

Scattergood Friends School  
School Committee Meeting  
Open Session Minutes – 12 January 2019  
Held via conference call, due to inclement weather

**Mission Statement**

**Scattergood Friends School challenges students with a college-preparatory curriculum, farm experience, a shared work program, and community living in the spirit of Quaker faith.**

**Present:** Rebecca Bergus, Debbie Galusha, Lael Gatewood, Karen Greenler, Ruth Hampton (clerk), Roy Helm, Charlie Johnson, Russ Leckband, Lucy Marsh, Ann Robinson, Dan Schlitt, Kent Tjossem, Tom Wahl, Bob Winchell, Ginny Winsor

**Regrets:** Phil Henderson

**Staff Present:** Thomas Weber, Jenn Jansen, Paul Pressler, Kim Jones. *Were there others?*

Friends settled into silent worship in a timely manner.

Subcommittees didn't report in order to keep the conference call of reasonable length.

**MINUTE: We approve the minutes of the School Committee meeting of 3 November 2018.**

**MINUTE: We accept the operating statement of 3 January 2019.**

Operating statement discussion: We will probably have a deficit at the end of the academic year that can be covered by a combination of the Taber estate money and a line of credit from the bank. We have zero balance on the line of credit, which is better than many of the previous years. Getting a major loan from a bank will be very difficult until we turn enrollment around because the bank wants repayment, not the collateral. We discussed some of the consequences of this concern further later in the meeting.

Thomas reported on the middle school project, saying it has become clear that more time is needed to construct a solid academic program. This is essential to selling the middle school to parents and building enrollment. Further, building the middle school program quickly will undermine the efforts to build the high school enrollments. Although there was much community interest, the solid commitment to enrollment was not forthcoming, likely because the program was not yet solidly constructed. Also, the middle school would not be expected to bring in much profit in the first years. It may be necessary to redo some marketplace polling to see if the middle school plan is still viable. Transportation is a key issue that needs to be solved and it's important to brand the school carefully. There is need to hire someone to build the educational program; that person has been located and will be brought on board soon.

Staff have decided to postpone the opening of the middle school for another year and return focus to building the high school enrollment and expanding the summer program, while continuing to pursue the middle school plan at a slower pace.

The summer program has potential to be a significant money maker besides bringing traffic to the school. It leverages our resources to provide a service where demand currently exceeds interest. The plan is to conduct two theme-oriented, extended day camps in June and July. One would be a more traditional summer camp (like Camp Wapsi) and the other a circus/art camp. There was concern that the staffing of the summer program could be a burden on current Scattergood staff. Paul responded that working the summer program would be entirely optional for staff and would be compensated beyond their regular salaries. Working with an organization that takes care of the registration would also ease the staff burden. University of Iowa students can be vetted and hired after spring break to fill in as needed. Paul foresees that the camps would be staffed half by Scattergood people and half by U of I students.

Thomas reported that discussions with Grinnell on the gap year program have been moving very slowly. Raynard Kington and the other administrator involved have been reticent to respond.

Admissions: Jenn and Thomas presented a new admissions plan that focuses on the Chicago area, where there is a higher number of families with full-pay capacity. The plan is to present Scattergood as a place that is safe, personal, less formal, accepting of diversity and of the whole student. Jenn has developed an extended budget to increase outreach to new families. One possibility is to develop a niche market among young people who are gender non-conforming, trans, or otherwise part of the LGBTQI+ community. Another area that Scattergood can develop is the ability to provide a safe and supportive space for with kids with learning disabilities. The enhanced budget, as recommended by ISACS, would allow Jenn to work with a consultant in the Chicago area who could help to target the messaging, as well as hiring part-time help to work on an increased media presence and develop new media pieces.

There is no way to fund the increased budget for admissions and summer school within the current budget. Given that pursuing a long-term loan is not very likely right now, the option available is to use part of the Taber money, of which there is about \$125,000. The expanded admissions budget would use about \$35,000 and the summer program budget would use about \$10,000. That would leave about \$80,000 to be used as cash reserves, reducing the reliance on our line of bank credit.

**MINUTE: We approve the use of \$35,000 of the Taber estate money on increased admissions work and \$10,000 for developing the summer program. The remainder of the estate money will remain as cash reserves.**

The meeting ended at 11:27 with a moment of silence.

We look forward to meeting again 16 March 2019 at Des Moines Valley Friends Meeting (4211 Grand Avenue DM), God willing.

Respectfully submitted,  
Karen Greenler  
Recording clerk

Future meetings: March 16 (Des Moines Valley Friends Meeting at 4211 Grand Avenue, DM), May 4, July 23 (Tuesday of Yearly Meeting)