

Bloomington Montessori School Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

November 9, 2021, 6:00 pm, Online via Zoom

Board Members Present

- Allison O'Boyle
- Janelle Terkhorn
- Phuong Thang
- Amanda Cook
- Christine Lovelace
- Todd Schnatzmeyer
- Bridget Stomberg
- Rob Danzman

Staff Members Present

- Quinn McAvoy
- Jess Davis
- Teresa Mandell
- Robyn Miller
- Eve Cusack

Preliminaries

Allison O'Boyle – President – **Time: 6:04 pm**

- Introductions and Welcome
- Approval of Minutes from October 2021 Board Meeting
 - There were no suggestions for edits to the October meeting minutes.
 - **Todd Schnatzmeyer moved to approve the October 2021 Board of Directors meeting minutes. Phuong Thang seconded the motion. The motion passed with no objections or abstentions.**
- Call for Issues Not on the Agenda
 - No new issues were added to the agenda.

President Report

Allison O'Boyle – President – **Time: 6:06 pm**

Executive Committee Update

- The Board held a Town Hall for staff to answer questions and concerns about the proposed Vaccination Declaration Policy and COVID Testing Policy on October 25th.
 - The Board then met in Closed Session to discuss feedback received during the Town Hall and to vote on the proposed policies.
 - Allison drafted a message to staff about the policies, and the policies were implemented.
- The Executive Committee worked on edits to the school's bylaws in their October meeting.
- A meeting about the Development Committee will be scheduled in December to discuss how to set up the committee and get it working.
- The Executive Committee has also been looking at the strategic plan.
 - Committee members submitted questions and comments about the document. They found it has been fairly well updated, reflecting progress on goals to date.

- The committee is now looking at areas of growth. They can see where we're meeting our goals, but there are some areas that have fallen behind due to the pandemic. They will work on identifying new goals to put in the strategic plan that will be further developed next year.
- Discussion on the new Technology Policy has been delayed, but the committee hopes to start defining broader areas of need at their next meeting.
 - The committee hopes to revamp the current policy to reflect how the school uses technology now. They want to make sure it covers what we're using technology-wise as well as create guidelines for how we communicate with each other and for who has access to which systems.
- The Executive Committee heard from Quinn about changes to the PEOP regarding children's COVID vaccinations. We have received no firm guidance from state and local health departments yet on the vaccines to communicate to our population. Once they issue guidance, the committee will need to translate that for our community.

Second Reading – Policy Revisions

- Allison shared the most recent suggested policy handbook edits with the Board.
- Item 1: Because we have an external board member and will have more in the future, we wanted to make sure Board members were included in all our policies. They originally covered parents and employees, but not non-parents and non-employees.
 - We mirrored the statement about staff that Board members are expected to treat everyone with respect and keep all personal records confidential.
 - Several of the original policies had the words "Board members" or "Board" added in.
- In the Consensual Relations Policy, we removed the word "subordinate" when talking about Board members not having relationships with employees.
- In the Whistleblower Policy, we also added the words "Board members" or "Board."
- We added the IRS Template for Conflict of Interest Policies for Non Profit Boards to the policy handbook.
 - This policy contains procedures for Board members when disclosing conflicts of interest and determining when conflicts of interest exist. It also includes procedures for addressing conflicts of interest and what happens if the policy is violated.
- A new Disciplinary Policy for staff has been added to the policy handbook.
 - The previous policy was much looser. It reminded employees that Indiana is an at will state and provides a few points on conflict resolution.
 - The new policy outlines types of disciplinary action that might occur when situations with staff arise: verbal warning, written warning, and final warning.
 - It also includes a statement that reads: **"Employees who persistently engage in disrespectful verbal or physical behavior, or who are suspected of engaging in sexual abuse or misconduct, will be immediately suspended without pay pending the outcome of an investigation."**
 - Todd: "Do we need to clarify 'an investigation by whom'?" Allison said that language was from our former policy. In the state of Indiana, we're all under an obligation to report suspected sexual abuse to Family Services. But that's not clearly outlined here.
 - Someone suggested adding "pending the outcome of an external investigation."
 - There was discussion on the ambiguity of "disrespectful physical behavior" and how that could result in suspension without pay and an investigation. Is there a need to define the level of behavior that requires investigation? Quinn said it should be done on a case by case basis.

- Someone suggested removing the word “persistently.” There was also discussion on whether to change “will” to “may” or “shall.”
- Quinn wasn’t sure about the “suspended without pay” aspect while staff are being investigated, since they should be considered innocent until proven guilty.
- Christine suggested removing “persistent disrespectful verbal behavior,” because it would already be covered by the different tiers of warnings.
- Todd: “There are probably legal terms that would be used here: harassment, abuse, neglect, endangerment, etc.” He suggested using “moral turpitude,” which covers a broad definition of things outside the accepted norms of the community.
- Rob suggested having an attorney look over this language and help give us the correct terminology to use. “For the staff member who is accused, if they have an attorney, they’re going to target that language.”
- Todd felt it should also cover when somebody brings inappropriate images into the classroom or engages inappropriately on social media.
- Allison made a note of alternate terms we could use and said she and Quinn will seek guidance from Christine Bartlett, the school’s attorney, for proper wording and definitions for this policy.
- Rob: “What is the timeframe we are required to respond within [when a someone is accused of something]?” Quinn said it’s on a case by case basis. You would want flexibility for the person who is handling the discipline to be able to frame that according to the conditions of the situation.
- Rob: “If a teacher suspects another teacher or a parent suspects something and reports it to the Board or Quinn?” Quinn said that requires immediate investigation. If we suspect anyone of wrongdoing, we immediately go into that investigation, excuse the employee, and dive in to what’s occurred. Rob: “I think it’s something to investigate: within the hour,? Within a business day? That’s something that’s up for interpretation.”
- Allison noted the definition of “timeline” and the use of the word “immediate.” “We want to make sure we have enough flexibility in the policies, so Quinn can implement them accurately and in a way that ensures we retain employees and resolve situations as best as we can.”
- Eve wondered if there should be any protections written into the policy for employees. If a child says something outlandish about a teacher, and the teacher is asked immediately to leave, that doesn’t sit right with her, which also didn’t sit right with Quinn.
- It was suggested adding “suspended with or without pay pending an investigation.” It would be something else to ask Christine Bartlett about.
- Allison made a note about protection of employees and student account: “How do we respect all parties in the process of investigation?”
 - “With or without pay” is a lot to ask of Quinn to decide. We might want to spread the risk and maybe make a decision through Executive Committee.
 - It was suggested we investigate what’s common practice at other schools and companies as well as consult with Christine Bartlett. Quinn said she has access to HR from another payroll company.
 - We are dealing with a population that isn’t necessarily able to say what happened to them because they’re children.”
- Todd: “Could there be a coverage of confidentiality on this topic on both sides?” Allison pointed out that is should be covered in the Confidentiality Policy, but she also made a note of it.

- Christine Lovelace: “Maybe we should ask Christine Bartlett if we suspend a staff member without pay and they were determined to be innocent, something [in the policy] should say ‘payment will be given when they are deemed innocent,’ because that would seem like a liability.” If suspension without pay is appropriate, how can we provide for backpay should the employee be cleared after the investigation?
- It was decided this second reading of the policy handbook would develop into a third reading. Quinn will send the policy handbook to Christine Bartlett for review, and we’ll look at it again at the next meeting.

Treasurer Report

Phuong Thang – Treasurer – **Time: 6:55 pm**

Profit and Loss Statement

- Phuong said October was an uneventful month. Everything on the P&L seemed to be on track with what we budgeted for.
- Our expenses came in a little under. Our salaries were under because Jess is still the Lead Teacher in Sycamore, so we’re not paying one more teacher.
- Our savings were offset by maintenance and a repair invoice for the main sewer break in the line, which was a \$5,500 expense.
- Also, our liability and business insurance was paid in October.
- Our net ordinary income came to a little over \$26,000, and we budgeted for \$23,000.
- Year to Date, our net ordinary income came to around \$274,000. \$205,000 of that came from the second Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan. We ended up with a \$70,000 net income, which is a lot better than what we budgeted for the school year.
- We also had a net fundraising income of almost \$1,200.
- From an operations standpoint, we’re staying on track and coming in better than we expected to be.
- We bought a new commercial refrigerator for the kitchen. That invoice will come through in November, so we’ll see that on next month’s statements.

Balance sheet

- Our Certificate of Deposit expired, and the amount of money that was in the CD has been transferred to our IUCU savings account until we determine where we want to invest it.
 - Cyndi and Quinn talked to IUCU, but their current CDs are not offering a lot of interest income. They recommended we wait and see if there’s a better opportunity on CDs in the future. We’ll reconvene to talk about whether a shorter or longer term CD will get us the best rate of return.
- Our cash balance is looking very good. It is reflecting both of the PPP loans at around \$846,000.
- All the other line items are consistent with our amortization of FACTS, mortgage, and depreciation, etc.
- Rob: “Are there other financial vehicles we could consider for the money from the CD? CD interest rates are not likely to go up any time soon.”
 - Phuong: “We haven’t looked into very many different vehicles. We discussed, if we step away from IUCU, are there other facilities we could get a higher rate from? But also we kept in mind that we have a close relationship with IUCU, and our debt covenant has been with them. They’ve been very flexible with us. Our good relationship with them has deterred discussing it, but we could do some research on it.”
 - Todd: “We’re still responsible for protecting the principal no matter where we put that money, right?” Phuong: “The CD is a very safe vehicle, so we could earn more interest

taking more risk. How much risk do we want to take, and what are the chances of losing some money? We could do a risk/benefit analysis to see.”

- Quinn: “The CDs offered through IUCU had a 25 month lock-in for .6%. We were looking at a 13 month lock-in for .5%. The CD we had before had a 2.5% rate, which was really good. We will see a hit in the budget line item for that interest.”
- Phuong: “We didn’t want to lock the rate in for too long. When we had to withdraw money from the CD to cover summer expenses, we had to pay a hefty penalty. That’s why we have the Money Market account, which gives us some interest, but doesn’t have a penalty to pull out that money. We can rethink what to do with the money from the CD now.”
- Phuong: “New CD rates will be posted in December. The Feds were going to meet soon, which may result in a change in rates. IUCU said to wait until this past Friday after they met. We might see a slight increase, which could determine what our best plan going forward is.”

Governance Report

Janelle Terkhorn – Vice President – **Time: 7:05 pm**

Governance and Nominating Committees Update

- Nominating Committee met officially in October and had a productive meeting. They narrowed down the skills they need to look for during the Board recruitment process.
 - Janelle said she put together a call out letter for potential Board members for the next Board newsletter.
- Governance Committee still has to meet. This year, they will primarily work on a Board self-evaluation to see if we’re meeting our goals. Janelle said the committee already has some materials gathered for that.
- The new shared Google Drive system is complete. It is still missing some documents in the Board Drive, and it’s still being updated. Janelle is asking Board members to keep some of their documents linked to their official Board emails until we have all the permissions for the shared Drives in place.
- Governance Committee will implement some sort of backup system for the teacher and Board Drives, hopefully biannually. Janelle will work with Teresa on that and will follow guidance from the new Technology Policy, as well.

Second Reading – Bylaws Revisions

- Janelle shared her screen to go over the most recent suggestions for Bylaws revisions.
- She said she received suggestions from Amanda on how meetings are conducted and how to post minutes to the website. We’re modernizing the bylaws and showing how we’re using technology now to do things.
- In the meetings section, we added that the Board could “vote by email when necessary.”
- We made changes to the section on eligibility of Board members. We added that Board members must be 18 years of age when nominated. We also added that we can have more than one family member, such as a husband and wife, serve on the Board at the same time, but we cannot have a majority of a family serving on the Board.
- Under the Treasurer section, we added that the Treasurer will chair the Development Committee.
- Also, we changed one bullet point, so that the Treasurer will now “verify the timely deposit of all funds, etc.,” which originally, the Bylaws stated the Treasurer would be doing all the depositing of funds themselves.

- Under the Secretary section, we added that meeting minutes should be posted to the school website in an accessible format.
- We also changed one bullet point to read that the Secretary will do the meeting minutes for the Executive and Governance Committees and will archive the notes from other standing committees as needed by the Board.
- We changed the last bullet point under the Secretary role to read that the Secretary will assist other Board members in the preparation and archiving of materials as needed.
- We added a section for the new Development Committee. Janelle read that section to the group.
 - Jess suggested adding a piece to the new Development Committee to make certain the school is meeting our financial goals.
 - There was much discussion on how to word the bullet point about the committee creating and implementing a fundraising plan.
 - Allison: “When we talk about the committee and our fundraising goal, there’s so many pieces to that: the annual fund, fundraising events, ongoing fundraising throughout the year. The language here needs to reflect accountability. If this committee has accountability that the goal is met, the committee needs to have oversight and a level of control over those pieces.”
 - Todd: “The second bullet might be “execute and assess or continuously monitor the plan.” Or: “execute the development plan and monitor the progress of financial goals.”
 - Jess said it can become unproductive when you separate the fundraising ideas from the fundraising piece. There are creative ideas to use, but if that gets detached from hitting a targeted goal, like a business cost, it can become unproductive.
 - Christine: “Can we say: ‘execute and oversee the development plan and monitor the progress of goals?’” Or: “To work with staff and the full Board to establish the development plan and yearly fundraising target (financial goals).”
 - Another bullet point under the Development Committee: To lead development planning and Board education on development.
 - Bridget wondered what the difference was between the second bullet and the fifth bullet points. The fifth bullet point kind of wiped out two; the term “execute” was added to the fifth bullet point.
 - Christine: “Is ‘performance’ specific enough for goal setting?” Bridget: “What about ‘monitor development plans for progress towards financial goals’?”
 - Todd: “‘Execute, monitor, and adjust development plans’ would work, because it could be a living plan.”
 - Janelle said the Board will probably revisit this section of the Bylaws once the Development Committee meets and finds out what they need to do.
- We made changes to the Voting section, where the Annual Membership Meeting will no longer include the May Board Meeting.
- Amanda brought up the fact that there may need to be changes in the Secretary’s role related to the Board election, since the election will no longer take place during the Annual Meeting, and may be done online or through a ballot box during the week before the May Board Meeting. During this discussion, it was discovered the copy of the Bylaws we were reading from was not the most updated version, which was posted on the school website and which included allowing the election and Board voting to occur electronically.

- Janelle said she would table the Bylaws revisions until we located the most updated version of them. She will incorporate the changes we made in each version into one document, and we'll have another Bylaws reading in December.

Operations Report

Administration Team – Time: **7:47 pm**

Enrollment Update

Table of Enrollment Numbers as of October 2021

Group	Actual Enrollment 2021-2022	Classroom Capacities 2021-2022	Difference
Half-Day	48	48	0
All Day	44	44	0
Lower EL	53	59	-6
Upper EL	44	48	-4

- In the table above, “EL” means “elementary.” “Half-Day” and “All Day” refer to the Early Childhood classrooms.

Enrollment

- Two students remain on sabbatical. A student who withdrew will be coming back in January.
- A new Lower Elementary student is joining Maple mid-November.

Staff

- Goal setting is underway and will be completed by Thanksgiving break.
- Hiring for Upper Elementary nonlead continues
- We have support staff for two classrooms now: a sub helping to support kids in one classroom, and a sub going into Sycamore to relieve Jess, so she can do her admin duties.
- Aflac supplemental insurance program offered to staff, open enrollment November 2nd – November 19th.

Curriculum

- Grant-purchased Early Childhood materials have arrived. The grant came to \$11,000. Jess said they're only okay materials as far as quality goes.
- Partnering with Sam for his transition to Lead with curriculum planning and resource development.

Student Services

- Attended MCCSC team meetings for Individualized Service Plans for students and led in-house accommodation plan team meetings. Quinn goes to the Speech meetings, and Jess goes to the other meetings.
- Met with parent for a crash course in building mathematical mind to help with home support.

Advocacy

- Senator Raatz has picked up a groundbreaking bill for Montessori advocacy in Indiana and we are currently working with his LSA to draft language for the bill while the Senator visits some Indianapolis-area Montessori schools!
 - Jess said a team met with senators and LSAs for the final drafting verbiage. She's hoping Senator Raatz will pick this bill up as one of his 10 bills to bring to the legislature. She said she had to answer some uncomfortable questions about things related to Montessori curriculum. She believes it went okay, and the senator is still asking questions and touring schools.

Parent Education

- Meetings with admin and leads to begin design of a developmentally appropriate progress report for Early Childhood to align with benchmarks and learner outcomes.

Professional Development

- Quinn continues Ph.D. course work on Educational Leadership
- Jess began an IU master's program: Teaching, Learning, and Curriculum.
- American Montessori Society (AMS) annual conference to be held in Nashville, Tennessee, March of 2022, during our Spring Break. A few staff members will be going.
- Jess – Association Montessori Internationale? (AMI): Neurodiversity and Montessori
- Jess - AMS: Positive Psychology for the School Leader
- Jess - Yoga 300 certification with a focus on teaching yoga to children. (Currently Y200 certified)

Administrative

- Enrollment
 - Tours
 - Inquiry follow-up phone calls
- CTBS standardized test inventories to prep for ordering
- Pandemic Emergency Operations Plan (PEOP)
 - Continued to attend Department of Education and Indiana State Department of Health briefings weekly
 - Continued updates (community transmission considerations, local provider requirements, etc.)
 - Tracking and documenting all illness absences per PEOP protocol.
 - Updates to contact tracing procedures (schools now responsible for contract tracing within the school setting and reporting this through the state portal)
 - Researched and attended COVID testing training
 - Vaccinated kids will be captured under the vaccinated status section in the PEOP.

Community Partnerships

- City of Bloomington Martin Luther King Jr. Commission
 - Lesson plans are almost finished and have received full approval by the commission.
 - MCCSC's Dr. Markay is excited about the partnership.
 - We are currently getting classroom teachers signed up for visits and volunteers signed up for trainings for presentations to 1st – 6th grade classrooms throughout the county.
 - Jess was asked to be on the commission, because when presenters for "40 Days of Peace" came to our school, they wanted a partner in creating lesson plans and a program for the commission.
 - Jess: "We have created lesson plans on the civil rights movement, unity, conflict resolution, and nonviolent communication for children. MCCSC is really excited. We have so much interest in the program, we'll need a lot of volunteers to be presenters."
 - Jess said she is the only volunteer trainer, so they are working out how to do it. They are beta testing it in classrooms where they could record lessons and create a virtual trainer. There will be lesson plans used in 43 classrooms in the district between January and March.

Facilities

- MAINTENANCE COMPLETED:
 - Sweet Gum outdoor cabinet door repaired
 - Kitchen refrigerator replaced. Emily is thrilled with its functionality and size.

- Mainline sewer repaired – insurance claim filed. Insurance is currently investigating on whose liability/responsibility the sewer break falls, ours or the city's.
- PENDING:
 - Nothing currently

Technology

- Support for Cyndi (cutting checks and QuickBook errors)
- Maintenance of Listservs
- Support with printing for Jess and check of battery health on her laptop. We have made changes and will see if we need to replace sooner rather than later.
- Met with Barbara Rand (new employee) to train her on using our school accounts
- Investigated access errors occurring for two students in Sycamore
- Updates to all laptops (approximately 2 times since last year: Windows updates, Chrome updates, and driver updates)
- Learning more about Google Apps and upcoming developments
- Currently participating in the Nominating Committee
- Posted announcement in .ORG for emergency closing
- Working with Morgan (GoMontessori) to move our domain name lease to GoDaddy (GoMontessori from Reclaim)
- Support with printing for Eve
- Delivered/set up laptop for Sam's use in Sycamore
- Brought Anna's machine back from the dead (would not start)
- Covered front office for Quinn
- Operation systems reset for laptop in Sycamore
- Website changes for new Co-Lead in Sycamore
- Setup a new classroom for Maple's Typing Club
- Printer help in Sycamore (student accounts)
- Working with Quinn to create this year's Giving Tuesday site

Parent Action Committee

- The Fall Festival went off without any major hitches. Around 65 users (some families, some individuals) attended. A survey will go out to get feedback from participants and those who did not attend (to get an idea of what keeps people from attending).
- The Take a Hike Challenge raised \$2,900
- Take and Make: Board and Brush is on November 17th. Registration is open until Monday.
- Future PAC Events:
 - BMS community service project
 - January 28th: Take and Make - Pizza kits/Trivia
 - March 25th: Parent Social
 - April 22nd: Take and Make – Terrarium Gift
 - May 2nd: Teacher Appreciation

Development/Fundraising Committee

- For Small Hands
 - October 29th – November 18th
- Lynch Creek Farms
 - Wreath, swag, centerpiece sale October 13th – December 5th
- Giving Tuesday, November 30th
- Annual Campaign Kick-off

- Board: November 9th
- Staff: November 10th
- School Community: December 6th
- Board Fundraising Committee creation underway

Communications

- Bi-monthly Newsletters, emails to community
- Facebook posts
- Event Flyers

Finances as of October 31, 2021

- Main checking: \$178,910.40
- Money market: \$120,375.65
- Fundraising: \$543,825.77
- Café Account: \$3,385.84
- \$34,000 was moved from our Main Checking to our Money Market for use during June/July 2022
- Funds from our Certificate of Deposit were transferred to our Fundraising Savings account.
- Tuition delinquency: \$4,479.39, for three families. One family owes \$3,500. They are supposed to make a payment in full soon.
- IUCU Loan balance: \$664,233.25
- Reports filed with the National School Lunch Program and with Workers Comp payroll audit
- Aflac account established, begins December 1, 2021, for interested employees

Strategic Planning

- The Executive Committee is continuing to review and update the Strategic Plan objectives and is planning tasks accordingly.

Closing

- The Finance Committee will receive an email soon from Quinn. Cyndi and Quinn will put together a draft of the budget for the next fiscal year. The committee will plan to meet on November 29th to go over that first draft.
- Mitigation testing for staff: the first run of testing is scheduled for the Wednesday after the Board meeting.
 - Quinn said she only had two people registered for this first testing round. The first formalized round of testing is scheduled for the following Wednesday.
 - Jess asked if Quinn needed people who don't necessarily need to test to register. Quinn said the turnaround time for registration takes more than 24 hours, so there wouldn't be enough time to get more people to test the day after the meeting.
 - Quinn: "It's best if everyone registers. They need to have an account on the website in order to test. Whether they test or not, as long as the account is made, they can test."
- Janelle asked about the Board kickoff for the Annual Appeal. Allison sent an email with the goal setting sheet for Board members with ideas for pledges.
 - Allison asked everyone to email her their goal setting sheets, and the sooner the better. "Having 100% Board participation in the Annual Appeal communicates to everyone in the community that the Board is ready to support the school. To kick off the Annual Appeal with 100% Board participation is important."

Meeting Adjourned: 8:02 pm

Respectfully submitted by Amanda Cook, Board Secretary