

AGENDA

Board of Directors' Meeting Agenda

August 20, 2019

9 am to 11 am CST

August Topics:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identified School Official for MDE External User Access Recert. System• Contract approvals• School Calendar Updates• Contract Renewal Discussion• Monthly Reports
Purpose of the meeting:	To discuss necessary school business in order to ensure the proper and smooth running of NSA.
Please read:	NSA Mission: Academic achievement through study and exploration of the natural world. NSA Vision: Through its "Nature Immersion" curriculum, the Natural Science Academy will: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide an exemplary elementary science program• Cultivate and grow each student's connection to the natural world.• Foster creative and critical thinking.• Create and sustain a safe, supportive, nurturing community in which to learn, explore, and grow.
Location:	Natural Science Academy 920 Holley Ave., Suite 3 St. Paul Park, MN 55071 651/925-5050
Chairwoman:	Jennifer Raymer
Secretary:	Katrina Nichols
Treasurer:	Zach Fjelstad
Board Members	Caitlin Talarico, absent at 9:05, arrived at 9:10 Chance Theriault, to start in September post background check clearance.
Ex-Officio Present:	Kendra Hunding, Lead Teacher Traci LaFerriere, Business Manager
Attendees and visitors:	Talarico children

1 minute 9:05	Meeting Called to Order	Raymer
3 minutes	<p>Reading of the meeting purpose, NSA Mission Statement, and NSA Vision</p> <p>Approval of August 2019 Meeting Agenda</p> <p>Nichols moves to take discussion time off the consent items and approve the agenda with that change. Fjelstad seconds.</p>	Raymer
2 minutes	<p>Approval of July 2019 Meeting Minutes</p> <p>Fjelstad moves to approve the meeting minutes, Nichols seconds, all say aye.</p>	
TBD	<p>Visitor and Non-agenda Items</p> <p>(Each visitor will have 5 minutes to speak without comment or discussion from Board.)</p>	Raymer
	<p>Consent Item: Designation of Identified Official with Authority for the MDE External User Access Recertification System.</p> <p>Background: Currently Kendra Hunding. Must be reapproved yearly.</p> <p>Purpose: This person keeps track of who has what access to MDE secure reports for attendance, academics teacher qualifications, etc.</p> <p>Motion: To reapprove Ms. Hunding as the designated identified official for the MDE external user access recert. System.</p>	Hunding
	<p>Consent Item: Contract Approvals</p> <p>Purpose: Continuation of contracts for various key positions within NSA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total Networkx (Tech support) • Designs for Learning (Sped Director) 	Hunding

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- Business Manager (Traci LaFerriere)
 - NWEA renewal (MAP testing)
 - NSA Sign (Kendra Hunding)
 - iOWA (Kendra Hunding)

Motion: To approve the 2019/2020 school year contracts for Total Networkx, Designs for Learning, Business Manager, NWEA Renewal, Sign, and iOWA.

Consent Item: Approval of school calendar date changes.

Background: The district has updated their school calendar, which has impacted two dates on NSA's school calendar. Impacts to transportation, etc.

Motion: To approve the updated NSA calendar reflecting the two days that were impacted.

Talarico moves to approve, Fjelstad seconds, all say aye.

10 minutes

Discussion Item: Talk about meeting between authorizer, Kendra, and Jennifer.

Conversation centered on test scores and contract renewal, and the concerns that ACNW has with NSA. Raymer's takeaways are that we're going to have to figure out how as a school to embrace standardized testing and encourage teachers to prepare kids for standardized tests. No getting around it. Unless we come up with a robust assessment that we use for our projects—we need to have test scores reflect what we believe our students can do.

Raymer's takeaway 2: The board needs to take a more proactive standpoint on understanding teaching and learning and assessment. Inviting teachers to talk about assessments and lesson plans.

Fjelstad shares a concern that this is overstepping the board's boundary. Board role is to be Kendra's boss and Kendra's job is to oversee academics.

Raymer reiterates that the board is responsible for the academics of the institution. Asserts that the board is not getting into the minutiae.

Fjelstad suggests that the board should look at the curriculum map, and asserts that one of the things that differentiates NSA from the larger district is that teachers have autonomy. So, the board can view the curriculum map.

Raymer agrees that we need to keep this high level. Shares the concern that ACNW perceives that the board doesn't know what the teachers are doing. Wants to ensure the board can back up teachers.

Kate asks if this can look like board members visiting classrooms.

Raymer says she'd like to invite one teacher per month to board meetings to "show off" some of the assessments they're using and how things are going.

Fjelstad shares the concern that teachers are overtaxed as it is with after school events. Suggestion is to submit a newsletter instead of coming to the board.

Raymer says we're only asking to do that once.

Fjelstad says we'd have to revisit work agreements.

Raymer says part of this is also relationship building. Wants the teachers that aren't on the board to have a relationship with the board. Reasserts that the board needs to have more involvement in academics.

LaFerriere shares that we should start by adding academic discussions to our agenda and keeping it there.

Fjelstad and Hunding shares that from a teacher perspective, this is going to feel like extra work.

Hunding suggests Traci's idea of adding the agenda item is a good idea, and then a teacher board member can talk to teachers and bring what they have to say to the board.

Raymer reiterates that we as a board have to find a way to do things differently than we have already done it and engage all members of our community. We have to show that the board knows more than they do.

Fjelstad says he'd like to invite ACNW back to see what that looks like to them. Not in support of the board getting into the detail of classrooms. Concerned about fear mongering teachers, threatening their efficacy.

Raymer says she understands how we've always done it at believes in the school.

LaFerriere suggests that in the interest of moving on and revisiting this subject later, we have Nichols and Fjelstad report on assessments for a few months because they're already on the board.

Raymer says we'd talked about the board understanding more about academics and showing up to workshop week.

Fjelstad says that currently there's not board support for showing up at workshop week so far, states he doesn't support that idea.

LaFerriere says we have to be careful about the board being a direct link to teachers. It sounds like we're skipping over administration. Raymer affirms that the teachers report to Kendra. LaFerriere then says that Fjelstad and Nichols can bring teacher concerns to the board.

Raymer agrees that management should be top-down, but governance should be accessible.

Fjelstad moves to put an academics section to every agenda item going forward. Nichols seconds. All say aye.

50 minutes

Discussion Item: Review Renewal Contract with everyone's contributions.

Goals:

- Identify any areas that need improvement or completion.

The board

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- Determine if any additional Contract meetings need to be scheduled.

Nichols moves to schedule an additional meeting to approve the contract renewal. Fjelstad seconds.

Raymer moves to schedule a special meeting to approve the contract renewal application on September 10 from 4:15-4:30. Talarico seconds. All say aye.

Board discusses changes and additions to the renewal application and decides upon the direction for narratives in sections such as large-scale challenges the school foresees in the coming contract period and how to address them.

10 minutes

Monthly Reports

- a. Financial Report LaFerriere

Audit fieldwork completed. The final report due end of December; we're on target to meet the deadlines. The way we ended means we're about \$19,000 better than anticipated, which allows for flexibility if we unexpectedly lose a few students at the start of the school year. Not a lot of financial activity in July and August.

- b. Policy Committee Report Nichols

Nichols shares the committee has not met between meetings. Nichols also shares she would like to be removed from the committee as it is not something she feels she can commit to doing well at this time. Calls for new members. Talarico points out we have people interested in the board, and perhaps they'd be able to join this committee. LaFerriere says it's an access point to involvement because policy work can happen at home.

- c. Lead Teacher Report of Current Happenings Hunding

Met with landlords. The hallways is exclusively ours—far doors locked, limited traffic through. Something needs to be done

about the play space and needs to make it safer. Landlord will put down a playground grade substrate, probably pea gravel. Getting a directional sign at the front entrance of the activities building to help people find us. As for funeral guests traveling through the hallway to the elevator, the business manager has agreed to monitor the door in addition to Bryce (custodian)

Will redo the front sign, but putting the letters on the school would require a \$1,500 variance to have more than one sign in St. Paul Park, so that puts a stall on the letters on the side of the building right now.

Nichols asks if paying for the variance might be worth it.

Raymer suggests revisiting marketing in September when we know beginning of the year enrollment and see what sort of extra money we're working with for the year. Perhaps that could go to marketing.

2 minutes

Adjourn Meeting

Nichols moves to adjourn, Fjelstad seconds, meeting adjourned.

Additional Instruction:

Use this section for additional instructions, comments, or directions.

At next meeting, discuss:

Lead teacher evaluation to ensure alignment to this year's expectations (Packet items include blank evaluation documents)