



**(Japanese-American School of South East Michigan)**

**Board of Education Regular Meeting  
Monday, July 11, 2011  
6:00 – 8:30pm  
Hinoki International School, Livonia, MI**

The meeting was called to order at 6:10 pm.

**I. WELCOME, ROLL CALL, and REVIEW OF AGENDA**

Present: Marie Peterson, Steve Myers, Arnoud Lobbezoo, Anne Hooghart, Itaru Inoue, Ted Delphia, Yuichi Okada (PTO Chair), and 1 guest (Damon Stephens).

It was moved (Anne) and seconded (Arnoud) to approve the agenda, with several additions, including the issue of a parent serving on the board, volunteer communication management, school calendar, and proposed additions to policy. Motion passed unanimously.

**II. PUBLIC COMMENT**

The board welcomed a prospective parent, Mr. Damon Stephens of Dearborn Heights, who is considering enrolling his daughter this fall, and invited him to provide input verbally today, or via email later. He learned about tonight's meeting via the Hinoki website.

**III. DISPOSITION OF MINUTES**

It was moved (Arnoud) and seconded (Steve) to approve the minutes of the last board meeting, on June 27, 2011. Motion passed unanimously.

**IV. SCHOOL REPORT**

**1. STATUS; GENERAL UPDATES**

- a. Wrap-up of 2010-2011 fiscal year
  - i. The budget ended up almost exactly as presented and approved at the June 27 board meeting.
  - ii. Ted recently submitted several required documents/reports to our charter authorizer, Livonia Public Schools, which will be considering the re-authorization of the charter at their August 16 board meeting; Ted agreed to make (electronic) copies available to the board members.

- iii. Ted reminded the group that the legal “mission/vision” of the school, as recognized by the MDE, is the one in the charter contract. Marie recommended that we continue to refine our mission and vision, acknowledging that we are building from the existing mission/vision.
  - iv. It was noted that there may be mutual advantages to pursuing a multi-year contract with LPS at some point in the future.
  - v. A graduation ceremony is scheduled for 10:00am on Wed., July 20, at the school. Marie and Mr. Okada have been invited to speak there; other stakeholders are welcome to attend.
- b. School calendar
- i. Ted recently learned that the MDE will not count toward the required total any school dates between July 1 and Labor Day (Sept. 5 this year). He has applied for recognition as a “year-round school” and a waiver that would allow Hinoki to start school on Aug. 30, and is waiting to hear back.
  - ii. Ted distributed a copy of a proposed calendar for the 2011-2012 school year, including 3 trimesters, from 8/30/2011 to 6/29/2012. It features 200 regular school days (1100 hours) and 5 professional development days (30 hours), a 5-week summer break, and week-long breaks each for winter/Christmas and spring/Easter, plus some other holiday breaks.
- c. Enrollment counts
- i. Ted reported that the counts for kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade are holding steady at about 16 students each; about 1/3 of each class lists English as their primary language at home.
  - ii. There is an additional classroom that can be made available if needed next year for an additional kindergarten class, or as a teachers’ workroom/ *shokuinshitsu*, etc.
  - iii. It was mentioned that, at some US schools, teachers mail postcards to every student on their class list before the school year begins. Since this does not usually happen in Japan, it might make more sense to invite parents to come in and pick up “registration packets,” etc. Ted will consider these ideas/suggestions.
- d. Employment
- i. Ted reported that both of our current teachers are renewing their contracts for next year. 1 is officially employed by EMU, but that contract is modeled from the Hinoki contract for the other teacher. Contracts for the renewing teachers should be provided before they leave for visits to Japan this summer. Contracts for the new teachers will be provided later than that, but ASAP.
  - ii. In addition, 2 new teachers are being selected from the many applicants received; one would be expected to teach mostly in Japanese and the other to teach mostly in English.
  - iii. Over 200 applications were received for the English-teaching position. Considering that the application deadline was June 3, it might make sense to contact applicants and confirm that they are still interested before going forward. Steve volunteered to assist with this, if desired.

## 2. OUTREACH EFFORTS

- a. Ted noted that we are scheduled to participate in Channel Local 4's Education Fair at Oakland Mall on July 30 and 31 (Sat. & Sun.).
- b. Arnoud distributed color photocopies of 4 different "marketing" points or images of our school—Hinoki website, Facebook page, MetroParent website, and WDIV ClickOnDetroit.com—and asked about how consistent our message is. We need to make sure even concise messages are very precise and fully express what our school is.
- c. Ted mentioned that in June he received a quote and demo for parent-communication software that could help provide Hinoki parents with increased access to various types of information about how their students are doing in school. He is still in the process of evaluating it. Arnoud noted that it seems to be reasonably priced.
- d. Marie and Ted explained that Hinoki, in collaboration with Himawari, has offered monthly "chat circles" which offer socializing, cooking, and community-building time to parents of students.

## V. PTO REPORT

Mr. Okada, PTO Chair, distributed photocopies of the latest draft of the bylaws (in Japanese and English) for Hinoki's Parent-Teacher Organization. He mentioned that the PTO would like to make their official year end on July 31<sup>st</sup>, giving them one month after the official fiscal year to train incoming board members, etc. The PTO would like to have a potluck celebration with the Hinoki School Board during the late afternoon of Sat., August 27, in Novi, and would like to invite all current and new parents. Beginning in the 2011-2012 school year, the PTO meetings will need to provide a way that both Japanese-speakers and English-speakers can be fully involved.

## VI. EVALUATIONS

### 1. BOARD MEMBERS

- a. Arnoud recently distributed an Excel spreadsheet and, so far, has received 3 back. He expects to receive the remaining evaluations of board performance soon, so he can compile and report the data.

### 2. LEAD ADMINISTRATOR

- a. Consultant Rich Witkowski is expected to help develop a process for evaluation of our Lead Administrator. MDE and MASB have templates.
- b. Marie noted that all evaluations (staff, administrator, and board) are done in closed sessions. Our target date is August 2011.

## VII. PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MARKETING/RECRUITING

### 1. NEEDS/GOALS

- a. Marie noted that there are several marketing experts out there with expertise in marketing schools/educational establishments. Over the next few months,

it would be helpful to find a way to identify what some of them could offer our school and for how much.

2. PRESS

- a. Steve stressed the importance of all of us promoting Hinoki to the media, and he volunteered to “schmooze” with reporters, etc.

VIII. UPDATE ON POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT

1. The board has been provided with hard copies of a standard district policy template by National Charter School Institute (NCSI) workshop-leader Mr. Glenn Bachman. As discussed by Steve and Anne last month, in order to streamline the localization process for policy development, each section of the standard template should be assigned to one a board member for initial review and updates. It was moved (Steve) and seconded (Anne) that the following section assignments be approved:

- o 0000 Board Operating Policy - All
- o 1000 Administration - A. Lobbezoo
- o 2000 Program - A. Hooghart
- o 3000 Staff - I. Inoue
- o 4000 – purposely omitted; discontinued section
- o 5000 Students - M. Peterson
- o 6000 Finances - A. Lobbezoo
- o 7000 Property - S. Myers
- o 8000 Operations - A. Hooghart
- o 9000 Relations - S. Myers

2. It was moved (Steve) and seconded (Arnoud) that the proposed changes to the existing contract between Hinoki and the Educational Service Provider (MJBEF) that Steve recommended in a “first read” at the June 27 board meeting (pasted below, with changes highlighted) be shared with all relevant parties (MJBEF, etc.). Motion passed unanimously.

ARTICLE III FUNCTION OF MJBEF

C. Specific Functions.

9. Selection, employment and supervision of all teachers and staff... With regard to the Lead Administrator (Principal), MJBEF shall conduct an annual, arms-length performance evaluation (including self evaluations and third-party evaluations, as appropriate). Said evaluation shall in part be based on Academy Board Policies, mission statement, goals and objectives. Said evaluation shall be conducted annually during the summer vacation, beginning in 2012, and be presented by MJBEF in a report to the Board on/before September first of each year.

23. Implementation of an ongoing public relations strategy ... the community, provided however, that individual Board members shall not be precluded from developing privately networks beneficial to the Academy.

## F. Acquisition.

All acquisitions ... but not limited to: equipment, materials, supplies, intellectual property and access codes or passwords ...

Another issue is the legal name of the school. The current contract lists the original name, JASSEM, and the MDE still uses that name instead of Hinoki. We may want to add some notation such as “a.k.a. Hinoki International School.”

## VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Volunteer communication – After resigning in May, a former contracted consultant offered to assist Hinoki as a volunteer. On July 1, he sent an email to a set of stakeholders, including the board, administrators, PTO members, MJBEP members, and another consultant, indicating his disappointment in the lack of guidance he was provided by the school. Ted and Marie responded to him in separate emails. It may be appropriate to draft pertinent language regarding appropriate communication channels and content, and include it in section 9000 of the school policy.
2. Parent serving on the board – Now that Anne is considering sending her daughter to Hinoki this fall for kindergarten, she asked the board about the appropriateness of her serving on the board. It was agreed that, as long as she agrees to abstain from votes that might pose a conflict of interest, having a parent on the board would be welcomed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25pm.