3 weeks during the summer. They would pay for the use of the space. Ben will see if this is acceptable for our current lease.

#### **12. Set annual meeting date**

Mary G. will find out if Lydia has set up a date for the annual meeting.

#### **13. New Business** No new business was presented.

#### **14. Adjourn at 8:15 pm**

Offered by Andrea Christensen; seconded by Angela van der Puije

Consent Agenda  
September 24, 2008

**C08092401 The Great River School Board approves the July 24, 2008 minutes, appoints Kate Deihn as teacher board member, authorizes Andrea Martin to sign checks on behalf of Great River School**

Offered by: Cory Olson  
Seconded by: Paulette Zoe  
Adopted this 24th day of September, 2008 by unanimous GRS Board vote.

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**08092401 Check Register**

The Great River School board has reviewed the check register listing checks written on GRS's behalf from August 1, 2008 through August 31, 2008.

Offered by: Kira Donnelly  
Seconded by: Angela van der Puije  
Adopted this 24th day of September, 2008 by unanimous GRS Board vote.

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**08092402 GRS Annual Report**

The GRS Board approves the Annual report for submission to the Minnesota Department of Education.

Offered by: Tom Carrigan  
Seconded by: Paulette Zoe  
Adopted this 24<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2008 by unanimous GRS Board vote.

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**Resolution 08092403**

The GRS Board approves the attendance policy.

Offered by: Andrea Christensen  
Seconded by: Ben Moudry  
Adopted this 24<sup>th</sup> day of September by unanimous GRS Board vote.

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