

Minutes of The Greenspire School
Board of Education - Special Meeting
March 14th, 2016
Unapproved

I. **Call to Order & Roll Call**

President Kurt Sanford called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was held in the Math Commons area. Present: Kurt Sanford, Meagan Batdorff, Gina Aranki, Raymond Minervini, Blythe Skarshaug, Matthew Missias, and Tara Ward.

II. **Changes or Additions to Agenda**

None

III. **Public Comment:**

None

IV. **Presentations:**

Future Growth:Staff Perspective: Kevin Kelly introduced the documents to all who were present. This included a map of the campus with potential future buildings and various budgets calculated with different levels of student numbers. He also introduced all staff and board members. Kurt Sanford thanked everyone for coming and he stated the board's number one goal is to educate students to be the best they can be in an environmental, project based school. The second goal is to be fiscally responsible, as we go through this process, what will be best in the long run to keep the school open.

Kelly Fransisco - Kelly spoke on the history of the school and emphasized what is most vital to preserve is the school's sense of community. The small size of the school allows us to create a community feeling at the school. She also gave examples of other qualities that our program offers staff and students and how those aspects will be affected by large growth. She asked the board to consider slow incremental growth, allowing us to preserve what is unique and important to our school's mission.

Eric Breithaupt - Eric asked the board to consider the option of renovating the buildings to accommodate the number of current students, allowing time to determine a long term plan for more growth. He stated that the staff feels the campus is at capacity- meaning the number of students and buildings on the campus is at maximum.

Phil Girard - Phil asked the board to consider another option; renovating the current buildings to allow for the growth of student numbers, with the option to split the school into two campuses in the future. The two campuses could potentially each have the same population as the school currently does, allowing us to preserve the small community feel we currently have. He noted that we are the number one user of the park and therefore we have the greatest impact on the park.

Susan Taylor - Susan spoke about her role at the school and how she felt that with large growth and rapid rise in student needs, the school could not continue the current model, While growth is necessary, she is concerned about aggressive growth. She stated how our small school benefits both students and teachers with having a voice and being able to connect and feel like a family. She feels small incremental growth or rethinking of moderate growth would be most beneficial to our unique students.

Claire Alexander - Claire discussed all of the aspects that make our school unique to middle school learners and our concern of the impact that a large quick expansion could have on these aspects. She feels that with small growth we could keep Greenspire from becoming just like all of the other schools.

Emily Ferguson - Emily shared her thoughts on how the sense of community is what makes our school great and having students be a part of our surrounding community is an important aspect of the school. This is becoming more challenging as we grow, it is hard to find places to visit that can accommodate our large group of students. Another example she gave was that none of the students could name all of the other students in their pod, something that the 8th graders commented they could always do before. She asked the board when thinking about the future growth of the school to keep our core values and what makes the school different from others in the forefront of their mind.

Sarah Payette - Sarah read the school mission, and addressed the part of purposeful connections between individuals and communities. She discussed the changes to morning council and the number of students in each pod. She discussed the challenges of whole school community building with a larger group of students. She also discussed the lower impact of guest speakers with a large group of students. The school is more limited in what it can do with a large group of students. The sense of community is diminished as we get more students and we work hard to preserve it. With large growth we will not be able to provide that core education experience that we advertise, and the student will not experience the community that we have been able to provide so far.

Corey Hansen - Corey stated he observes growth in nature as slow and purposeful. With fast growth he has seen two results, one is a collapse from within and the other is a slow dwindle and decay from around the edges. He raised the question of can we do more and better. We all want to constantly improve what we do. He would like to see a slow growth column in the budget. He discussed the outdoor education curriculum and how it has been impacted by the increase in students. There are certain things he just cannot do with a larger group of students that he could do with a small group. The larger groups leave a larger footprint on the land as well.

XI. Public Comment:

Public comments from parents and community members expressed their experiences with Greenspire and thoughts about the future.

XII. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by Missias, second by Bartdorff, voice vote; 6 ayes, 0 nays, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

Eric Breithaupt
Recording Secretary