

Monona Grove Education Foundation Board Meeting Minutes – October 10, 2023

Present – Beebe, Bernards, Eddington, Homburg, Jones, Klinke, Kugle, McCutchin, O'Connor, Olson, Parrott, Perkins, Robbins, Salvi, Weinberger

Absent – Manning, Runk, Young

Also present – Christine Benedict and Mary Salisbury (Girls on the Run)

Opening of Meeting - McCutchin called the meeting to order at 4:02.

Approval of September 12, 2023 Minutes – Kugle's motion, seconded by Eddington, to approve the minutes of the September 12, 2023 meeting, was approved unanimously.

Reports & Announcements:

Supt. Dan Olson Report – Olson's primary piece of news is in regard to potential changes to the configuration of two primary schools in Cottage Grove. The school board will likely be voting to change the existing configuration to make Taylor Prairie and Cottage Grove Elementary both grades 4K-2 and Granite Ridge grades 3-5. Currently, Cottage Grove students are required to transition through a total of four schools before entering high school. Staff feel there are too many transitions for the neediest students in particular. Every time they move to a different school it takes a long time to rebuild team support for both those students as well as advanced students. It's important to have an equitable experience for students in Cottage Grove elementary schools and at Winnequah.

New Business:

Discussion & Possible Approval of Funding Request from Girls on the Run – Christine Benedict (Executive Director) and Mary Salisbury (Director of Philanthropy) from Girls on the Run appeared to discuss their request for funding for their teams at Granite Ridge. Girls on the Run is an afterschool empowerment program open to all genders but is girl centered. The program uses running creatively to help kids learn and achieve something big. It features 18 different lessons led by volunteers and coaches covering topics like empathy, how words matter, and first aid as well as CPR. Participants learn to tap into their own star power and share it through a community service project. The teams meet outdoors after school twice a week for 9 weeks. The estimated cost for the program at Granite Ridge in 2024 is \$14,800 or \$400 per participant. The basic registration fee is \$165. 30% of participants can't afford the full fee. They will work with those students. Participant families can pay a range from \$20-\$165. Registration fees will cover \$6,270 leaving a gap of \$8,530. The funding gap lies between the standard \$165 fee and \$400 costs. They are a 501c3 and fundraise 50% of their budget.

Though they currently only have a program at Granite Ridge kids from any school are welcome. The age range is primarily grades 3-5. They only have staff capacity to work with schools who reach out to them because they require staff or parent involvement. They are increasing staff and hope to rebuild connections with schools they worked with previously like Winnequah.

In discussion, board members raised several concerns – would we be setting a precedent in providing funds to another non-profit organization and the fact that it's only at a CG school. It's not an official school activity, but functions much like the Y after-school program which the

district helps facilitate but doesn't run. We recently decided against funding for the 8th grade trip because it's no longer affiliated with the schools. The general consensus was not to provide the funds because it's not an official school district program.

Discussion & Possible Approval of Fishing Club Grant Request - Luke Wunsch, MGHS SRO and Jason Arneson, MGHS math instructor started a fishing club there last year. There's a lot of interest this year but many students don't have equipment. They submitted a request for a grant of \$500 to purchase an initial set of fishing rods and other equipment. Funding would come from the Starting Line Fund. Mark Rundle thinks it's an appropriate use for those funds. Weinberger wondered if there's a need for life jackets and first aid kits. Olson thinks they'll be fishing from the shore and if there's a future need for those items, the district should fund it. There was some confusion about which form should have been used to make the request. McCutchin will make sure that the correct form is attached to the Starting Line Fund option on our website. The board discussed setting a precedent by contributing to starting a new club and how much would be appropriate. We do have \$9-10,000 available in the Starting Line Fund which is intended to help kids who can't afford to participate in activities. Historically the district has not provided much funding for clubs. Now there is some baseline funding but not enough for this. Olson sees it as a one-time request. Bernard's motion to fully fund the request, seconded by Homburg, was approved unanimously.

Old Business:

Discussion & Possible Approval of Capital Campaign Final Details – Parrot reported that the campaign is a bit behind schedule but doing ok. She will drop off sponsor letters to those who volunteered to write notes to include with them soon. Beebe will start dropping off yard signs in Monona. Wells will send the donor letters which we would like to be mailed next week.

Committee Reports:

Communications Committee Report – O'Connor asked that people send her any stories they'd like included in the next issue of Traditions.

Fundraising Committee report (Parrot) – See above

Weekend Snack Pack Committee (Klinke & Eddington) – Klinke reported that there are 150 participants this year with a waiting list. She doesn't think they'll be able to handle any more. All schools are looking for snacks for students during the week. Olson thinks schools could use their endowment funds for that. All schools have them but Granite Ridge and MG21. There are also some foundation funds available. He asked Klinke to work with Christa Foster. They're looking for volunteers to help pack food during school hours each week. The classroom they're able to use is working out well. A background check is required to pack the food and deliver the snack packs to the schools. Eddington reported that there is a cribbage fundraiser coming up on October 21 if anyone is interested. Klinke asked for volunteers for Trunk or Treat at Dolphin Swim Academy on October 27. It will be a way to promote MGEF.

Next Meeting - The next meeting will be virtual on November 14, 2023, at 4pm.

Adjournment – Beebe's motion to adjourn, seconded by Klinke was approved unanimously at 5:41 PM.

Mary O'Connor, Secretary