

**Woodlands School
Board of Trustees Meeting**

Woodlands School Mission

Creating the character of the community through diverse education.

Vision

The best of what an urban education can be.

Minutes

November 30, 2017 – APPROVED

Attending:	<p>Officers: Chair – Sue Bay – Y Vice Chair – Jason Schultz – Y Treasurer – Catherine Wittig - N Secretary – Matt O’Neill - Y</p> <p>Trustees: Claypool, Krista - Y Griffin, Dennis - Y Hanvey, Patricia - Y Khan, Qasim – Y Miller, Milika – Y Parsons, Don - Y Richardson, Peter – Y Sobush, Sonya – Y Stenum, Erin – Y</p> <p>Ex-Officio – Tommie Myles, Executive Director/State Street Principal; Patty Rogers, Chief Educational Director and Bluemound Principal</p> <p>Staff Trustee – Mitch Hartman, Bluemound Appointee</p> <p>Guests: Michele Scott, Business Manager; Michael Pointer-Mace; Fund Development Assistant and Operations Manager Katelyn Kastern; Kallie Schucknecht; Kathy Simonis; Amy Williams; Jody Schneider; Kieshan Jones-Sutton, PTO Liaison; Amanda Dushain; Walkowicz, Boczkiewicz</p>
1. 2016-2016 Annual Audit Report	<p>Walkowicz, Boczkiewicz & Co., S.C. presented their Audit Report. Wendy Hansen & Valorie Boczkiewicz circulated the audit report for 2016-2017. Reported we has a spectacular year, with good increase</p>

	<p>in net assets. Audit opinion is unmodified, the best they can give. Valorie walked the Board through the audit report and explained the information and findings.</p> <p>Jason Schultz asked clarifying questions regarding concentration of cash at Park Bank and the balloon payment on the Note due in April 2019. Auditors reported the cash concentration is common at institutions with substantial turnover of funds, and the current assets are adequate to account for the balloon payment, in case it was paid off rather than refinanced.</p> <p>Auditor’s Report on Compliance stated Auditors’ conclusion that Woodlands School, Inc. complied, in all material respects, with the requirements for each applicable school program.</p> <p>Auditor’s Report on Internal Control stated the Auditor did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that they consider a material weakness.</p> <p>Auditor’s Report included October 26, 2017 Management Advisory Letter suggesting two potential improvements of internal controls: ensuring all credit card purchases apply the school’s sales tax exemption; and ensuring we maintain written records of completed background screening.</p> <p>Oct. 26, 2017 letter to the Board of Trustees discusses management. This is a clean letter, no issues with management. No difficulties dealing with management. Noted some material misstatements relating to commodities (food) from MCFI, which was a new item for Woodlands, and that corrections were made during the audit process. No other audit findings or issues.</p> <p>Auditors noted that Woodlands does not have a written whistleblower policy, which is an item included on the 990 form. This is an item the Board should address.</p>
<p>2. State Street Charter Renewal</p>	<p>Executive Director Tommie Myles reported further on the 3-year charter renewal for State Street. Reported on continued discussions with UWM and the Board of Regents after the last Board meeting. Mr. Myles sent a detailed email to all staff and the Board on November 2, 2017 discussing the Action Items that will be included in an Action Plan for the next three years.</p>

Mr. Myles discussed the Action Items set forth in the Action Plan, which we are already implementing now, even though technically we are required to implement them starting July 1, 2018. These include:

- **Instructional programming**
 - Curriculum displaying differentiation
 - Higher academic expectations/Rigor
 - Quicker Academic Pace
 - Attention to the specific needs of the students
 - Development of world language (French) at the upper grade levels
 - Modification of the school's discipline plan to include the restorative practices that actually exist
 - Tie instruction to assessment

- **Organizational Infrastructure**
 - Decision what should be "replicated" at State Street and what should not be.
 - Clarity on roles of Chief Educational Director in conjunction with Principal role.
 - An organizational chart

What does it all mean? Change. Tommie described to the Board his aggressive plan to make necessary changes at State Street in response to the issues identified in the renewal process.

Jason Schultz asked how the staff has responded to these changes? Tommie answered there has been some level of shock, but he is finding buy in from the staff about what needs to be done. Does not have any sense of anyone jumping ship.

Michael Pointer Mace and Cindy Zielinski explained how they have been approaching the issues. MPM will be reporting independently to the Board. Cindy explained they have been and are engaging in differentiating with the students on math and reading.

Dennis Griffin asked questions about measuring progress spring to spring, and asked about reviewing the school report cards. Patty Rogers explained our approach is to measure development more often than annually. The report cards have been shared with staff.

Dennis Griffin explained some of the assessment approaches they are using at his school, for consideration by Mr. Myles, Ms. Rogers and the Board. Mr. Myles and Ms. Rogers are aware of the approach, but explained that we have not invested the substantial resources necessary to overlay an additional assessment of grade level v. grade level. Currently the classes at Bluemound and State Street are taking the same tests for math, but not other subjects, where the manner of teaching is autonomous for each school. Mr. Myles stated that will

	<p>be a paradigm shift, and we are working to get to that point, but it will take some time and a lot of effort.</p> <p>Dennis Griffin challenged the staff to consider different approaches to assessing the students, even though it will present difficulties.</p> <p>Krista Claypool noted that she believes teachers would welcome input on curriculum development, and we should explore the possibility of using, for example, text books for math so the parents could help with learning at home.</p> <p>Mr. Myles explained the deliberative approach we have been taking to deal with the difficulties we encountered when we turned over the leadership of State Street. The written plan of action is due in June; but we already are putting improvements in place and working on broad-scaled meaningful improvements and processes. Waiting until June is too late.</p> <p>Milika Miller explained her view that we need to move quickly, and with urgency, to ensure that the first 8th grade class to graduate from State Street achieves placement in the best schools they can achieve. Potential of a low-achieving graduating class could have a larger impact on the entire State Street school.</p> <p>Dennis Griffin strongly encouraged Board members to read books relevant to the challenges we are currently facing, and Michael Pointer-Mace added a third book. Sue Bay agreed that Board members should engage in outside reading, as their individual time allows.</p> <p>Peter Richardson noted that these deeper discussions are perfect for consideration and discussion by the Academic Excellence Committee.</p>
<p>3. Work to Close Achievement Gap with Special Education</p>	<p>Patty Rogers reported we will start asking our educators to inform the Board about positive changes and procedures we have in place.</p> <p>Michael Pointer-Mace gave a report on changes we have put in place since January for our special education for students with exceptional needs. Handed out copy of report on Woodlands School Inc. Student Services. Gave the Board an overview of what our support services are trying to create, inside and outside of the classroom. Working to lessen the achievement gap for special education students.</p>

	<p>Proposing that we move towards more co-teaching with general and special education. Will require increase in special education teachers – two per school. Would require financial investment by the school.</p> <p>Cindy Zielinski asked why that is not happening now. Mr. Pointer-Mace explained the co-teaching happens two times per week in two grades at Bluemound, but not yet at State Street. Need to have investment of time for co-planning, co-teaching and co-assessing.</p> <p>Jason Schultz confirmed we would need additional instructors. Mr. Pointer-Mace stated yes, right now we would need 0.5 more special education teacher for State Street.</p> <p>Krista Claypool asked a question about pursuing additional Chromebooks and smartboards for State Street. Mr. Myles confirmed that is one of our aspirational goals, but we are currently focused heavily on the changes identified in connection with the charter renewal and technology is not the first level manner to address that. Mitch Hartman explained his view that finding funding for additional Chromebooks is a better use of funds than smart boards.</p>
<p>4. Executive Director Performance Review – Quarterly Progress Check-In</p>	<p>Mr. Myles gave a brief update on his own performance review process. Began with a foundational question of whether we need an Executive Director for all of Woodlands. Right now, 85% of his time is spent as the Principal of State Street and working on the continued growth and improvement of State Street. Bluemound is performing well.</p> <p>Jason Schultz noted that the Board’s expectation when we performed the search for an Executive Director was that the majority of time would be spent as Principal.</p> <p>Mr. Myles questioned whether a better structure would be to have a Vice Principal at each school rather than the current cross-over positions.</p> <p>Mr. Myles discussed his efforts to achieve certain of the goals set forth in the rubric.</p> <p>Mr. Myles circulated a Fund Development Timeline. His request is that each Board member provide five quality contacts for the school to reach out to with a personalized message about Woodlands. Requesting names by December 5th. Mr. Myles and Katelyn Kastern will provide letters and envelopes and would like the Board members to send the letters with a personal note by Dec. 15th. The Fund</p>

	Development team will add the contacts to the data base for developing future donors, and networking for future referrals.
5. Board Committees	Jason Schultz reported that he and Chair Sue Bay reviewed all responses from the Trustees and developed a proposed makeup for all Committees. They are striving to respect the wishes and strengths of the Board members. Jason will circulate the proposed Committees and invites any feedback or suggested amendments.
6. 2018 Board Meeting Schedule	<p>Due to conflicts, we need to move our 2019 meetings from the third Thursday to the third Tuesday of the month. The revised dates are::</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Thursday 1/25/18 <input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday 1/23/18 o Thursday 2/22/18 <input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday 2/20/18 o Thursday 3/29/18 <input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday 3/27/18 o Thursday 4/26/18 <input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday 4/24/18 <p>The following meetings will remain as previously scheduled:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Thursday 5/17/18 (Annual Meeting) o Thursday 6/28/18
7. Good News	<p>Mr. Myles reported that State Street completed a terrific Professional Development Math Workshop last week, led by Patty Rodgers, Kathy Simonis and Mitch Hartman.</p> <p>Ms. Rodgers reported that the Bluemound conference bake sale was a huge hit, raising over \$1,100.</p>
8. Adjourn	Peter Richardson moved to adjourn, second by Krista Claypool, the motion passed unanimously.

Prepared by: Matt O’Neill