

**School of Technology and Arts I**  
**Steering Committee Minutes**  
**November 5th, 2019**

Officers

- President: Doris Faucheux
- Vice President: Jillian Hugo
- Secretary: Kirsten Gabriel
- Treasurer: Kerrie Moore
- Principal: Ben Burns
- Fundraising: Erika Cedergren and Jillian Hugo
- Teachers: Maria Henry and Mike Lawrence
- Yearbook: Leah Lachman and Ashley Patros-Kader
- District Wide Parent Rep: Dawn Wacek
- Volunteer Coordinator: Clarissa Grover
- Community Building: Judson Steinback

**Present:** *Mike Lawrence, Kirsten Gabriel, Doris Faucheux, Clarissa Grover, Ben Burns, Ashley Patros-Kader, Jillian Hugo, Leah Lachman, Renee Stowell, Dawn Wacek, Maria Henry.*

1. **Review and Approve October Minutes** – motioned by Clarissa Grover, seconded by Leah Lachman.
2. **Teacher Report** – Mike Lawrence
  - a. Open House – Publicity. We've started a penny drive; last time Mr. Mike's class raised \$1.27, and we're hoping to increase that amount. No book fair during Parent Teacher Conferences this year as that hasn't been productive. We're trying to keep the KVR cost at \$8 per person; Mrs. Fuller is working to help keep the cost at that level. Our second open mic is slated for this week. We'll have an open house in December to showcase what we do. Please invite your friends to join you! There will be a curated open mic at that event to illustrate some of what we do. We're getting ready to launch a marketing campaign, and the school/district staff will take the lead on that.
  - b. LEGO League – Mike is paid \$1,100 to run LEGO League; while the SOTA PTO covers \$250 of the costs to run the program, he'll cover the remaining cost. PTO will continue to fundraise the offset expenses.
  - c. Mike notes that the 4/5 grade camping trip in the Dells in May runs \$35/kid. The Madison trip will take place in April for 4/5 grade students. It was suggested that we ask parents if they would like to sponsor another kid.
  - d. More information is forthcoming regarding the La Crosse SOUP event and the

SOTA baked good donations.

### 3. Principal Report

a. **Strings Program Review** – one of the things the school staff has talked about is having regular conversation about the strings program. We're up for charter renewal this year, making this a great opportunity to revisit our strings and drama programs as well as the possibility of a tech ed program. We have .5 FTE for drama, as an FYI; we also have FTE allocated for strings. While tech ed would be great, it would require approval from the district level to get additional FTE allocated for that position. Update on strings for this year: they are now in the newly allocated multipurpose room instead of the basement. Conversation ensued and the following points came up:

- There was some conversation about how we gauge the effectiveness of the strings program.
- There were some requests for information regarding what the strings program is, what their learning outcomes/goals are, etc. so parents can share information with other prospective families.
- It was mentioned that if the goal of 1<sup>st</sup> grade music is exposure to different instruments and music, might it be possible to expose all students to each of the instruments.
- Fine Arts supervision has been piecemealed out across the district this year instead of having a point person leading a district-wide program, which may contribute to why we're in the position we are currently.

b. **Enrollment** - this year's enrollment is fairly consistent from last year to this year; as a district, we're down 211 students this year, and it's the 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> year in a row that we've lost students. If this continues, it will lead to some difficult decisions at a district level. Some factors that may contribute to declining enrollment are:

- this is the first year that more students have opted out of the La Crosse school district than have opted in (first year in recent history). Much of the decrease has been in students who have opted to enroll in virtual academies.
- La Crosse is an aging community, and there are fewer younger students in the La Crosse area.

### 4. GROW Update

a. There will be an Edible Schoolyard Celebration this Nov. 7<sup>th</sup> at 10 am. Please come as you're able!

### 5. Fundraising

a. Equal Exchange Order Sorting– while we have a few volunteers, we would like

more help bagging up orders for kids after school tomorrow (starting at 12noon or so). PTO members offered to assist, so volunteer needs are met at this time. It was reported that there were \$4,000 in sales through this fundraiser, resulting in approximately \$1,806 in profit.

- b. Box Tops update: Jillian reported that we have raised \$124 from physical box tops and the app reports \$34.20 in raised funds.
  - c. Karen Burnet has been working hard on the Scrip program, and \$679.39 has been raised to date.
6. **District-Wide Meeting Recap:** Dawn reported the following:
- There is a new social studies curriculum rolling out now; it was noted that five groups have been missing from the school social studies curriculum historically. Assessment of this curriculum will occur 2021.
  - There was conversation about the lagging enrollment and how 4k enrollment is among the lowest.
  - Conversation ensued at the DWM regarding the possibility of all day 4k.
  - Randy Nelson's last day is June 30, 2020. The school board is planning on hiring an outside firm for that search process.
  - September 1<sup>st</sup> will be the first day of school in 2020-2021.
  - The school levy was set November 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - Intro of new administrators.
  - Discussion ensued regarding 7 Rivers and LDI as their charters are up for review. Those schools are slated to move in April 2020. There's some conversation about whether virtual schooling might be a good option for the district.
7. **Rep. Reports**
- Yearbook club started today. 19 kiddos are involved. We are shortening the yearbook schedule wrapping things up in January, so we'll need materials from teachers before that point. Teachers: please remember to start taking pictures of your class!
8. **Last Update:**
- Last meeting, we talked about having a School Choice/Charter Day at the La Crosse Library. If it's just a SOTA day, we can coordinate it in-house. If it's all choice and charter, we probably need approval at the district level; the Library Youth Services Coordinator will be reaching out to the Director of Elementary Education.
9. Meeting adjourned at 7:30pm.