



Board Meeting Minutes

August 24, 2020 – 6:00pm

The mission of Grand Peak Academy is to develop students of great character, who are culturally aware, accepting of diversity, appreciators of history, arts, mathematics, and sciences, and are prepared to meet the challenges of the world today. We value parental partnership through direct involvement in classroom and school activities and community stewardship through our support of local charities and hosting of community events.

The Board shall use the Mission and the Plan for Success (Academic Success, Economic Sustainability and Character Growth) as the filter for all decision making.

1. **Call to Order** (6:04pm) –
2. **Pledge of Allegiance** –
3. **Mission Statement** –
4. **Roll Call** (6:04pm) – Chris Dempsey (President), Brandon Henry (Vice President), Steven Teague (Secretary), Jen Reishus (Treasurer), Scott Hunter (Principal), Nicole Parker (Assistant Principal), Melissa Maldonado (Assistant Principal), Valerie O'Brien (Business Manager), Marcia Billingsley (Registrar)
5. **Approval of August 24, 2020 Board Agenda** (6:05pm) – Brandon motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Stephen seconded the motion. Motion passes 4-0
6. **Approval of August 11, 2020 Board Meeting Minutes** (6:06pm) – Brandon motioned to approve the meeting minutes as presented. Steven seconded. Motion passes 4-0
7. **Comments from the Public** (6:06pm) – None
8. **PTO Update** (6:07pm) – First executive meeting was held today. Working on getting the budget squared away. Have some challenges this year with having to do virtual events. There are some really great ideas. Scott and Marcia are working on getting a list together of the needs of the staff. Also working on getting dates together for the executive and general meetings as well as events. Its all coming together. Looking at setting up a platform for the members to sign up and pay their dues.
9. **Board Dashboard (Principals' Report)** (6:11pm) – Introducing Nicole Parker and Melissa Maldonado, they have jumped in and structured the start of school really nicely. We have on-boarded some fabulous new teachers this year. We have staff sending out bios to families. We are focused on staff culture, created a staff social contract. The last staff meeting we broke into groups and discussed how each other want to be treated and deal with contract. The next staff meeting we will finalize the contract. We have also put into place a week at a glance that goes out every Friday, it highlights important dates, meetings and other reminders. We also highlight birthdays and coffee bean shout-outs to recognize the positives that we are seeing in the building. We are looking to get more feedback from staff on how to run the core virtues this year. Possibly for teachers and peers to nominate for a total of 2 students per classroom each month. Still in the process of finalizing that. Going forward we will encourage teachers to have a classroom social contract. We have a goal of investing in the "Capturing Kids Hearts" program but are implementing small parts of it now prior to the huge investment that will be needed. Scott reviewed that we have masks for the kids and adults if needed. We received our first shipment of N95 masks from the state, we will receive them once a week for 8-10 weeks. We currently have 730 students at our best estimate. We are having a little challenge with enrollment but there are about 10 we do not know about. That number will help us with some budgeting decisions so that we can purchase some electroic resources that we have been holding off on. Some students have applied just recently and have not started yet. Some are out of

town but have not engaged yet. We have talked to almost all of them and have said they are coming but we have not seen engagement yet. In the past we have seen much high numbers in the first week so we are encouraged by that number. Marcia highlighted that some are previous students, some are new. Some have unexcused absences. The online attendance piece might take us a little longer to get those last few engaged. At least half the 10 have had contact with the teachers, but day to day there has been no contact yet. Typically, families from central and south America sometimes start delayed as well. We have not seen as much of that this year, but that is one possibility. Attendance is being tracked for them as unexcused absences. We have not received any guidance from the district yet on truancy yet. Last year with elearning we did not continue with truancy but that will likely be important this year. Also with attendance for middle school, if a child drops from a meeting a child might be marked absent due to tech difficulties. We are going back and fixing if a parent contacts. Families and kids are all getting better at the log in process, teachers are getting better at wrapping their head around the attendance. Brandon mentioned a classroom agenda said a specific time and the teacher did not show, this morning a parent jumped in during the class. We need to remind parents to not handle issues such as that during a class period. Chris asked about the section about recent professional development listed on the dashboard, it shows a lot of outdated information. For future please have current year only. Asked about books that were purchased for staff development. Scott reviewed that this particular book by Marzano was purchased in the spring by Serena as a book to read for the summer. Chris wondered if there is a book club program created around it. Scott said Serena did not create any structure around it but we certainly can go forward. Where it is most appropriate is our team meetings and will go along with best practices in teaching as well. We have started to schedule those but its still early in the year, so that will probably get going in the next week or so. Questioned financial sustainability being outdated on the dashboard. This section needs to be updated. Scott mentioned that financial should be removed from the dashboard. Chris said either all together or all separated. Chris commented that the other section about financials seems to be outdated as well. Do we need a \$15k Spanish curriculum purchase. Scott said we do not need this now, Ms Granados has her own curriculum and is ready to go. We have engaged her with some electronic resources but textbooks are not needed, her way of teaching is conversational that does not require textbooks as much. Chris asked about the possibility of dropping SPED to save money, is that a consideration we are looking at? Has legality around the SPED program been considered? Scott said it would be creating an entire new infrastructure. It would take months to make that happen, and probably could not happen this year. It would be best to do a cost sharing with other charter schools, but that would take time to construct a system like that. Scott said that is sort of out there as a long term situation that could not be implemented quickly. Chris commented that we should make cutting staff the absolutely last resort. Brandon asked about cutting PD as a possibility, and wondered if there are other areas that could be cut besides butting training and sacrificing the core of our school with training staff. Steven Teague wondered how many chromebooks we ended up losing or having damaged. Scott said there were some broken and some families kept them for the fall but we do not have a total count. Steven said if we are doing our best to keep track of them, through inventory, that could help our budget as well. Scott said the chromebooks are hitting the end of their life cycle and are no longer supported anymore and need to be cycled out. We have been amping up to having a Chromebook for every student and now need to work on replacing some. They hit a level where they are not worth repairing. Brandon commented that PCs and Chromebooks are usually only good for 3 years max

10. Treasurer/Business Managers Trend Report (6:37pm) –

- 11. Marketing Update (6:48pm) –** Brandon commented that we have some ads running locally. We have the festival of trees coming up and needs to decide if we want to do that again this year. Brandon said we may not be gaining students but we are gaining social impact. We did some facebook advertising that landed us about 40 people going to the enrollment landing page but we do not know

if that gained us actual enrollments. For September we are retargeting the people that might be homeschooling right now that used to be GPA to try to get them to re-enroll prior to the count date. We have not had a marketing meeting yet, because of everything that has happened recently but it is planned very soon. Also, we updated a bunch of stuff on the website, including videos on how to use the teacher websites etc. Teachers are adding a bunch of contact on their websites as well as a searchable directory on the main webpage.

12. Discussion Items -

- a. **First Week Start of School and bringing 3rd – 5th Grades back to in person learning on Aug 31 (6:53pm)** – Chris asked, if people choose to go online and realize it is not working for them, will we let them back to in person learning at any time? Brandon asked since we did not have the entire group online when they made their choice, could we open it up to allow more to come in person next week? Scott said there are two systems running, online side and hybrid side which would require some data entry time. If there are just a couple that would be fairly easy, but it could be a challenge if there are a large number. Chris said if they come back next week they have to commit to it. Marcia commented that the district is drawing a hard line with their schools on the quarter deadline for in person and online. If we keep changing it will mess with the reporting to the state. We can take care of the grades piece on our side, but it is a lot to ask teachers to go back and forth. The attendance piece burden will rely on the district if we switch mid-term. However, the 3rd-8th grade right now are all in one section, they have not been moved to the elearning section just yet. On Monday they will be switched over, after that date it will be more difficult to transfer. Marcia would prefer if they are going to change their mind, they do it before Friday. Marcia said of course we will allow some situations that are necessary, but the bulk should be handled by Friday until the quarter ends. Classes have been built based on those numbers and it could mean we have to rearrange class lists again if we have a rush of people coming back in person. Scott said that would require calling parents and notifying them that their teachers have changed etc. Chris commented that we are not trying to give a better education to online or in person, our goal is to provide a stellar education to everybody across the board. Brandon asked if we could update how the first week went. Melissa said it went really well, families and students were really excited. Kids are handling social distancing and masks really well. Scott commented that the biggest thing coming up is how to handle the masks in lost and found. Doris commented that we have not had to deal with the isolation room, but believes we will see it once 3rd-5th returns to in person. In October there will be an issue with coverage in the health room. D49 has started training a couple health aides. We have a para set up to assist in the health room. Melissa mentioned that we might want to update the arrival and departure plan once 3rd-5th returns. Nicole commented that we had some kinks to work out with the middle school schedule but those seem to be worked out now this week. Scott does want to improve the communication with parents that are online to hopefully make it more efficient and so they do not have to call into the office as much. Chris asked if adjusting the start time for 3rd-5th would help with starting them in person next week? Scott said the issue with that is siblings.
- b. **Athletics (7:11pm)** – Nicole is working with Colorado Military Academy to get us into a three team sports league this year. The athletic director at CMA has been in contact about inviting us into this league that he has just created called Colorado Springs Metro Middle School League. It was needed because the previous charter league has been full for a while. They do not have a practice facility so they have asked if they could use our facility for their practices as well as their games. Chris has been in contact with Colorado Springs Altitude volleyball to use our facility as well which will leave our facility very full. There

has been teacher concern if we are working so hard to cohort students only to allow them to all join together after school for sports so we have decided to hold off in the fall sports but still allow the league to use our facility. The athletic director heading up the league is looking to get more schools to join so there could be a larger league at some point. There are a lot of unknowns and things to be decided at this point. Nicole has a meeting with the athletic directors tomorrow night to discuss some of these issues. Steven asked how usage in the gym would affect the school overall if there is a covid case among one of those outside groups. Doris commented that it would depend on contact tracing. Nicole said if we were going to participate in volleyball and soccer for this season, that would require us to get a lot properly handled in too short of a time to turn it around in time. Marcia commented that physicals would be needed if it is called a league, vs the camps we used to hold, which would be really difficult for difficult to accomplish in that short of a time. Chris suggested we keep working towards basketball and we will evaluate the start as we get closer.

13. Action Items

- a. **Bringing 3rd – 5th Grades back to in person learning on Aug 31 (7:32pm)** – Brandon motioned to approve as presented. Teague seconded the motion. Chris does not see a reason to not continue with the plan moving forward, Chris feels the staff is ready to keep going forward as planned. Motion passes 4-0
 - b. **Athletics (7:33pm)** – No vote needed at this time
14. **Adjourn to Executive Session (7:37pm)** – Brandon motioned to adjourn to executive session, Steven seconded the motion. Motion passes 4-0.

C.R.S. § 24-6-402 (4)(f)(I) Personnel matters except if the employee who is the subject of the session has requested an open meeting, or if the personnel matter involves more than one employee, all of the employees have requested an open meeting. With respect to hearings held pursuant to the "Teacher Employment, Compensation, and Dismissal Act of 1990", article 63 of title 22, C.R.S., the provisions of section 22-63-302 (7) (a), C.R.S., shall govern in lieu of the provisions of this subsection (4).

15. **Board Member Communication (8:15pm)** – None
16. **Other Business (8:16pm)** – None
17. **Adjournment (8:16pm)** –