

Bloomington Montessori School Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

March 8, 2022, 6:00 pm, Online via Zoom

Board Members Present

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

Staff Members Present

- Quinn McAvoy
- Jess Davis
- Cyndi Williams
- Eve Cusack
- April Waxler

Preliminaries

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

Introductions and Welcome

- Allison welcomed everyone to the meeting. She explained that she would be speaking on behalf of Janelle during the Governance Committee report, as Janelle recuperates at home with her new baby.

Approval of Minutes from February 2022 Board Meeting

- Allison asked for comments, questions, or edits to the February 2022 meeting minutes.
- **Rob Danzman moved to approve the minutes from the February 2022 BOD meeting. Russ Clark seconded the motion. The motion carried with no objections or abstentions.**

Call for Issues Not on the Agenda

- No new issues were added to the agenda.

Governance Report

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

Governance Committee Report

- Janelle sent out a final Board assessment survey to Board members, and Allison said the group would go over a summary of results in Closed Session.
- The three assessments will be compiled into a final summary report, which will be presented to the Board before the end of the year. The committee will incorporate some of the suggestions and results into an action plan for the Board and will hopefully merge them into next year's strategic plan.

Nominating Committee Report

- The Nominating Committee wrapped up their process in March. They interviewed 4 applicants for positions on next year's Board. They also went through a vetting process of those candidates

with criminal background checks, looking at their social media accounts, and asking for feedback from Board and staff about each person.

- Allison said she appreciated everyone who participated in the process, from the committee members to those who helped in the vetting process.
- The Nominating Committee recommended three of the four applicants to next year's Board slate. The slate for the 2022 – 2023 Board Election will be:
 - President: Allison O'Boyle
 - Vice President: Janelle Terkhorn
 - Treasurer: Bridget Stomberg
 - Secretary: Christine Lovelace
 - Returning Members-at-Large: Russ Clark and Rob Danzman
 - New Members-at-Large: Ge Yan, Hilary Kanyi, and Tracey Warren
- Allison gave a brief biography of each of the new Members-at-Large candidates:
 - Ge Yan is a long time parent at BMS with a middle grouper currently in the school and one child who has graduated. Ge is the head of Tech Services at Kelly School of Business and is pursuing a doctorate in education at IU.
 - Hillary has a middle grouper at BMS. She works in human resources and has been a member of the BMS community for several years. She has also volunteered to help with PAC events.
 - Tracey has a third grader at BMS. She is a long time member of the BMS community and a Montessori alumna herself.

Treasurer Report

Phuong Thang – Treasurer – **6:11 pm**

Profit and Loss Sheet

- Phuong said February was a good month. BMS's net ordinary income came in at \$31,687.96, which was close to what we budgeted for at \$32,930.61.
- The main reason for the variance between our income and the budget was the budget included the dividend from the CD. However, the CD expired, and we couldn't renew it at the same rate we had before.
- Our expenses came in close to what we budgeted for, and there were no surprises in February.
- Our net fundraising was \$5,359.92, and our total net income was \$37,047.88.

Balance Sheet

- BMS's operating checking at the end of February was \$230,759.79. Compared to January, that was an increase of about \$47,000. This was due to our net ordinary income for February and registration fees.
- Phuong said our checking and savings looked very good for February.
- In the FACTS accounting line, the January balance was around \$344,000, but for February, it's over \$1.3 million. This was due to enrollment in February, when families' financial commitment for the following year is depicted in FACTS accounting.
- Phuong said we will see an increase in long term liabilities based on the FACTS accounting line, because the school then has a commitment to provide families services.
- The other balances shown on the Balance Sheet were the normal amortizations of fixed assets, mortgage, etc., and are a representation of our position in a certain month and date.

Discussion of CD Options for Reinvesting Funds

- Cyndi did some research and came up with two options for the reinvestment of our CD funds, which total \$475,000.

- One option would be keeping our CD at IUCU for 13 month with a 0.5% dividend rate.
- The second option was investing in a CD with Synchrony bank for 15 months and a dividend rate of 0.9%.
- Phuong said based on a simple calculation, Synchrony would provide us interest of around \$5,300 - \$5,400 versus IUCU's CD, which would only accrue about \$2,500.
- The CD with Synchrony would only add two more months to our investment, but it could double our interest income. The Finance Committee thought it worthwhile to reinvest in the Synchrony CD instead of the IUCU CD. We have plenty of other accounts with IUCU (checking, mortgage, etc.), so this shouldn't hurt our relationship with them.
- It was pointed out that the meeting of the Federal Reserve to possibly raise interest rates would be happening the week after the Board Meeting, so it might be best to wait to reinvest until after that meeting when banks reconfigure their interest rates.
- Rob wondered if some Board members could do some research on other, possibly more competitive CD options and come up with a list for the Finance Committee to look at.
- It was agreed that by March 25th, the Finance Committee would look at a list of CD options from various banks. Cyndi and Phuong could go over the list in email and decide which option would be best for BMS to invest in.

President Report

Allison O'Boyle – President – **Time: 6:26 pm**

Executive Committee Report

- The Executive Committee consulted with Quinn between February and March on the PEOP and general COVID management.
- On February 18th, the committee met to process the COVID guideline changes from the CDC and ISDH and made the decision to keep everything in our PEOP in place until tonight's meeting. Allison sent out a statement to the school community soliciting feedback for the meeting.
- Next month, the committee will suggest a small edit of the Technology Policy in order to make it more comprehensive.
 - Under the section covering social media and our website, the committee wants to include the language "other web based platforms we use" (such as Vimeo and distance learning platforms), making sure the language covers all those websites. This will keep Quinn in charge of the tone and culture of making decisions on which websites to use in the school and classrooms.
- The Development Committee will meet on March 9th to identify the theme for next year's annual drive, put together a long term goals plan, and work on a committee charter.
- The Code of Conduct is still a work in progress. The "Parent Agreement" is still scheduled to be released in May with the final deposit request. The Code of Conduct will be ready for a first reading in April.
- The Executive Committee also consulted with Quinn on HR and weather concerns and is in the process of administering their annual 360 evaluation of Quinn. This year, Jess's evaluation is being handled by Quinn, since she's been in a faculty position.
 - Allison said she would send a reminder to the Board and lead teachers about Quinn's evaluation. She would like feedback by March 11th.

COVID-19 Policy Updates

- Allison shared a PowerPoint presentation entitled "PEOP Review and Discussion." "We built our PEOP on logic and on guidance from health experts and public policy, and we've had the rug pulled out from under us."

- The goal for the evening was to determine what the Board wants to include in the PEOP, why they're choosing those policies and procedures, and what criteria they would use for future changes.
- During Allison's presentation, she reviewed:
 - Our PEOP at present, including all the mitigation strategies we've implemented
 - The current/new public health guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH), and Monroe County Department of Health (MCDH)
 - Feedback about the new guidance from the American Academy of Pediatrics and from the American Medical Association
 - The policies local schools and daycares have put in place based on the new guidance
 - Current local COVID-related data, which may be incorrect due to the number of rapid tests being used and because schools are no longer required to contact trace and report cases
 - BMS vaccination rates and the total number of positive cases BMS has had among students and staff
 - Feedback from parents and staff about the new guidance
 - And the Executive Committee's recommendations for changes to the PEOP
- Allison advised everyone that the school qualifies for a rapid test mitigation program through the state. Each family would receive a set of rapid tests to take home to use weekly for the remainder of the school year.
- She opened the discussion up for comments and questions from the Board, reminding everyone to be cognizant of the time.
- From the discussion, in which both Board and staff gave their opinions and suggestions:
 - Most everyone who spoke agreed with making masks optional outside after Spring Break.
 - There was discussion about the cons of continuing to mask indoors, especially for our Early Childhood students. Masking has been found to be detrimental to their social and emotional development in some ways, especially when learning speech and language and reading facial expressions.
 - There was discussion about the pros of continuing to mask indoors, especially during the first two weeks after Spring Break, when cases may rise again after people return from traveling. Also, we have a large population of Early Childhood students who are still ineligible to be vaccinated.
 - There were questions about whether the benefits of continuing to mask indoors outweigh the risks to students' social and emotional development, especially if their risk of being seriously ill with the virus is low. Some Board members pointed out the possibility of students transmitting the virus to high risk or immunocompromised family members at home.
 - There was discussion about allowing the elementary students, who are vaccine eligible, to unmask in their classrooms and continuing to require masking in the Early Childhood classrooms. It was pointed out that this could cause confusion among families who have children in both elementary and early childhood classrooms. Also, some of our families have children going to public schools, where masking is optional.
 - There was discussion about the Board's fiduciary and liability responsibility to the school to make sure we keep everyone at the school protected.
 - It was suggested that we make masking indoors optional when cases reach a certain level, but once the numbers increase again, we return to requiring masks indoors. For

students' benefit, we should make it a gradual process, starting with making masks optional outdoors.

- There was a suggestion about allowing unmasking in the classrooms with higher vaccination rates, but each classroom is different, and some of the Early Childhood classrooms have more kindergartners than others. It was also pointed out that we're not requiring KN95 masks in the classrooms, Omicron is more transmissible, many Early Childhood students are not great at wearing masks in general, and the majority of the positive cases in our lower and upper elementary were vaccinated.
- It was suggested we could lean on other mitigation strategies, such as our air purifiers and MERV-13 HVAC filters, the continued podding of the classrooms, and social distancing and partitions while unmasked during lunch and naptimes.
- Quinn recommended moving forward with positive cases isolating to 8 days instead of 10 and allowing rapid test results for return to school.
- There was a question about how to proceed with a vote, and Rob suggested going through our current PEOP list of strategies, deciding which ones we want to change, and voting on that new list of changes. It was suggested that we wait two weeks after Spring Break before reviewing how things are going and making further changes to the plan.
- The following changes to the PEOP were suggested:
 - Mandatory masking indoors, but masking will be optional for everyone when they are outdoors on campus (students, staff, and parents).
 - Require social distancing only when unmasked inside the school.
 - Air purifiers and MERV filters will remain in place through the end of the school year.
 - Instead of contact tracing, families will be informed of positive cases in their classrooms. They will be asked to closely monitor their students for symptoms and will be encouraged to use the at home rapid tests provided by the state.
 - Allow PCR or lab administered rapid tests for positive cases to return to school.
 - Mitigation PCR testing of staff will continue through the summer.
 - Require vaccination status disclosure for staff and students.
 - Require isolation for 8 days for students and staff who are positive for COVID.
 - No more required quarantining of close contacts. However, if a student or staff is symptomatic, they fall under the school's sick policy, and must be symptom free without use of medication 24 hours before returning to school.
 - Keep the classroom pod structure through the end of the school year.
 - Remove the "cleaning of classroom materials" section of the PEOP, but continue the regular mid-day cleanings and professional daily cleanings of the classrooms.
- Allison reviewed these suggested changes and asked for questions from the group.
- **Christine Lovelace moved to approve the changes to the PEOP that were reviewed by Allison. Phuong Thang seconded the motion. The motion carried with no objections or abstentions.**
- A timeline was established for review of these changes. There will be a check-in on March 31st. Any new changes will go into effect on April 4th. There will be two week check-ins for the rest of the year to continue to review our plan.

Operations Report

Quinn McAvoy, Jess Davis, Teresa Mandell, Cyndi Williams – Admin Team – **Time: 8:19 pm**

Classroom Enrollment Numbers as of February 2022

Enrollment Update 2021-2022 Group	Actual 2021-2022	Classroom Capacities 2021-2022	Difference
Half-Day Preschool	48	48	0

All Day Preschool	44	44	0
Lower Elementary	52	59	-7
Upper Elementary	43	48	-5

Enrollment

- Re-enrollment is complete. The first wave of new student enrollment calls has been made and student visits are scheduled for the last two weeks of March and the first two weeks of April.
- Quinn said two students have left who were on sabbatical. Another student is returning to the lower elementary on March 21st.
- Summer camp registration is currently open to both BMS students and non-BMS students.

Staff

- Teresa will be leaving her position of IT manager at BMS. Her last working day will be March 11th. We will be reassessing the school's IT needs.
- Kat Drake has had her baby and is on maternity leave. Donalee is covering Kat's leave, and Mara is covering Donalee's position.
- The hiring process for an Upper Elementary non-lead teacher continues.
- We will begin the hiring process for the 2022 – 2023 school year soon. We are looking to hire a non-lead Walnut teacher, a Sweetgum assistant, a Hickory AM assistant, and two Aftercare teachers: one for Lower Elementary and one for Upper Elementary.
- Teachers are looking for non-lead/assistant teachers to join their team for our summer camp sessions.
- Staff peer evaluation surveys were completed.

Curriculum

- Jess is partnering with Sam for his transition to Lead teacher with curriculum planning and resource development.
- Parent-teacher conferences were held February 27th and February 28th.

Student Services

- Quinn and Jess attended MCCSC team meetings for Individualized Service Plans for students and led in-house accommodation plan team meetings.

Advocacy

- The Montessori bill has passed the Indiana House of Representatives and just needs signed into law! The bill is for Montessori to be a recognized pedagogy in the Family and Social Services Administration. Jess said it's a small win, but it increases the ratio of students to teachers to closer align with American Montessori Society standards.

Professional Development

- Quinn continues her Ph.D. course work on Educational Leadership.
- Jess continues an IU master's program: Teaching, Learning, and Curriculum.
- Jess continues her Yoga 300 certification with a focus on teaching yoga to children.
- Cyndi completed her Discovering Montessori course.
- Alice completed OG training.
- April is taking OG training on phonological awareness.

Administrative

- Training for new Office Assistant
- Enrollment
 - Tours

- Inquiry follow-up phone calls
- Re-enrollment
- New student enrollment
- CTBS (Standardized Testing)
 - Testing completed
- National School Lunch Program
 - Cyndi attended trainings: Financial Management and Civil Rights Compliance
 - Verification Report filed
 - NSLP claims filed for January: \$8,098.44
 - On-site audit scheduled for March 25th, 2022.
- PEOP (Pandemic Emergency Operations Plan)
 - Continued to attend Department of Education and Indiana State Department of Health briefings bi-weekly
 - Continued updates
 - Tracking and documenting all illness absences per PEOP protocol.
 - Discussion around new guidance with the Executive Committee

Parent Action Committee (PAC)

- The school donated over 225 items to Pantry 279 through our Community Service-Learning Project in February!
- PAC is working on the Parents' Night fundraising event on March 25th. Registration is open until March 18th.
 - Cardinal Spirits and Big Red have donated spirits and wine for the event.
 - BOD participation is greatly appreciated and is a great way to show your support for BMS events and make yourself visible to the community.
 - Perhaps consider buying a "Virtual Table for Four" package and get your friends involved too! This is PAC's last fundraising event of the school year.
- The next PAC event will be Take & Make: Terrarium Gift
- A succession plan for PAC Chair is in the works.

Community Partnerships

- Social justice curriculum partnership between the city and BMS fully implemented. Jess has taught two sessions outside of BMS.
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Commission is planning a virtual community event to honor the 54th anniversary of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination. Jess will be leading a breakout room, along with several other members.

Facilities

- Maintenance Completed
 - Lower playground woodchips installed
- Maintenance Pending
 - Lower playground and side yard flooding/water retention. Quinn said she has a call in to the city. The creation of Short Street has put a path of running water straight through our lower playground. She's hoping the city will take some responsibility for that.
 - Sweetgum student bathroom – flooring and toilet repair
- Mason Davis has been hired to do maintenance repair and landscaping around the school. Quinn said these sorts of jobs can also be parent volunteer opportunities.
- Quinn signed an agreement with the YMCA to use their parking lot again during drop off and pick up.

Technology

- Updated Chromebooks in Maple, Walnut, and in reserve (computer closet).
- Willow/Sycamore laptops also updated Windows 10 Version 21H2 (KB4023057, KB5009467, KP5010415).
- Updated laptops in Willow/Sycamore as well as Nick, Sam, Anna, and Robyn's laptops prior to parent/teacher conferences. Updated Emily's machine.
- Provided backup Chromebook to Robyn for use when her laptop got too slow. (It needed updating, see below).
- Deprovisioned one Chromebook in Walnut. The battery is shot. It's not worth replacing the battery.
- Participated in a Nominating Committee Interview and final candidate submissions.
- Writing up all my duties for the next person. (Detailed instructions are being written for my successor).
 - Remove my personal data from the school computer I use currently.
 - Change all the passwords and document them for my successor.
 - Removed my IT account as admin from all the FB classroom pages, this role is no longer necessary now that Quinn is posting and running memberships.
 - Removed my personal email from Listserv accounts. I had been receiving all correspondence there when we were having problems with Sympa at IU.
 - Removed Teresa Mandell from access to listservs (changed to BMS IT Manager and left password for a new person).
- Reported website outage to GoMontessori. Worked with GoMontessori and Reclaim Hosting to get this figured out.
- Uploaded more documentation to FACTS for access by parents through Resource Documents in the Family Portal (this was done to mitigate the GoMontessori/GoDaddy outage).
- Tracked down some metadata issues we were having with PDFs. Old titles of documents stored in files. Now that we have identified the problem, we can move on.
- Posted the Shakespeare Play video for Sycamore Class.
- Quick training with Emily on Google Apps.
- Google for Education training (3 half-hour sessions).
 - Learned about Chrome OS Flex which I have recommended to Quinn for the older laptops in Sycamore/Willow.
 - Chrome App Hub may be a great resource for software to use with Chromebooks and WeVideo for students to make their own videos.
 - The Chrome Apps in the Hub are all COPPA and FERPA compliant. Although individual schools' experiences have varied, most free versions are quite useful.

Development/Fundraising Committee

- The next Development Committee meeting will be March 9th.
- Activities and Events
 - Take A Hike - Restricted Funds: \$2,233.04
 - Charleston Wrap: \$2,215
 - Lynch Creek: \$179
 - Annual Appeal 2021: \$27,488.14
 - Donations: \$49.00
 - Amazon Smiles: \$178.51
 - Fall Parent Night: \$568.46
 - Kroger: \$1316.47

- Donations: \$93.90

Communications

- Bi-monthly Newsletters, emails to community
- Facebook posts
- Event Flyers
- Website updates
- Jess posted information about the school on WFIU. It's on rotation as an ad.
- BMS will have a booth at the Children's Expo on April 9th at Switchyard Park.

Finances as of 2/28/22

- Main checking: \$230,759.79
- Money market: \$120,474.61
- Fundraising: \$554,380.77
- Café Account: \$7,675.35
- Tuition delinquency: \$6,284.13
 - Four families have delinquent tuition amounts and two families have delinquent incidental expenses
- IUCU Loan balance: \$645,244.85
- Unemployment Account: credit of \$1,750.91
- Certificate of Deposit Account: \$475,000 to be moved into a new CD
 - Two available options: Synchrony with an interest rate of 0.90% for 15 months and IUCU with an interest rate of 0.50% for 13 months.

Closing

Allison O'Boyle – President – **Time: 8:28pm**

- Allison thanked everyone for their honesty and their peaceful, open minded discussions during the meeting. She said she appreciated everyone's thoughts and time.
- The Board moved to Closed Session.

Meeting Adjourned: **8:29 pm**

Respectfully submitted by Amanda Cook, Board Secretary