



# MINNESOTA EARLY LEARNING ACADEMY

## Board Meeting Agenda • December 2016

Meeting of the Board of Directors December 8, 2016, from 4:00 - 6:00 p.m. MELA

6717 85th Ave North • Brooklyn Park, MN 55445

Conference Call number: 716-293-6267 PIN: 91149

Remote access: [https://hangouts.google.com/hangouts/\\_/distinctiveschools.org/mela-board?authuser=0](https://hangouts.google.com/hangouts/_/distinctiveschools.org/mela-board?authuser=0)

### 1. Record Attendance and Guests

- Joseph Scherer, New Board Chair
- Signe Anderson, Board Secretary
- Brienna D'Angelone, Board Member & MELA staff
- Nicole Schmidt, CFO, CliftonLarsonAllen
- Scott Frauenheim, VP/CEO, Distinctive Schools (remote)
- Andrew Parket – Exec. Dir. of School Partnerships & Development
- David Sundstrom, Distinctive Schools
- Antonio Zambrano, Director of Operations, Distinctive Schools, MELA
- Jennifer Mitchell, MELA School Dir.
- Carrie Bakken, IQS Authorizer

### 2. Call the Meeting to Order - 4:10 pm

### 3. Approval of the Agenda

3.1. Brie moved, Sig 2<sup>nd</sup>, passed

### 4. Approval of the Minutes of the previous board meeting Oct 13, 2016

4.1. Bri moved, Sig 2<sup>nd</sup>, passed

### 5. Reports to the Board

#### 5.1. Board Chair Report

5.1.1.1. Board Member Candidates: Mariela has some recommendations for our consideration, replacing individuals so no election process needed per statutes; just our vote is enough; We also need time to find a new Chair - looking for experienced board members

\* Ruth Elfering/US Bank product manager MCM strategy; MBA / PMP board member on CLUES, involvement in NSHIMBA and Tgt HBC (was a committee member for family recruitment back when school started); Sig and Antonio also know her; Bri expressed approval; Bri moved to add Ruth to the board, Sig 2<sup>nd</sup>; passed unanimously; Mariela will extend offer

\* Victor Chavarria - MBA in finance; career is analytics/finance; would be Jackie's replacement; was on Tgt HBC/ passionate about diversity; N Mpls resident; Sig moved to appoint Victor as board member/treasurer, Bri 2<sup>nd</sup>, motion passed; Mariela will extend invitation to Victor to join as treasurer.

\* Lisa Dotson; clinic worker and dedicated to MELA; parent; very involved president of PTO; generous and creative; BA in Spanish and Linguistics; knows school very well; need to confirm if they are involved in any decision making to avoid conflict of interest; Bri moved to extend offer, Sig 2<sup>nd</sup>, motion passed; Mariela will invite her to the board

#### 5.1.2. Distinctive Schools Announcements

N/A; Andy parker comes at least every week / every other week to support the school; all is going well; MELA's progress with DS is going well; Joe congratulated DS staff on professionalism during the transition

#### 5.1.3 Charter School Facility

Mariela: Nichole / Antonio and Mariela worked on looking at lease aid / facility needs and created enrollment assumption projections and looked at needs of facility based on space; lease agreement with church expires June 2020; can't break contract; did projection on classroom / office space needs; we need at least a building that covers 40,000 sq feet; currently at 17K sq ft, 204 students as of today, only 8 classrooms 1 EL classroom, 1 social worker needs multi-purpose room and 1 SPED; also great relationship with church; options:

1. Build an expansion building; limitations are lease aid; investment is very high from the church; could be done in phases every year if possible through the bank
2. Portables; approved last year for 1 portable by city; but investment and situation with cash flow, this wasn't an option; if the church wants to expand and invest in 3 portables we're willing to stay and pay the monthly fee; but with expansion plan in the following year; 17K - 22K more sq ft; so close to goal of 40K sq ft; church has an architect and they could only do 10 K... we need 22K minimum, so this won't work; portable with agreement to expand following year
3. Early out termination contract; and go to another facility; find a tenant and be relocated
  1. Pay separation fee; buy out; unsure about amount
  2. Find organization to buy property and land and lease to us; they pay us with a monthly fee for our services; they build it out; lease back to

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church; after full implementation of project (4 years, need full enrollment; hit our 450), we can buy the property back from the organization

David said church has been sympathetic and collaborative; they want to go the building route; looking at proposal to make it most appealing to the church's bank

Meet again on 12/21; Antonio has reached out to portable vendor and will continue to stay in contact; how much for 3 portables with plumbing; options for customization; also need to work with the city to approve; what would they require for a lease? Informally they said if we built the 22K we'd have to sign a 15-year lease beyond 2020; that would be negotiated by David; open to any options; school can't own the building; would have to be another company and need to be in existence for 7 years; building company would buy it and we would lease through bonds; ball is in church's court and on 21<sup>st</sup> they will indicate which of the 5 options sounds best; by Feb 1<sup>st</sup> we'll know what we're going to do (drop dead date); Feb board meeting we will discuss and approve the decision; portable timeline is about 3 months

Don't want to be in a commercial area necessarily, but there could be a commercial area that we could look in to; MN School of Business is closing, so that could be an option; David: we should lay out what's out there and what are the pros and cons; Mariela presented some options (40k old bowling alley in residential area, has high ceilings ready for a gym; 70 kold MN school of business, may need elevated ceiling extension; 70k old business / college private institute combo; old seminary, might be too expensive); retail space is higher risk

Jennifer said 12 is the goal for next year, and with portables we'd have 14; extra lease aid for portables? Or will it still be based on enrollment? 1,500 / portable / month;

5.1.4 Calendar State Compliance Report; Mariela: supported by CLA; Jennifer & school work very hard to get monthly reporting done and we don't have any additional support outside of us and we are 100% compliant.

## 5.2 Committee Reports

### 5.2.1 Finance Committee

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5.2.1 FY17 Budget Updates; Nichole will send out final revised budget in Feb board meeting or even April meeting with 1<sup>st</sup> draft of next year's budget; everything is going well (current on vendors and cash flow is going well); CSP is back to being behind;

5.2.2 Financial Packet Review Oct & Nov; everything going well; don't want to submit a revised budget; school current on payment plan to DS; got lease aid last payment so we're exactly at 10% holdback number, only \$200 loss (vs other schools have 15K-20K loss); Sig moved to approve Oct and Nov financial packets, Bri 2<sup>nd</sup>, motion passed

5.2.3 Audit Update; N/A; completed and submitted to MD; Jennifer completed all necessary paper work

5.3 Authorizer Report Carrie; saw school during the day; met with Jennifer and Mariela; initial reviews are pieces she'll ask for; Board training plan will be shared, 6 months to complete. Can we become MACS member. \$35 fee to be a member; March training coming up; Nichole will take care of skyward signature form for Joe to sign. Need to look into Board Training Matrix

5.4 School Director Academic Report: Jennifer

5.4.1 Curriculum Update - imagine learning pilot for 35 students; reading intervention; kids love it; serves for personalized learning / blended learning; very solid program; live webinar in coding; multi-grade coding event; papers were here interviewing and taking pictures

5.4.2 Assessment Update; 2<sup>nd</sup> round of NWEA starting Monday; tested before winter break; DRA testing before winter break and some right after break (what level are kids in for group reading?); access testing coming up in 2017; 50 ELs and 15 are from Africa and the rest are Hispanic, 2 from Asia

5.4.3 Professional Development Update: Wednesday started grade-level / specialty staff meetings; data session with bri, el session with Mariela and meet with sped team to make sure we're all on the same page; teachers are finding them valuable; personalized learning update Kathryn has worked with teachers and goal is after winter break to roll those out; teaching framework / andy

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standards and objectives; .... assessment using and presentation of content (gradual release model and thinking maps), envoy coach back in January

5.4.4 Staffing Update - hired another sped teacher (Wendy Sorentino); things have been going well; also hired sped para Birana Borden (reco from Ms. Caroline); getting a lot of sped students so the school has hired extra staff (94% reimbursed from state)

5.4.5 Parent Involvement Update - 2 big fundraisers, selling Little Caesars kits, goal is at least 100 kits sold (get \$5 per kit); if they get 300 sold then TMNT coming for Pizza Party; Tuesday culvers night (4-8 pm) any sales Brooklyn Blvd culvers came to MELA; many families went and kids helped out; winter concert 12-22 created a "peace concert" theme; after school is having polar express day; parent involvement day in November and 60 parents came from 9-11:30 am breakfast and helped in classroom and worked on projects in gym; Proud Parent of a MELA student T-shirts available to sell

5.4.6 Federal and State programs; title 1 compliance meeting; Bri and Jennifer attended; school isn't always documenting everything they do, but we won't be reviewed from year 1-3, so they are setting up folder in Google Drive to begin doing that; asked PTO if they could use first 15 mins to talk about title 1, world's best work force and QComp implementation; collecting documentation for QComp; thanks to DS we're on top; all about documenting everything; WBW plan: needed to have the plan uploaded in the fall, but now finished and is ready to go; can be used as school improvement plan for both title 1 and QComp; summary report submitted prior to due date of 12/15; need a principal evaluation - something the board needs to think about (how would we go about to evaluate); MACS has a template that Carrie can send to us; Joe encourages a 360 format; annual public meeting required and should occur separately from regularly scheduled board meeting; QComp needs something approved by 6-15 so that will be discussed in the June meeting; perhaps we need to invite community members to speak at meeting

5.4.7 Enrollment Update - up to 204; parent involvement is a tool for enrollment;

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5.4.8 Health Benefits Transition Update - Dec. 1<sup>st</sup> successfully transitioned from Chicago to MN, actual ID cards are not available to staff yet, but we are being proactive to ensure they get their cards. Everyone is covered though. Both staff and school are saving money with this transition.

5.4.9 Transportation Update - some issues at beginning but everything is working out now; we're also saving money with this new company vs. LY

5.4.10 Technology Consultant: proposal for service provided to MELA; lots of thought put into kinds of service / hours of service needed; MELA only needs about 12 hours / month (10,500 for those services from Dec 15 - June 15); would like to start in January - around 9000 total for Jan - June. Rollover hours? Charging for travel time? Hardware repair - need to show the amount of time needed to do a repair) tomorrow they're meeting with David Sima (DS head tech person; he put the consultant through a great vetting process, and the person was interviewed by Antonio and Jennifer) and with tech consultant rep and we'll send to David Sima, came recommended by another technical support company; this is an alternative strategy to having a part time staff member; he knows about charter school testing protocol

5.4.11 Move Antonio needs approval to finalize the contract based on David's finalized adjustments sign the agreement with David's guidance; sig 2<sup>nd</sup>; passed;

## 6 Other New Business

6.2 Recruitment; Adrienne in Chicago has contacted local fellowship leaders and council members to come out and learn about us; no one came on the first day but hopefully the 15<sup>th</sup> people will come and check us out; Ms. C is setting up breakfast with local daycare providers so they can recommend MELA to families; so far 5 students in open enrollment for next year; calendar will need to be discussed based on facility decisions; when we have clarity on space the way we go about recruitment will be more energized and focused.

Feb 9<sup>th</sup> is next board meeting

7. Adjourn; sig moved to adjourn; bri 2<sup>nd</sup>; passed and adjourned 5:54 pm

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