

**OAK KNOLL KINDERHAUS MONTESSORI
BOARD MINUTES
Monday, December 5, 2005**

Attendance: John Barrone, Joyce Barrone, Dorothy Chambless, Peter Dimopoulos, Hannah Holland, Gwen Hourihan, Nina Powell, Lisa Vigil Ruelas, Alana Steele, Standrea Williams.

CALL TO ORDER

TREASURER ELECTION:

Nomination of Standrea Williams for Treasurer made and seconded. Unanimously voted in.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT:

Elisabeth sent her report in memo form. All read the report.

--Discussed last month enrollment: 8 tours, 3 enrolled. 3 also dropped out.

--Teacher applications: 2, one is AML trained, the other AMS trained.

-- [REDACTED]

--Parent Credits: system working well. Parents like the logbooks but unhappy with increase if they choose opt-out system.

--Fundraising/In-kind donations: receive about \$140-180 a month thanks to Lisa Vigil Ruelas and Standrea Williams.

--Silent Auction: already procured \$1700

--Grants: Elisabeth working with Rachel. Identified 6 for this month. Lisa Ruelas to follow up on her grants. Audit by toddler parent, Anna Guerra, for Jan 06. Will identify 4 more grants this month to apply for in following month.

ACTION: PREPARE FOR AND EXECUTE AUDIT IN JANUARY 2006.

a. TUITION REMISSION REPORT FROM E.D.:

Is the report reflecting the actual remissions? Elementary staff members at \$685.

b. REPORT FROM EXEC DIR ON PRIMARY 3:

[REDACTED]

Since the directors are also parents of Oak Knoll students, we discussed the need to be diligent about letting teachers know when we are speaking to them as parents, rather than as directors.

ACTION: ELISABETH TO SEND OUT MEMO RE: START TIME FOR TEACHERS, AS A REMINDER. (DONE)

ACTION: [REDACTED]

ACTION: ELISABETH TO SET UP MEETING WITH POSSIBLE CANDIDATE, KAYE LUBACH, FOR BOARD. THEN BOARD MEET WITH LISA. (DONE)

ACCEPTANCE OF ELISABETH'S LETTER OF RESIGNATION AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

John presented draft letter to board accepting Elisabeth's resignation. Approved with one amendment: when we refer to ourselves it should be Oak Knoll Kinderhaus, Inc.).

Ad Hoc Committee Report on the job description.

Question regarding whether we need to hire a full Exec Dir or should it be an Administrator/Principal? Elisabeth has reviewed the draft job description and provided comments. Jonna said Corrina does much of the day-to-day business and is expected back from maternity leave.

ACTION: ALL BOARD MEMBERS TO LOOK AT THE JOB DESCRIPTION AND GIVE THOUGHTS WITHIN THE WEEK. SEND ANY COMMENTS TO "ALL". HANNAH WILL THEN MAKE CHANGES.

ACTION: DOROTHY TO RESEARCH SALARY FIGURES FOR TYPICAL MONTESSORI HEADS OF SCHOOL.

OLD BUSINESS:

ACTION: Newsletter should be proofed by two people before being copied. Standrea and Alana offered. Need newsletter two days before it is to be copied for proofreading.

NEW BUSINESS:

AUCTION: first meeting will be after the holidays

HOLIDAY CARDS: Jonna has raised \$900 so far!

NEW FUNDRAISING: Jonna has plans to fundraise through her family's "Truckin' for Kids" event next year (Sept 06) at California Speedway.

BOARD DUTIES: reaffirm our commitment as Board that the Board's function is to develop school policies and to engage in fundraising efforts for the school, rather than to handle day-to-day management, which should be handled by the Executive Director. The Board will also resolve management issues that cannot be resolved by the Executive Director.

NEW EMAIL: to the Board has a new e-mail address: board@oakknollkinderhaus.com. In the future, this e-mail address can be used on Oak Knoll's website, so that all directors will see any communications to the Board.

Regarding large email Group for Oak Knoll: Alumni are on until they request to be off.

WEBSITE: Alana asked whether committee needed to be established for website. Board agreed there was no need, that Alana could make the decisions regarding development of the new website.

NEXT MEETING:

Elementary Forum

Cost vs. Benefit of affiliations with AMI, AMS, WASCAE

GOAL FOR 2006: move forward with AMI affiliation.

Advertising for teaching and executive director positions (need Elisabeth's help).

Jonna challenges all board members to come up with enrollment drive by March 1. Tell parents if they have someone tour they get 50 credits, if they enroll get \$100 towards their own or friends tuition. By

ANNUAL MEETING: Bylaws state this meeting will be held on the second Monday of May.

ADDENDUMS TO BY-LAWS: change quorum number; number of directors, Delete provision for regular meetings and only include the annual meeting in May.

ESTABLISH COMMITTEES: long range planning, etc.

MOVE JANUARY MEETING TO MONDAY, JANUARY 9.

ADJOURN.

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Oak Knoll Kinderhaus Executive Director's Report 12/4/05

Enrollment/tours: Aliete has been giving a lot of tours, including a number of "drop ins", we have been able to move up several toddlers, giving us more space as many of the inquiries are for toddler positions. Unfortunately, we have lost 3 students, one of which we knew about at the beginning of the year [REDACTED] but the others have withdrawn from Orange Grove. The total number of tours this month is 8, with 3 enrolling.

Search for teachers: Most of the inquiries we have gotten are from overseas. However, one, Kay Lubach, is an AMI trained teacher who is finishing her doctorate at UCLA in Ethnomusicology, will be available in January and is willing to come in mid-year if we need her. Also, [REDACTED] is still interested although she has not yet given me her resume. Both are interested in working [REDACTED] and probably in Summer/September as well. Both are excellent prospects, although [REDACTED] training is AMS.

[REDACTED]
she is fine for the moment, it is possible that she would have to step down suddenly should her condition recur. The situation in her class has been difficult since the beginning of the year, since she has lost two assistants (through no fault of her own). Despite this she has done a brilliant job with her very young class, and they are an exemplary classroom. She has been really concerned about the assistant situation, especially since her assistant will be key in making parents feel comfortable during the maternity leave transition. Luckily, I called Marisol at just the right time and she has re-joined our community as of last week. Since [REDACTED] but is not needed in any classroom between 12-2:30, she is helping me in the office in the afternoons, as well as taking over the aftercare position that Bryan has been filling since the beginning of the year (and unfortunately putting in a lot of overtime). This is a great solution and [REDACTED] since all of the parents know Marisol, at least by reputation. The transition will be smooth with her in place, no matter who we get [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Parent credits: Parents are much happier this year with the logbook method of tracking their volunteer time. Unfortunately, the "credit" concept has been a little challenging to people. As well, two families who pay their credits were unhappy that it was changed to \$50 from \$40 a month. I added a feature on the invoices that reminds them of their status every month. Generally, we are getting much more participation from families and a lot more initiative is being taken by teachers and families. I think there is much more of a sense of investment in the school than we have ever seen before.

Fundraising/In kind donations: We now are getting between \$140-\$180 a month in ongoing fundraising projects, including e-scrip, restaurant nights, and whole foods (everyone give Lisa R. and Standrea a big pat on the back). This is starting to be a

significant amount of money from a yearly standpoint. It's very exciting and has lots more potential! As well, eagle-eyed recyclers have gotten tables, cement garden borders, planter boxes, a leaf blower and more donated from a number of different sources including Craigslist and Freecycle.

Auction: Letters to previous donors going out this week, plus we already have \$1700 in procurements. This is definitely the earliest start yet and bodes well for the best auction ever. Lisa R. and Nina give a more detailed report if requested.

Grants: Rachel and I have identified the following grants that will all be submitted this month:

Payless shoe source
Starbucks
Parsons
Mockingbird Foundation (music equipment)
Milagro Foundation
Tournament of Roses Foundation

We have assembled the requirements and most of the documentation necessary for these, and they will be sent in within the next week or so. In addition, Weingart has asked for audited financials, so I will be meeting with Anna Guerra, a new toddler parent and an auditor, next week to see how quickly we can put together an in-house report that can be used with them, in preparation for a full audit which I am asking her to have done in January.

With [REDACTED] I have had difficulty finding the time to do a lot of grant work. Rachel has been very helpful, and I anticipate that with her help the pace of submission will greatly increase. My goal is to have the six grants above submitted by the end of the month and four more grants identified this month, for submission after the first of the year.

Tuition remission report: attached.

Report on [REDACTED] attached.

Tuition Remission Report 12/5/05

The following children receive tuition remission. CCIS numbers are approximate as the amount of compensation varies based on the number of school days in the month.

██████████ class: *Primary 1*
1 staff member—~\$265

██████████ *Toddler*
1—\$200 based on family income

██████████ *Primary 2*
1—CCIS ~\$100/mo.

Elementary:

2—staff member ~\$550

1 CCIS—250

27 year olds ~650

██████████ *Primary 3*
1 CCIS ~\$100
1 staff—~\$265

Total amount of tuition remission, including staff discounts is \$2380.

Subject: Letter from Elisabeth Dimopoulos

Date: Wednesday, November 2, 2005 10:57 PM

From: Elisabeth Dimopoulos <emommy3@sbcglobal.net>

To: John Barrone <barrone@earthlink.net>, <alanasteele@charter.net>, <CHATTERBOX@earthlink.net>, <hourihan@altrionet.com>, <RHannay@aol.com>, <artzoo@earthlink.net>, <girljosephine@yahoo.com>, <lisavigilruelas@yahoo.com>, <mn.powell@verizon.net>, <normanmerino@yahoo.com>, <MEJIACHAM@aol.com>, <Peter@mcg-california.com>, <standreaw@yahoo.com>

Conversation: Letter from Elisabeth Dimopoulos

Category: Oak Knoll

November 2, 2005

To the Board of Directors of Oak Knoll Kinderhaus:

I am writing this letter to express my intent to resign my position as soon as a replacement Executive Director or administrator is hired, but not later than June 25, 2006.

Eight years ago, when Dorothy Chambless and I started this school, we did so with no real experience on my part in running a school. I did attend classes on and qualify as an administrator with the Dept. of Social Services, but really administration of a school is nothing like my former career. When we began the school, we had a capacity of only 24, and it was exciting to be a part of a new organization. As you all know, my only reason for involvement in the school was my children; in fact Nikitas was the first student of Oak Knoll Kinderhaus, and he will complete his Montessori education this school year. School administration has never been my idea of a career for the rest of my life, and as my children grow, I feel that I must continue my original intent, to spend as much time with them as I possibly can while they are young. Since my children are slowly growing out of the school, I want to follow them.

In 2003, I took a leave of absence for medical reasons, and during my leave, I served as President of the Board of directors. During that period, we had a catastrophic loss of an administrator and a difficult situation with the governance of the school. In watching that series of events unfold, I became convinced that the school requires a professional administrator or at least a very experienced teacher with administrative knowledge to run the school. Last year, I was asked to return to my position because of the urgency of the situation at the school. I did return, but I also made clear that I believe that the school has entered a very different period, in which it needs to develop its own identity and take on professionals as a matter of course.

I have enjoyed working on the staff of the school on and off for the last eight years, and I am proud to have co-founded such a promising institution. But I feel very strongly that I must step aside in favor of someone who can complete the

transformation of the school from "the little school that could" into a large, Pasadena institution, that will continue and grow as a vibrant community of families committed to a common goal.

I will be delighted to be on the Board of Directors once again, and to continue to be active in the life of the school. But in my conversations with my friends in the nonprofit community, my feelings are common in founders of organizations; and the time comes that we must step aside and let our "kids" go their own way. I will always be involved in Oak Knoll Kinderhaus, and I look forward to the new chapter that is unfolding at the school.

Sincerely,

Elisabeth C. Dimopoulos
Executive Director and co-founder
Oak Knoll Kinderhaus