



The Emerge School for Autism

Minutes

Board Meeting

Date and Time

Wednesday June 12, 2019 at 12:00 PM

Location

7784 Innovation Park Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70820

Directors Present

A. Meyer, C. Blaize, M. Juneau, S. Broome, S. Waguespack

Directors Absent

E. Jones-Morgan, J. Perrault, R. Pettit, R. Thibodeaux

Guests Present

L. Bozard, M. Leger, Melissa Fox, S. Jones, Tyler Litt

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance and Guests

B. Call the Meeting to Order

M. Juneau called a meeting of the board of directors of The Emerge School for Autism to order on Wednesday Jun 12, 2019 at 12:18 PM.

C. Approve Minutes

C. Blaize made a motion to approve minutes from the Board Meeting on 05-08-19 Board Meeting on 05-08-19.

A. Meyer seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

D. Approve Previous Minutes

A. Meyer made a motion to approve minutes from the Board Meeting on 04-10-19 Board Meeting on 04-10-19.

M. Juneau seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

E. Approve Previous Minutes

S. Waguespack made a motion to approve minutes from the Board Meeting on 03-13-19 Board Meeting on 03-13-19.

C. Blaize seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

F. Approve Previous Minutes

S. Broome made a motion to approve minutes from the Board Meeting on 08-08-18 Board Meeting on 08-08-18.

C. Blaize seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

G. Approve Previous Minutes

M. Juneau made a motion to approve minutes from the Board Meeting on 07-18-18 Board Meeting on 07-18-18.

C. Blaize seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

II. Finance

A. Budget Update

Melissa Fox

- Packets have been provided for 19-20 school year budget.

- Base Funding- \$451,000 for 30 students
details in packet

MFP is not final just assumptions, so this may shift and change

- Federal Entitlement- Title I funding may go down due to an increase in schools in the district. Based on prior year enrollment.

- Philanthropy/Other Income- Need \$349,000

Leigh- That amount gets us to 0 not 5% correct.

Melissa- No that gets you to 4%

Leigh- \$100,00 FFE we realized there is still a \$50,000 in our account that is restricted. So we will actually only need \$50,000.

Melissa J.- The school has a restricted amount from Charles Lamar. That \$50,000 is to be utilized to purchase the FFE package.

Melissa Fox- That was not deferred so it would have already been recognized on the books.

Melissa J.- It was two separate payments.

Melissa Fox- It has already been recognized. So the foundation will only provide \$50,000 instead of the \$100,000.

Melissa J. - Can you bring in the prior year fund balance from the year before. And bring in the restricted gift.

Melissa Fox- I can make that deferred revenue and that will lower your current need.

Melissa Fox- It would be on the deferred revenue if it had been restricted. If you look at page 6 if it would have been deferred revenue it would have been booked on June 30th. The only thing we've deferred is \$10,000.

Melissa J.- On page 5 does that philanthropy does that have the Charles Lamar?

Melissa Fox- That does not include that. It was brought over as a net.

Melissa J- The biggest question on the table is the relationship between the school and the foundation and the amount of philanthropy needed needs to be discussed. It can not be assumed that the foundation can fund the full amount for the school. So the question is what is the actual number of need and whether that can be realized.

Melissa Fox- The prior books, who maintains these?

Melissa J.- What I'm understanding is based on projected net surplus we could use that to offset some of that \$449 deficit.

Melissa Fox- No. We could pull it in at the very bottom and show offset. At the bottom line I can bring over your fund balance and take out \$50,000 and do that.

Charles- The question is if we bring \$50,000 for proposed budget purposes it will be net same.

Melissa J.- Would y'all like to go ahead and do that?

Sarah- If you do need to move that over do we need to put the contingency in?

Melissa Fox- Yes.

Sarah- If we use the cash reserve this year the budget for next year would have to include the cash reserve. So there's a potential increase for the MFP. There was a 1.75 increase plus \$1000 on the table so trying to determine how they're going to work out. The fund balance should be used for MFP mostly.

Melissa Fox- So y'all want me to reduce the emerge foundation by \$50,000

Melissa J.- I'm going to turn it over to Shelton.

Shelton- The week after the 4th of July we'll call a special board meeting and Leigh and JP will present to our board to determine if this request is reasonable to be raised. After the foundation board meets we will provide feedback.

Melissa Fox- It is still going to be a need of 349,000 plus the 50?

Shelton- That is not clear at this point. Our Emerge Foundation will have to meet and determine if that full amount can be raised.

Sarah- I would like to go line by line but a broader conversation may be needed to discuss long term sustainability. My understanding is that the agreement with EBR for the separate behavioral services contract to make the school more sustainable. Do you foresee a change in this model that would disrupt this model. At some point the school would reach a place that would no longer be feasible. Is there a different path?

Leigh- I think there are several options. We did just meet to address this. Our expenses are almost identical. The salaries are difficult. There is a limited amount to what we can do. I feel that for long term sustainability we need to look at discussing with EBR tiered funding.

Melissa J.- Just to clarify. The center has a professional services contract for OT, SLP. It's a direct contract that at the same rate we've had approved for the next 2 years. Then the behavioral health piece meaning ABA. The emerge center provides ABA to the children in the school that is the healthcare piece. They clarified that schools can have a Behavior Analyst in the schools to provide the services but is separate from the IEP. What Leigh is alluding to is meeting with that team to see if there is opportunity for a group billable code to be used. So reducing the personnel expense for the class. The other issue is the number of students in each class. There are currently 8 in each class.

Leigh- We felt 10 was too many so now we're looking at some flexibility within that model.

Sarah- That seems like that could pull. I would love to know more about APE but ultimately you're looking at salaries that are going to continue to throw the budget out of whack.

Melissa J.- They are looking at the group code but we haven't had a lot of time to reflect on this deficit. There is now also another board to consider.

Sarah- I would love to hear your take on if there is a number or an amount of time that the foundation would be comfortable. As part of an annual campaign.

Shelton- No there is not a number. We have not gotten to that level and it's hard to answer because we also are fundraising for the center. We're having within the growth campaign to raise \$400,00 in excess that could be stretched along the years. I really cant give you a number.

Melissa Fox- We do have to do a 5 year budget. So we could determine the need.

Stephen- Some of this number should not be a surprise. But we knew when we discussed the opening of this school that this would happen, but we need to understand what it means if the deficit continues to grow.

Melissa J.- This number seems high to be even.

Shelton- We have worked extremely hard to find grants for public operating and it has been very difficult. So the grants we're looking at now are not significant.

Melissa J.- I wanted to look at the audit cost. \$19,000 seemed high and trying to move that down.

Melissa Fox- That cost is the 2% management fee, your audit is \$8500. We can try to go back and get more quotes. The district admin fee is \$9,000.

Sarah- I would like to see us move forward on a plan that brings in some additional revenue outside of philanthropy. What kind of support would you need to start to dive deeper into that.

Leigh- I think that a committee to talk through what can we do and what skill sets can we utilize.

Melissa J.- Do you think we can apply for that. I think we can try to get a meeting with EBR and try to understand how to get certain kids that could meet the high cost allocation needs.

Alice- Do we know how many kids EBR put up?

Leigh- 18. They've removed the cap but we can put up at least 2.

Melissa J.- We have had good success with EBR general council to assist us and to begin the conversation.

Stephen- I don't understand the application process what would be the issue?

Sarah- The only risk would be that statewide the state did not utilize the full high cost pull.

Leigh- Yes however when we talked to people at the state they indicated that there may be concerns for funding.

Melissa J.- We don't know that the general counsel would have any issue.

Leigh- My concern is that this is only on piece of the puzzle and not necessarily something we can count on and our most intense kids also spend a portion of their day in ABA so we cant account for that in the cost to educate them.

Melissa Fox- Have y'all had any conversations about the IDEA funding.

Sarah- It might make sense to make an advisory committee made up of members of this board and others to look at a long term sustainability plan. It would then be up to the board to decide which path to take.

Melissa J.- I agree that that would be a very good pathway to look at that again.

Sarah- And to put a very firm timeline. It's not fair to continue to tell families that we can continue to do this when we cant.

Melissa Fox- I would be curious to ask for the IDEA budget to ask what amount was allocated and what was received. I'm not sure who the contact person is but you can compare to other districts and see if they're doing the right allocations.

Melissa J.- I know that the IDEA funding is a complicated issue.

Leigh- I will send out an email to get some nominations for the committee.

Sarah- Possibly the foundation could lobby for some free legal hours of something along those lines.

B. 2019-2020 Budget

III. Planning Ahead

A. Next Year's Location

The location is Polk and the lease has been signed. It's been a great process. The move in date in July 8th. IT has been sorted out. There is some opportunity within the district.

B.

2019-2020 Board Meeting Dates

C. Growth Campaign Update

Growth Campaign-

Shelton- We secured a \$20,000 anonymous donation. We are hoping to receive a \$100,000 granted. We held our ground breaking last week.

IV. Other Business

A. New Board Members

Melissa Miller is one of our proposed board members. A very passionate advocate and has a child with autism. She has a wealth of knowledge in HR.

Jeremy Jones previously worked with four sector but he was very interesetd in joinging.

A. Meyer made a motion to approve Melissa Miller as a board member.

S. Broome seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

C. Blaize made a motion to approve Jeremy Jones to board.

S. Waguespack seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

V. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

S. Waguespack made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

A. Meyer seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 1:25 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

M. Juneau