

North Metro Flex Academy
Board of Trustees Meeting
2350 Helen Street
North St. Paul, MN 55109
July 13, 2016
4:15 p.m.

Board Members

Kathy Hanson
Gretchen Yeager – Absent
Stacy Yang
Debra Kranz
Sasha Denisova

Also Present

Terri Privette, Principal
Brynda Sengbusch, Office Manager
Marta Maldonado, Parent
Randy Brady, Parent

Agenda

Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 4:15 pm by Kathy Hanson with a quorum present.

Board President Opening Remarks

I stated for the record and for Marta, Randy and Terri to hear the Board's position: We are an all inclusive school and welcome all children, including those outside of our school district. Families outside of our district are welcome to enroll their children at NMFA at no cost to them. We cannot provide transportation to children outside of our district out of our financial responsibility to the children within our school district to provide free transportation. Families outside of our school district will have to provide their own transportation to NMFA and we can certainly help them figure out the options available to them. Over a year ago NMFA Board promised families free transportation within 10 miles of the school, even if the child lives outside of the district. 15 families enrolled outside of our district last year, knowing they would get free transportation. The school did not open last year. This year, the Board voted on using a school district bus and the school district boundary. When that Board decision was made, the 15 families who had remained enrolled with NMFA were promised free transportation as a gesture of goodwill and our commitment to their children and the children of our nearby community that supported our school from the onset.

There are currently no other interested or enrolled families or children outside of the district. These 15 families will get free transportation for their children every year they attend NMFA. Our response to families who ask about free transportation outside of the district circles right back to our inclusive policy. Everyone is welcome to enroll at NMFA and we are an all

inclusive school. We provide free transportation to all children within our school district. We have voted to provide free transportation to the 15 children who enrolled with NMFA a year ago who lived outside of our district. We grandfathered these 15 families into our free transportation because we promised them free transportation. We cannot offer other children outside of the district free transportation due to the NMFA Board approved Budget for 2016-17. Phrasing it as inclusive rather than exclusive is essential in creating a community school. NMFA Board reiterated that we are happy to extend our free transportation to these 15 families because they enrolled last year and were confident in our school. We want all communication about this matter to be framed in the positive rather than in the negative. We ARE extending our free transportation to these specific families. We ARE open for enrollment outside of the district. If Terri is privately approached by a family outside of the district that seriously wants to enroll their child at NMFA: We ARE open to discussions on a case by case basis only for the few (if any) available seats on the 18 passenger van.

Public Comment

Marta expressed her concern over the promise last year of the free transportation to families within a 10 mile radius of the school, regardless of living outside of the school district. Marta asked how she can position her explanation to the community outside of the district why “only” those 15 children are getting free transportation. Great discussion ensued over how to positively position this if the topic arises. NMFA Board Chair suggested to Marta and to NMFA School Principal that we tell those families outside of the district that NMFA is an all inclusive school and families outside of the district are welcome to enroll their children! Limitations of the bus schedule and the cost of transportation within the school district prevent us from providing free transportation to those children outside of the district. This is a change from last year and Marta understood the reason for the confusion.

Marta understood why NMFA Board has to limit free transportation and agreed with the Board's position. Marta wondered if there was room on the bus or van for more children. Board Chair said we have to wait for the Board to Vote later in this meeting to determine if it was a van or a bus transporting kids outside of the district. If there are only 3 seats available on the van, NMFA will have to be very discreet about offering those seats to people who were not enrolled at the time the 15 kids were. That is our reason for extending our free transportation specifically to these 15 kids.

Marta was under the impression NMFA was going to have a full size bus go to pick up those 15 kids. Board Chair explained the bus option is not a cost effective solution. Board Chair explained there is a cost effective transportation option of a 18 passenger Van for \$163/day, despite the fact it surpasses NMFA transportation budget allocation for transportation. NMFA Board is willing to approve this cost because these are previously enrolled families. Marta understood the timeline and the process. Principal Terri Privette told the Board she was comfortable telling families our position on providing free transportation to only these specific 15 families.

Transportation Vendor

The 18 passenger van was approved due to budget restraints and cost issues. NMFA Principal is going to clarify and confirm the 18 passenger van is the \$163/day option and get a firm commitment from the transportation vendor to our route and the number of seats. A Bus vendor and cost was discussed and determined to be too expensive. The Board voted for the 18 passenger van because it is the most cost effective method to transport these 15 children and the van also allows NMFA, Principal and Marta to have a solid, valid, reasonable, thoughtful explanation why we have no more room on the vehicle. Should a nearby family outside of the district and near the van pickup location want to enroll their child or children at NMFA, Terri will discuss the enrollment with the Board and determine if NMFA can offer that family a seat on the van. Each child outside of the district who wants free transportation will be brought before the NMFA Board before Terri discusses transportation options with the parents.

As of July 13, 2016 there were no interested families outside of the district. It has been over a year of marketing to that area and the Board is confident there would have been more interested families in that area when the idea of free transportation

was available. Based on that information from Terri and Marta the NMFA Board does not feel this will be an issue with the community outside of our school district.

Uniform Supplier

Kathy Hanson moved to approve Graffice Traffic for the uniform vendor and it was 2nd by Stacy Yang. Terri will contact them for the contract and to get the website up and rolling.

Nurse Contractor

There were still questions about the quotes so this was tabled and will be discussed at the July 20th board meeting. The board said they would send Brynda the specific questions they have.

Breakfast and Lunch Prices for the 2016-2017 School Year

Kathy Hanson moved and Debra Kranz 2nd to approve \$1.90 for Breakfast prices and \$2.95 for Lunch prices for the student meals.

Cleaning Company

There were still questions about the quotes so this was tabled and will be discussed at the July 20th board meeting. The board said they would send Brynda the specific questions they have.

Adjournment

Kathy Hanson adjourned the meeting at 4:35 pm