

Steamboat Springs Education Fund Board and Grant Commission
October 11, 2023
5:30PM

Education Fund Board Directors participating included Adam Alspach, Jim Beers, Kandise Gilbertson, Lisa Ruff, Amanda Koziar, Mandy Maass, Mary Johnston, Lauren Hughes, and Jeff Steck. Jon Wade and Kipp Rillos were absent. Also in attendance were Linda Thomas (SSEF accountant); Celine Wicks, Emily Beyer and Tim Miles (SSSD); Eric Owen (HSD); Emily Barnhart and Dervla Lacy (SM). Sarah Katherman prepared the minutes.

- **Call to Order:**

Adam Alspach called the meeting of the Steamboat Springs Education Fund Board to order at 5:30 PM.

- **Public and Advisory Board Comment**

Celine requested the EFB reconsider its decision to postpone until the summer session its discussion of pre-K funding. She said that the funding from the state for the universal pre-K was not coming together as expected and that pursuing grant funding for these programs is something all of the districts may be interested in. Eric concurred with Celine and said that HSD is having a difficult time paying for these programs while the state funding is still up in the air.

- **Collaborative Grant Writer Report**

Emily Beyer reviewed her report included in the meeting materials. She reported that the grant writing team had raised over \$6MM in new grants and private donations, had applied to 85 grants and had managed 58 ongoing multi-year grants, totaling \$7.9MM. Emily noted how valuable the addition of Kristi Brown had been in response to the increasing opportunities for competitive and non-competitive grant funding, which also means increasing obligations for grant management and compliance. She reviewed some highlights from the recent year, including the emphasis on mental health and school nursing, the increase in partnerships with other organizations and private philanthropists, and the growing need for community-based matching funds. A full breakdown of the current and past grants was included in the meeting materials.

- **Steamboat Montessori Grant Writer Report**

Dervla Lacy, whose part-time position is supported by an SSEF grant, commended Emily for her efforts at collaboration. She said that she had applied to about 30 grants, raising almost \$650,000, with an additional \$223,000 in pending grants. She concurred that mental health and social and emotional learning had been a major area of focus. Dervla added that SM is planning for a significant campaign for Colorado Gives Day to support teacher salaries. She stated that SM is also trying to figure out how to provide lunch for students. A full breakdown of the grants applied for, awarded and pending was included in the meeting materials. In response to a question from Lisa, Emily Barnhart stated that approximately 7% of the current SM student body are English language learners. She said that SM is working on reducing the barriers to attendance, citing lunch and transportation has two major factors.

- **Meeting Minutes – September 20, 2023**

MOTION

Mary moved to approve the EFB meeting minutes cited above, as written. Jim seconded the motion. **The motion carried unanimously.**

- **Amendment to meeting calendar**

MOTION

Lisa moved to amend the SSEF Board meeting calendar to move the date of the January 2024 meeting to the 24th. Kandise seconded the motion. **The motion carried unanimously.**

- **Rescissions**

Linda reviewed the list of unspent grant funds from the 2022-23 school year that are to be rescinded to the SSEF, as follows:

G23-12-COM	Environmental Education (Yampatika)	\$ 61.00	
G23-14-COM	School-based mentoring (Partners)	\$29,683.50	
G23-16-COM	Jr. Achievement	\$46.13	
G23-20-COM	Dance Programming (SDT)	\$490.00	
G23-21-COM	Adaptive P.E. (STARS)	\$78.00	
G23-24-A	Administrative Expenses	\$3,576.91	
	Total Outstanding Liabilities - Prior Year		<u>\$33,935.54</u>

Linda noted that although the SSEF categorizes the administrative expenses as a grant, the auditors do not, so the total rescissions will not match the amount listed in next year's audit. Sarah stated that the large rescission from Partners was due to their inability to secure staff. This will be explained in the accountability report.

MOTION

Jim moved to accept the rescission of \$33,935.54 in awarded funds back to the EFB, as presented. Mary seconded the motion. **The motion carried unanimously.**

- **Audited Financial Statements for FY23**

Linda reviewed the audit, noting that it was clean, and without adjustments. Adam commended Linda on another clean audit.

- **IRS Form 990 – tax return**

Linda stated that the tax return is based on the audit but includes a lot more detail about SSEF operations.

MOTION

Mandy moved to approve the IRS Form 990 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023. Lisa seconded the motion. **The motion carried unanimously.**

- **By-laws**

Adam offered that the EFB is obligated to reconsider its position on pre-K funding, given the request from the districts. He noted that not only would the by-laws have to be amended, but the agreement with the City would also need to be revised. Sarah noted that revising the agreement with the City could be a lengthy process. There was a discussion of the status of private not-for-profit pre-schools and whether they would be eligible for SSEF funding through the community grant process. Mary stated that they only would be eligible if they conducted their programming through and in conjunction with the public schools. Jim suggested contacting the Colorado Department of Early Childhood to find out more about their funding of public schools. He added that it might be wise to seek legal advice. Adam said he would

reach out to Sam to determine the best approach regarding an amendment to the City agreement. Jeff offered that the pre-K landscape is very complicated and suggested that the SSEF establish a committee to work through the details. Adam, Mary, Mandy and Jeff volunteered for the pre-K committee. Adam presented the ballot language, which specifies only that the funds be used to support “public educational purposes.” Eric stated that the state currently provides 15 hours/week of pre-school programming for 4-year olds and 10 hours per week for 3-year olds, free of charge for all. The challenge is the funding flow from the CDE. The question is whether the SSEF can allow the school districts to allocate a portion of their SSEF funds to pre-K. Stephanie noted that Emily Beyer is reluctant to apply for grants that support pre-K because the grant writers’ salaries are supported by the SSEF.

MOTION

*Mandy moved to table the amendment of the by-laws to the January meeting. Kandise seconded the motion. **The motion carried unanimously.***

• Accountability Reports

Mary reviewed the AR review procedure. She noted that most members would have two reports to review this year. All the ARs have been returned and Mary has assigned them to EFB members for review, with most people reviewing the same grants/organizations they reviewed last year. She presented the shared summary document and discussed what reviewers should enter in each column. The instruction sheets, with links to the summary sheet, and AR assignments have been emailed to EFB members and all the ARs are also available through the meeting materials website. AR reviews are due back at the beginning of November. Adam noted the importance of the AR process.

• Organizational Review

Adam presented a review of the SSEF, including its organizational structure and governing documents, its history, the ballot language that was approved by voters most recently in 2019, and the duties of the board. He also reviewed what gets funded by the SSEF, and flow of the grant cycle. Adam stated that he had made his annual presentation to City Council last night. He said that due to changes at ColoTrust, where SSEF funds are held, in 2024 City Council will be approving SSEF board officers who are signers on the ColoTrust account. In addition, signatures of two authorized signers will now be required for any account to be added for transfers from the ColoTrust account. Adam noted that City Council would like to appoint all incoming SSEF board members, but for now this process will be limited to officers. Adam offered that this change takes some of the liability associated with signing on the account away from the board and puts it on the City. The SSEF will continue to maintain its own D & O insurance.

• Agenda for January meeting

- Review Accountability Reports
- Sunshine Law Resolution
- Application review and Q&A process
- Discussion of pre-K funding/by-laws

The EFB meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.