

OLD MISSION PENINSULA SCHOOL

Special Board Meeting – Minutes

Friday, March 5, 2021 10:00am

Meeting held at:

Via Zoom at

<https://zoom.us/j/6382772649?pwd=dUExaW5YckVKMDZqeFB5NnhYNFhqZz09>

Meeting ID: 638 277 2649 Passcode: 3SherD

1. CALL TO ORDER

Amanda Igra called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Roll call was held.

The following board members were present: Amanda Igra (President), Becky Seah (Vice-President), Susie Shipman (Secretary/Treasurer) Mike Smiley, Mike Jager and Geoff Streit.

Non-Board Members Attending:

Danielle Clayton and Renee Kolle, OMPS Co-Principals

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion made by Seah and supported by Streit to approve the agenda as presented.

Roll call vote: Igra: yes, Seah: yes, Shipman: yes, Smiley: yes, Jager: yes, Streit: yes. The motion was approved.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

Scott Gorman wanted to note for the record that his wife Courtney Gorman had sent a letter to the board.

5. BUSINESS

a. 2021-2022 Seat Schedule

The board continued discussion of the following seat schedule options from the tabled item at the February 19, 2021 Board Meeting:

Kindergarten: 36		Kindergarten:36
Grade 1: 36		Grade 1: 36
Grade 2: 36		Grade 2: 36
Grade 3: 44	or	Grade 3: 44
Grade 4: 44		Grade 4: 44
Grade 5: 44		Grade 5: 44
Grade 6: no		Grade 6: 44

Igra asked Clayton to summarize the recommendation being made by school leadership to offer K to Grade 5 [note: Pre-K is a separate program].

Clayton provided the following statement prepared by herself and Kolle:

Based on a collection of factors, Renee and I are strongly recommending that a seat schedule for K-5 be approved without 6th grade. We have looked at the numbers with [OMPS' accountant], and we continue to strongly believe that a minimum of 10 students is needed in order to progress with 6th grade. This builds in a minimal attrition factor and allows OMPS to financially provide the basic resources to 6th grade that we are able to afford for the elementary grades.

That did not happen during OMPS's re-enrollment period. We do not foresee additional students enrolling at OMPS in a 6th grade option for the next school year, and shouldn't leave families hanging with the

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“let’s wait and see” theory. Planning for middle school begins now, and if we don’t have the resources and financial stability to move forward right now, OMPS should wait for a time when the 5th grade class size is large enough that losing 50% of the students would still put us above the minimum goal without financial worries. This year we have a confirmed 8 students, which includes in that number 2 students receiving advanced enrollment paperwork from other middle schools in the mail here at school. We would only receive this paperwork if students are actively engaging in the enrollment process of another school.

We completely understand the strong desire for some parents to continue the 6th grade next year, but OMPS needs to work on building a 6th grade option that is competitive with other schools, in order to slow the middle school exit from so many families. In the different committees we participate in, discussions about making OMPS the best that it can be is always the main topic. We are striving and I believe working towards thriving in that area from the elementary perspective. Why would we aim for any less than that in the 6th grade? OMPS doesn’t just want a 6th grade. OMPS wants a competitive, unique opportunity to provide our families that allows students to experience something they cannot receive elsewhere. This takes time, planning and patience. Right now, we cannot provide additional opportunities for these upcoming 6th grade students that would allow us to even begin offering some of the opportunities that students receive elsewhere at the 6th grade level.

It is our strong recommendation to approve a K-5 opportunity at OMPS until we have two substantially sized 5th grade classes to support a higher 6th grade retention. A middle school committee should begin this year with motivated individuals that are willing to lead a multi year project to work towards this community goal so when the time is right, OMPS is ready and financially prepared to make that big step that can include unique experiences. We also recommend that the final seat schedule for next year be confirmed today to allow for adequate planning time for OMPS staff and parents to prepare for the 2021-22 school year.

Shipman noted that the discussion about offering K-5 and not 6th Grade is a recent one, and earlier this school year this was not being considered. Shipman prefers to offer 6th Grade as our current 5th Grade families had been expecting, and feels that the financial deficit could be managed. Shipman sees more harm in not offering 6th Grade than in offering it for 2021-2022. Shipman respects the recommendation of leadership, but also feels that the school leadership and staff team have shown they excel in managing challenges and providing great outcomes for kids, and that they would do so again under whichever seat schedule is approved today.

Seah expresses that she trusts the analysis and recommendation of the leadership team and agrees that without enough students to support 6th Grade, the other grades are negatively impacted. Seah notes that future class sizes are expected to support expansion in coming years.

Jager is disappointed that the work of the committee wasn’t focused on maintaining 6th Grade, but was focused on future expansion and feels the committee would have been effective in maintaining a 6th Grade class for the coming year if they’d had the opportunity to make this their focus.

Streit thanks the parents who have reached out. Streit stated that he looked at the cost of offering 6th Grade with regard to multiple factors including the physical plant space, curriculum, and impacts on other grades. Streit believes that decisions need to be made in the best interest of the kids, and that this may not make every parent happy, and he noted that it is important to trust the recommendation of school leadership in this decision as they are most familiar with the needs of OMPS kids.

Smiley expressed agreement with factors as outlined in the leadership recommendation and supports a K-5 offering.

Igra reiterated that going forward with 6th Grade for the coming year would be a financial loss and that she believes in this decision it is important to trust the leadership recommendation.

Motion made by Streit and supported by Smiley to approve the 2021-2022 Seat Schedule for K-5th Grade as presented.

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Roll call vote: Igra: yes, Seah: yes, Shipman: no, Smiley: yes, Jager: no, Streit: yes. The motion was approved.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Jen Wilson – Asked about post-meeting communication to families to share the decision on 6th Grade for the 2021-2022 School Year.

Scott Gorman – Is very pleased with leadership of school and not pleased with leadership of board, noting that communication around this issue has been poor which is difficult because parents want to make informed decisions for their children.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Seah and supported by Streit.

Roll call vote: Igra: yes, Seah: yes, Shipman: yes, Smiley: yes, Jager: yes, Streit: yes. The motion was approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:51 a.m.



Board Secretary