

# Voyagers Expeditionary School Board Meeting Minutes

May 8, 2023

4:30 pm

## Mission

The mission of VES is to provide students with the necessary tools to lead meaningful and productive lives through hands-on learning, service to others, and environmental stewardship.

## Vision Statement

Starting at a level much deeper than just curriculum, the design of VES addresses the origins of learning and the fundamental well-being of students.

The foundation necessary to achieve the mission of our school is the establishment of a community of learners, composed of students, families, teachers, and staff who share the conviction that the best education takes place in an intentionally developed environment that nurtures, protects, challenges, and values every member of that community.

## GROUP MEETING NORMS

<i>Develop Group Norms 1x/year and refer back to them at the beginning of each meeting.</i>	
<i>Be on time and stay on task.</i>	<i>B</i>
<i>Operate with transparency.</i>	<i>O</i>
<i>Maintain confidentiality.</i>	<i>M</i>
<i>Be well prepared and fully present.</i>	<i>B</i>
<i>Maintain a sense of humor.</i>	<i>M</i>
<i>Be a solution-focused and system thinker.</i>	<i>B</i>
<i>Be respectful and non-judgmental (verbally and non-verbally)</i>	<i>B</i>

## ATTENDANCE

Jessica: x	John x
Ryan x	Kari x
Kathy x	Gene x
Heather x	Chari x

Visitor: Holly Schultz (observer)  
Kwe Humphrey and Waase

**MEETING MINUTES**

Time	Agenda Item/Topic	Discussion	Decision/Result	Action/Steps
4:30 PM		Jess called meeting to order		
4:31 PM	Meeting Agenda	Kari motion to approval Meeting Agenda. No discussion. Heather Seconds.	All approve.	
	No conflict of interest	None		
4:32 PM	Consent Agenda	John Motion to approve. Kari seconded, No questions or changes. Need to get Chari the board packet. Something went wrong with email account.	All approve.	
4:35 PM	Director's Report	Ryan: Busy month. Many trips and activities. Last week MAAP Stars Conference for students. Kathy, Mak, and Ryan brought 8 students. Will have more prep time for students next year. Kathy was impressed by how well the students acted and performed. Currently senior class is on the North Dakota Energy trip. Juniors went to Osprey Wild two weeks ago. Other highlights: testing is done with few issues, Earth Day week action summits were interrupted but we moved the final day to the following week. April e-week happened, as did Prom at Rail River Folk School. Upcoming: 6 staff going to P-cubed conference this week. May e-week in two weeks. Then graduation June 1 at 6 PM. John asked about summer school. Ryan says that is planned for July as is a trip to the Boundary Waters.		
4:49 PM	Public comments.	NA		
4:51	Discussion Items	First Reading of Smudging Policy presented by Kwe so that we have a plan for when and how smudging is allowed. We have at least 86% Native American students. Policy plan adapted from other schools with adjustments based on VES needs. Currently Kwe smudges when students request to do so. We have air purifiers and turn off fans if smudging occurs indoors.	Next reading will be Jun 12, 2023	
4:58 PM		Second Reading of 4.3.2: Group Health Insurance changes. We had some suggestions from Addie Washington at Osprey Wilds because	Next board meeting will	

5:13 PM		<p>we are looking at having more staff and need a different policy if we have 25 or more staff.</p> <p>22-23 Calendar Update: We found out that there is no transportation on Jun 1, 2023 . Bemidji Schools altered their calendar in August. We can end on May 31, 2023 with enough hours. What should June 1 be? If it is a staff day should we offer staff the opportunity to take PTO. Or should we use June 2 as a planning day, at least in part? Kathy: We probably need to do some planning and get our contract renewal underway.</p> <p>Graduation - John Eggers researched ‘Best charter schools in MN’. Many have high rates of graduation. One requires Latin. John has a list of 14 suggestions to increase graduation.</p> <p>Substance Abuse - John Eggers We spend a lot of money on drug prevention, so John created a 20 page report about the impact of substance abuse on high school graduation. His research indicates that students who graduate are less likely to use drugs.</p> <p>Red Lake Boys and Girls Club symposium - May 23 - John Eggers: asking VES to send students. It’s on the second day of e-week.</p>	<p>move it to an action item.</p> <p>June 1-2 are staff only days. School ends for students on May 31.</p> <p>Can VES send students?</p>	
5:21 PM	Finance Committee	<p>Met lasts Wednesday. Insurance rates went up 11%. That is roughly 12,500 next year. We may need to stop paying 100% for each staff policy. Cash in lieu of insurance will add another 8,000. We belong to the NW Service Co-op. Medica handles the policies. Deductables have changed twice in the last 7 years. Kathy and Chari will investigate. It is a good bargaining chip in terms of hiring. Chari has experience with health savings accounts. Jess knows about tax benefits for the school. HSAs have administrative fees, so we should consider that, too.</p>	<p>Need more information and discussion.</p>	
5:37 PM	Election Committee	<p>Kari, John, and Gene are all re-elected. Might need to be sworn in in July.</p>		
5:38 PM	Director Eval Committee	<p>Met earlier today where Becky and Alison explained to us what needs to happen and shared the rubric used last year that is based on Ryan’s job description.</p> <p>Jess explained process. We will hand out paper rubrics and then ask staff to complete a Google Form by May 19. Committee will meet on May 22 to aggregate data and share with the school</p>	<p>Hand out paper copies and share Google Form. Need to add a line to the</p>	

		board. The eval process with staff should take ten days. We could do this during the next board meeting or during special meeting. Process: start meeting open, then closed for director eval, then opened again. Jess will share information with Ryan.	next board meeting agenda.	
5:46 PM	Action items	Certify election results. John motions, Gene seconds. Discussion involved questions about term length.	All approved (minus Chari who had to leave.)	
5:47 PM		Approval of budget revision. Kari motions, John seconds. No further discussion.	All approve (minus Chari who had to leave.)	
5:48 PM		Approve revision to school calendar indicating that, due to lack of transportation via District 31, we cannot have students on June 1. June 1 and 2 changed to staff days. Gene motions. Kari seconds. No discussion.	All approve (minus Chari who had to leave.)	
5:50 PM		Next year school calendar. Kari motions to discuss. Gene seconds. Kari is concerned about losing in-class time for various activities because of e-weeks, MAAP conference, etc. Of 39 weeks during the school year, we will have 11 that are actual 5 day weeks. Kathy says we have only one 'open' day in case of weather. Heather is also worried about not having 'wiggle' days. Ryan says we have five e-learning days. Jess asks how many we need on average. We think this year it was two closures and several e-weeks. John wants to know what the LIT team said about the proposed calendar. LIT like less e-weeks and a spring break. Kari wants to know if we need to close school for the entire three days of MAAP. It is very expensive. Should we spend that much money? What are the opportunities for support staff? Can we make adjustments next year based on staff interest and desire to keep school open. Jess asks if the goal is to have the entire staff. Ryan likes the idea of sending everyone. John suggests alternating years. How do we compensate based on attendance? Kathy says we need a calendar by July. Jess motions to table this item until next month. Kari seconds.	Take a poll, ask staff what they like and make adjustments.  Postpone until June meeting.  All approve (minus Chari who had to leave.)	

6:03 PM		Jess Motion to adjourn. Kari second Motion.	All approve (minus Chari who had to leave.)	

**NEXT MEETING(S):** June 12 at 4:30 pm