

Scattergood Friends School
School Committee Meeting
Open Session Minutes – 3 November 2018

Mission Statement

Scattergood Friends School challenges students with a college-preparatory curriculum, farm experience, a shared work program, and community living in the spirit of Quaker faith.

Present: Laël Gatewood, Bob Winkleblack, Lucy Marsh, Ruth Hampton (clerk), Karen Greenler, Rebecca Bergus, Kent Tjossem, Charlie Johnson, Russ Leckband, Ginny Winsor, Tom Wahl, Debbie Galusha, Phil Henderson

Regrets: Ann Robinson, Dan Schlitt, Bob Winchell, Roy Helm

Staff Present: Thomas Weber, Tim Schulte, Amy King Weber, Jenn Jansen, Paul Pressler, Rachel Button, Kim Jones

Friends settled into silent worship in a timely manner. The clerk read a message:

“I will love the light for it shows me the way. Yet I will endure the darkness for it shows me the stars.”

– Og Mandino

Because this was our retreat meeting, the subcommittee reports did not review the written reports and only additional comments were relayed.

Admissions – There has been lots of work to improve the summer camps and the camps’ enrollments. Questions about the middle school were postponed until that discussion.

Academic – The committee enjoyed hearing about the new programs from Paul and discussed how the committee could provide resources. It was a good conversation.

Development – We are well ahead of last year in fundraising, with about \$135,000 brought in so far in a mix of operations, scholarship and annuals funds. Two strong candidates for the development coordinator are being interviewed.

HR – The Head survey will come out before winter break.

Farm – The donkeys are in the donkey dorms, but they are escape artists! The shelter is a repurposed chicken coop which served as a carpentry project for the students.

Facilities – The committee met and provided feedback for Tim. There are no current crises.

Spiritual and Community Life - Students are exhausted after Scattergood Day and spirits are stretched thin. November is a time of year that may require some additional attention as it’s a long stretch until Thanksgiving. Scattergood Weekend and Harvest Festival went very well and was a lot of fun.

Consultation and Finance – The school is now going through about \$130,000/month. Payroll is higher due to the costs of a Licensed Counselor, adding some admissions assistance, and other small adjustments. Health insurance is a moving target because we don’t know the insurance needs of new staff before hiring them. Tech costs are higher due to rolling over some costs from last year. The administration needs to assess the costs of hosting Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative) and see if the amount charged needs to be increased. We have not yet touched our Reserve Fund (Tabor Estate money) nor have we any line of credit with the bank, though we will probably need to borrow some from one or both accounts in spring. Cash flow is as healthy as it’s been in years.

MINUTE: We accept the Operating Statement of 10/30/18.

MINUTE: We approve the minutes, open and closed, of 9/22/2018 with minor adjustments.

Head Report – The ISACS reaccreditation team visit went well. Their recommendation won't be available until February, but it seems likely that it will be positive, and we will be granted the three-year extension. The visiting heads were convinced that we are fulfilling the mission and their major concern was that we need to be willing to take some significant risks to solve our enrollment crisis because our school is so important and worth saving. They recommended tripling our Admissions budget to this end. Other recommendations included developing fuller curricular scope and sequence documents, which is an issue not fully completed since our last accreditation report. Administration has begun working on this in earnest. The visiting heads were impressed by our students' openness and ability to talk about the school. In order to pursue their recommendations, it may be necessary to increase our fundraising or even develop a capital campaign.

Note: It might be useful to host another survey of constituents, since the last one was in January 2017. ISACS normally does this, but perhaps we can administer one ourselves.

A more robust alumni organization continues to be a need. The new development person will be tasked with acting as a liaison and helping to invigorate the alumni group that exists.

There is no movement on the issue of the sprinklers. There are many bureaucratic levels to work on and the way forward may change after midterm elections. The Fire Marshal did visit the school and was happy with the school's work. It's important to keep this relationship transparent and positive.

We adjourned to the Social Studies room to view a PowerPoint presentation about the Middle School project. Thomas will send out the PowerPoint. The committee working on this include Thomas, Dana, Paul, Jenn, Mark, and an outside consultant from Cedar Rapids. The proposed Mission Statement for the middle school is:

“We provide young people with a living laboratory and a healthy environment to promote their personal and academic growth while encouraging them to explore the world with compassion.”

This statement works as a compass and is compatible with the high school mission statement. There are several working groups: marketing and admission, curriculum, physical plant, transportation, administration and operations, business planning. There is a potential architect though Thomas will put out an RFP. There are two siting options for the permanent classroom building and one for the temporary classroom. For the temporary classroom, the storm shelter issue can be addressed by bringing the middle school students to the main campus when there are watch conditions, prior to the warning stage. There was a brief discussion of sustainability issues regarding the permanent building. These are part of the consideration of the subcommittee working on physical plant.

After brunch, we moved into our retreat topic which was understanding race and implicit bias. Shirley Scritchfield from Penn Valley Mtg graciously led the retreat. We look forward to meeting again 12 January 2019 at Scattergood Friends School, God willing.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Greenler
Recording clerk