

Ellensburg School District Education Foundation

Annual Retreat • June 15th, 2015 • John MacRae's Office • 5:30 p.m.

Board Members Present: Michelle Cawley, Missy Davis, Paul Farris, Deb Gauck, Mary Gordon, John MacRae, Mike McCloskey, Bob Titus, Jeff Slothower, Richard Wachsmith, Dick Wedin

Board Members Absent: Jim and Patti Gylling, Mark Larsen, Trish Perna

Meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

Guests Present: None

Retreat Agenda

Missy explained the outline of the agenda and our goals for the retreat.

Mission Overview:

Discussion began on our mission statement: 'The Foundation's goal is to enhance programs, equipment and services available to the Ellensburg public school students and staff'. Questions were asked regarding the origin of the statement (original BOD), when it was written (2000) and if it still encompasses what we are attempting to accomplish today. It was decided to revisit at the end of our retreat.

In perusing the ESDEF website, Michele requested a link be added to our 'Purpose Page' concerning our ability to provide a mechanism for organizations to support education thru associate membership with our Foundation. Mike agreed to add this bullet point.

Treasurer's Report:

Financials were sent to all Board members for March, April and May 2015.

Strength and Weakness- Missy broke our attendees into two groups for discussion

Weaknesses

No identified group to care about and support annual fundraiser; no concrete needs expressed from District; no rubric for giving has been created; our labor force within our Board is too small and more volunteers are needed; leadership lacking within our group (currently without a President for next year); need to grow scholarships available to students, especially for students attending trade schools and non-traditional college paths; continue to feel a disconnect with the District; concerned about our liability with activities orchestrated by our Associate groups; need better marketing and PR for our Foundation; tile sales are lacking despite our best efforts; communication with mini grants requests needs work; our Board has reached it's capacity for giving time; we've been unable to recruit new Board members; would like to discuss adding a paid staff position; haven't been able to get larger grants off the ground with the District.

Strengths

Unified scholarship is done well; Scholarship Fair is done well and growing/thriving; our yearly fundraiser is gaining momentum and hitting it's stride; our 501c3 status is strong and helping many groups; Caring Cupboard is going well and growing/reaching more kids; we've given great donations to many students and teachers over 15 years; our Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer work hard and are of great help to us; annual fundraiser is becoming well established; our Board has a good core of individuals who work well together.

Annual Fundraiser

It was agreed the 'Super Bowl' party is fun, unique, well supported by our friends who volunteer for us, well organized and always has good food. Ongoing weaknesses discussed: very laborious, the ticket selling system is confusing and needs work, we're missing a key audience of more generous givers, the idea is limited, we need to grow our audience, our current business plan leaves little room for growth of income, our tight timeline makes it hard for attendees to give (need notification of silent winners), need to know our recipient earlier to capitalize on that audience, need more silent auction items and more people to bid on them, this event needs a strong chair who can keep the Board moving forward and on task.

Other fundraising ideas discussed: tagging on to the CWU Speaker series, teaming with the Tourism students at CWU for an event, adding a 2nd event that is easier to orchestrate (as an example our previous events at the Clymer)

Deb inquired about the status of grant writers per Paul's research with ESD 105. Paul reported that there are no grant writers employed by area districts and ESD 105 has none on staff. Deb asked about the possibility of ESD hiring/contracting with a grant writer. Paul said there were many needs but finite resources. Tabled.

PR/Marketing

- **Improving our PR in the schools:**
 - Adding a 7 a.m. meeting with District Administration to discuss our purpose, mini grants and our annual fundraiser as a means for distribution at faculty meetings
 - Coordinating with Jeff Cochran to add information to the District Facebook page and adding a regular column in the quarterly District newsletter sent to all folks in the 98926 zip code
 - Attend faculty meetings to discuss our purpose, the mini grant process and our annual fundraiser

- **Improving our PR in the community:**
 - Increasing the amount of information we submit to the Daily Record for the Education Page
 - Adding a regular column in the quarterly District newsletter (sent to all folks in the 98926 zip code)
 - Presenting to area groups (Rotary, Kiwanis, Generations) on our purpose, mini grants and annual fundraiser
 - Request a column in the District Newsletter via Jeff Cochran
 - Present more prepared information to the Daily Record
 - Request more presence on the District Facebook page via Jeff Cochran
 - Start a Twitter account for the Foundation

- **General**
 - Tile sales: advertising (Gyllings), new brochures (Mary), investigation on return on investment and whether we should continue program (Jim)

Scholarships

- Goal: grow the amount of money offered in the Unified (special target group: 2 year programs, trade schools)
- Goal: extending scholarship information/communication to the freshman year so parents and students are making curriculum choices that allow them to be competitive with scholarship offerings

Board Capacity

- All sub groups planning activities need to do a better job of delegating to others so they are more supported with their specific event
- Investigation of paid staff options- Deb

Mini Grants

- Formation of rubric scoring system for requests- Jeff
- Update website with the list of gifts given over the years- Mike
- Re-visit form and application process- Dick

Connection with ESD

- Admin meetings/ Faculty meeting attendance- tabled
- School Board meeting presentations in September (our mission), January (fundraiser, scholarships) and May (overview of year and accomplishments)- tabled

Short Term Goals

- Grow a list of 'worker bees' who will support our events and projects- look outside our group for help
- Grow Board with specific talent, not just numbers
- Update Foundation brochure- Mary
- Determine a solution for our lack of President this coming year and how we should proceed

Long Term Goals

- Grow Board
- Grow Scholarships
- Add another fundraiser
- Send Foundation member(s) to the ASFA Regional or National Conference

Revisiting the Mission Statement:

The Foundation's goal is to enhance programs, equipment and services for the Ellensburg public school students and staff. Discussion followed. Tabled until September.

To do:

- Jeff will email the committee sign ups to all Board members
- Jeff, with a select group, will work on a rubric scoring system for our financial giving to present in September
- Mike will add a link to our 'Purpose Page' concerning our ability to provide a mechanism for organizations to support education thru associate membership with our Foundation
- Mary will update the Tile brochure and the Foundation brochure
- Mike will add a list of all financial gifts we've given to the website
- Dick will revisit the mini grant form and instructions to make sure they are clear and updated
- Deb will investigate our ability to hire a paid staff member
- Jim will investigate the return on investment for the tile sales and if we should continue this project
- Mary will send all Foundation members the link and password for the ASFA site

Next meeting- Wednesday, September 9th, 2015 (first day of school)
6:45 a.m., place TBD

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Gordon, ESDEF Secretary