

Bloomington Montessori School Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

November 15, 2022, 6:00 pm, Online via Zoom

Board Members Present

- Allison O'Boyle
- Christine Lovelace
- Bridget Stromberg
- Russ Clark
- Rob Danzman
- Janelle Terkhorn
- Hilary Kanyi
- Tracey Warren
- Ge Yan

Staff Members Present

- Quinn McAvoy
- Jess Davis
- Cindy Williams

Preliminaries

Allison O'Boyle – President – **6:03 pm**

Welcome

Approval of Minutes from October 2022 Board Meeting

- Allison asked for comments, questions, or edits. There were none.
- Janelle motioned to approve the minutes, and Tracey seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Call for Issues Not on the Agenda

- No new issues were added to the agenda.

Finance Committee Report

Bridgett Stromberg – Treasurer – **6:04 pm**

Financial Review

- The school maintains a strong financial position with \$963,178 in bank accounts and the Live Oak CD. These balances are 16.08% larger than as of October 31, 2021. Long-term liabilities are only \$606,208. As such, the school has the ability to cover its debts.

- Overall, the net income is \$40,550, which is \$21,209 higher than budgeted for the month. This overage is larger than what was reported in August and September 2022. Most of the overage is due to lower-than-budgeted salary expense. As Quinn explained during the September 13th meeting, there is a placeholder in the budget for an IT staff or any IT work we might need.
 - Approximately, \$8K of the overage is due to lower-than-expected salaries, as explained above.
 - Another \$5,300 of the overage is due to lower-than-budgeted Kitchen Expenses. Which is likely a mistake in charges from the food vendor. This will be corrected this month.
 - There is an overage of \$3,655 in Other Income.
 - Training expenses were \$2,528 higher than budgeted (this is just a difference in when conferences occur verses and Workers Comp Insurance was \$1,406 lower-than-budgeted. Training expense is different than budgeted because the budgeted amount is spread evenly over the year whereas incurred amounts vary based on when conferences and training opportunities arise. Workers Compensation insurance was actually lower than budgeted as a result of changing vendors. Previously, we paid insurance annually and now we are making payments more regularly.
- Rob asked if the Finance Committee has looked into the Inflation Reduction Act benefits available to non-profits (for green energy credits, etc.). Bridget said she would put it on the committee agenda for next meeting.

Other Items

- Work continues to determine whether BMS can claim a payroll tax refund for the Employee Retention Credit. The School does not qualify under the first of two options. The consultant is working to determine if the School qualifies under the second option.
- The 2021-2022 financial statements will be reviewed by Desmond & Ahern. BMS has submitted information to Desmond & Ahern for preparation of the 2021 tax return.
- Finance Committee will be meeting in early December to put together budget proposal for review at the December Board meeting.

Governance Report

Janelle Terkhorn – Vice President- 6:14pm

Governance

- Will be discussing the creation of documentation on the preservation and destruction of board materials including how the board handles emails.
- Will form a rough draft to be submitted to the Executive Committee for editing and approval to the board handbook

- Working on creating guidelines for a board performance review that will include individual assessments.

Nominating Committee

- Issuing requests to board members concerning their desire to stay on the board or in current board positions.
- Board skills matrix were sent with retention requests.
- Parent Christi Walton has volunteered for nominating committee this year. Janelle will be sending out a request via Quinn for our mandatory staff volunteer.

Executive Committee Report

Allisson O'Boyle – President - 6:18pm

PEOP and COVID management

- Multiple cases within Walnut and Sycamore in the last month, with a Sycamore cluster resulting in a temporary move to distance learning.
- No major updates from any of our public health agency resources in the last month regarding management strategies.
- The Centers for Disease Control has changed their reporting of county and state level statistics, including case and death updates, to a weekly basis. The new community level and data are available by 8 pm every Thursday. The current community risk level is low as of November 10, 2022.

Strategic Planning

- A strategic plan performance summary will be drafted and available for review for the Executive Committee's next meeting in January.

Policy updates

- The policies listed above were approved at the 11/10 meeting for the first reading by the Board.

Committee Business

- Security camera research update

- o The bid from Steve at BTown IT is the most cost effective so far.
 - Asked Steve, as a parent, to scope out the quotes to make sure we are comparing the same elements.
- o Erin at Leading Edge Home Security, who is a past parent and provides our alarms, was asked to bid on the project.
- o Siemens, a large chain, was reached out to and we are still waiting on a quote.
- First reading of policy handbook edits:
 - o Community Conduct policy
 - Awareness that we have policies that guide student and staff behavior with procedures to address behaviors outside of these guidelines, yet we lack such policies for the rest of the community including parents and caregivers.
 - Legal review is high priority to ensure that the policy doesn't conflict with any federal, state or local laws.
 - Rob asked about where the boundary lines are drawn. Who is the judge of what is appropriate and not appropriate. Allison clarified that the intent is to have an avenue of addressing behaviors that affect operations.
 - Bridget added that private entities do not have to uphold people's First Amendment rights. However, we accept Federal and State Funding. Jess cited a situation where a non-profit, private Montessori school in Canada was overruled by the Supreme Court when banning a parent who was spreading hateful speech due to First Amendment rights.
 - Janelle pointed out that our corrective action is not specified so the policy doesn't state anything contrary to federal, state or local laws.
 - Ge found a law website that states that private schools, regardless of federal or state funding, do not have to uphold First Amendment rights. He also stated that he wants the Head of School to have the power to address behavior quickly because, as parents, one of the reasons we send our children to private school is to be part of a community with common values that are upheld within the school environment.
 - Russ asked if we need to include online communities to this?
 - Bridget commented that we shouldn't have a policy that we don't intend to enforce or don't have a way to enforce. Add more clarity around who is monitoring behavior (especially in online environments). Notice to parents is important so that everyone who is on the school grounds is aware of the policy.

- Allison said that there will be signage, emails and it will go out as part of the yearly paperwork for families.
 - We will take this to the lawyer prior to second review.
- o Website and social media policy updates
 - The first goal of these edits is to include other platforms we now use, for example Zoom, FACTS, Google Drive, etc. in the original policy.
 - The Board didn't have any alterations to this policy.
 - A Cyber Bullying definition to the policy since it is referenced in the student and staff behavior policies.
 - The bullying would have to affect the ability of students to thrive at school or affect the mental health of a student within Bloomington Montessori School.
 - Janelle suggested that we include Cyber Bullying in the community behavior policy.
 - Rob asked if AMS s any guidance on these policies? Allison said we have accessed their policy templates before and can check to see if they have a template for this policy as well.
 - Jess pointed out that studies have shown that the use of the word "bully" with children is not effective.
 - Cyndi suggested looking at the state education resources so that the policy abides by the state anti-bullying rules. Jess believes we do not have to align with state policies since we are not accredited.
 - The Board decided to table this change and look at the entire bullying policy at a later time.
- o Weapons prohibition policy
 - Indiana broadened where weapons are allowed to be carried, so private entities must specify policies if they wish to limit weapons on their property.
 - Cannot supersede state law, so Law Enforcement Officers and other persons identified by state law must be allowed to carry their weapon.
 - Quinn wanted to know who would be responsible for searching.

- It is likely that police would be called if there was suspicion that someone had a weapon; however, the Board wanted the Head of School to have the right to take action as the law permits and the situation warrants.
- Allison suggested bringing this policy for legal review prior to the second reading. The Board agreed.

Development Committee Report

Allison O'Boyle – President

Development Committee Membership and Meetings

- Next meeting: December 13, 2022, 2:00 pm

Development planning/structural support

- Will review Return On Investment (ROI) analysis and discuss
- Quinn, Jess, and Allison met on November 7 to review materials from a recent class taken by Jess. The class provided additional information on ROI best practice and reinforced the need for refinement of the development calendar and formation of a clear case for fundraising and allocation of unrestricted funds. These materials will be shared as well at the December 13 meeting.

Development Event Planning

- Upcoming: planning for spring event (which will be a slightly larger parent event)

Annual campaign

- Board kickoff is tonight!
 - It is absolutely necessary to have 100% Board participation in annual campaign
- Our goal is \$50,000
- Giving Tuesday planning underway
 - Quinn and Jess: recording streaming program
 - Allison, Ge, Matt Metzler, Ken McAvoy: materials support

- o Joanna Woronkovicz, Quinn, Allison: sponsor requests, all sponsor slots filled
- o Giving Tuesday is on November 29th
- o Board members can share on Facebook on Giving Tuesday

Fundraising Progress

- Fundraising checking account: \$18,312.63
- Fundraising savings account: \$63,658.58
- Giving Tuesday sponsorships (pledged at this time): \$6500/\$6000 guaranteed

PAC Report

Tracey Warren – PAC Co-Chair - 7:03pm

Monthly Zoom Meeting: November 9, 2022

- Meeting rescheduled from November 2 due to chair illness
- Eight Attendees: Patrick Shih, Adriana Fernandez, Tracey Warren, Carley Carter, Pantea - [virtual connection name], Christine Bannister, Allison O'Boyle, Jen Pacella; Power point slide deck PAC chair presentation
- **Art to Remember Fundraiser**
 - o 50 + products of different types of children's artwork
 - o Submission Closing Date: November 18, 2002
 - o The date goal is for items to be delivered by Winter school break.
 - o Items can still be ordered after 11/18 date but will not be available until after Winter break.
 - o Parents are still able to receive volunteer hours by dissemination opportunities, creative outlets with design, etc.
- **Take & Make Pottery Painting**
 - o Last PAC activity for the season
 - o Facility – The Pottery House Studio (Williamsburg Center on South Pete Ellis Drive, 47408)
 - o It has expanded due to purchasing next door business space
 - o Can now accommodate approximately 40 people; outdoor workspace is still available
 - o Change of event date options: December 2nd will not be available as previously mentioned
 - o Other dates include December 3rd, 9th, 10th
 - o The option is for this to be hybrid – meaning studio in-person or take home and bring item back to be fired in the kiln
 - o There will be a 2-week window to pick up items after being painted
 - o The goal is to have items ready before Winter break
 - o Montessori will be receiving a 20% discount of cost
 - o Approximately \$15 per participant on average would be the cost

- **Spring 2023 Events Calendar**
 - Further exploration with face-to-face activities such as classroom meet-ups or other in-person options
 - For instance, one suggestion is to meet up with future classroom colleagues
 - Mentioned was doing some community service activities to do a give back to those that feel comfortable doing in person functions
 - Another non-profit to consider is TANDEM
 - Other fundraiser sponsored events were discussed
 - Childcare logistics were raised about having paired activities again
 - Allison will discuss with Jess and Quinn workarounds with childcare
- **Miscellaneous**
 - An anecdotal count of 9 Fridays, a group of Montessori Friday Food Truck playdates have occurred
 - On average 5 parents upwards with kids have met at Switchyard Park
 - Duration ... 2 + hours
 - Continuation of Friday playdates at the Warehouse (indoor Switchyard Park facility) has been discussed
 - I mentioned this at the Warehouse Board Meeting
 - They would be pleased with such a collaboration
 - Other indoor options are being discussed
 - This may or may not come under a PAC umbrella
- Next PAC Zoom Meeting, Wednesday, December 7, 2022 @ 5:30 p.m.
- Volunteers need to email Tonya or Quinn with their volunteer hours.
- We are not able to do childcare due to the podding system we have in place for Covid.
- Development and PAC relationship needs to be planned out. Proactive planning of events each year would also help define roles.

2022-2023 Schedule

- In the 2022-2023 academic year, The PAC plans to host or assist with the following upcoming events:
 - Take & Make Hybrid with Pottery House Studio: Seasonal Craft (December 2022)
 - Take & Make: Food (January 20th, 2023)
 - Community Service Project (February or March 2023)
 - Parent Social/Fundraiser (Saturday, April 1st, 2023)
 - Teacher Appreciation (First week of May 2023)
 - Spring Fling (May 13th, 2023)

Operations Report

Quinn McAvoy – Head of School – 7:45pm

Enrollment Update 2022-2023

Group	Actual 2022-2023	Classroom Capacities 2022-2023	Budgeted Spots
Half-Day	51	54	54

Half-Day Lunch Program	21	21	0
All Day	60	60	60
Lower EL	63	66	57
Upper EL	44	48	45

Enrollment:

- Two elementary students will be leaving BMS this month as they move out of state.
- Two students enrolling in Early Childhood.

Staff:

- Matt Metzler will be leaving at the end of the quarter.
- Tommy Birchall Perez will be leaving in January/February and moving out of state.
- Both jobs are posted, and interviews will begin.
- Quinn is taking a two-week medical leave starting November 18th and ending December 12th.
 - Jess will be at school on the Fridays that she is not typically at school.

Curriculum:

- Jess is a mentor teacher to two adult learners, Nick for his Transition to Teaching program and Sam for his Montessori Training. She meets weekly-biweekly with them and completes observations twice a month.
- Jess teaches Universe Book lessons in Maple and Walnut to first graders (weekly session in each class).
- Jess is doing some direct student service intervention (exceptional rate of high needs in the school right now)
 - Kindergarten Orton Gillingham reading intervention group for kids needed additional support
 - Running one twice-weekly lit group in Upper Elementary for students needing extra support.

Student Services:

- Quinn and Jess attended MCCSC team meetings for ISPs for students and led in house accommodation plan team meetings.
- Quinn and Jess are completing student and classroom observations

Parent Education:

- Parent Forum: “Welcome to the Progress Report and Benchmarks” 9/28 at 5:30 pm
 - Shared the video with all parents prior to parent teacher conferences.

Advocacy

- Jess will be visiting the statehouse to discuss Montessori voices on the new Early Childhood Learning Committee on 11/28

Professional Development:

- Quinn is completing her dissertation on Montessori benchmarks and assessment
- Sam is working on completing his Montessori teacher certification.
- Nick is working on completing his Transition to Teaching program at IU.
- Jess is working on IU master's program: Teaching, Learning, and Curriculum.
 - Began fall class: School and community partnerships (A510)
- Jess is completing two online Classes (through Trillium Montessori):
 - Onboarding Montessori Substitutes
 - Montessori Substitute Orientation Course
- Jess completed the "Achieving Annual Sustainability" class through IUPUI School of Philanthropy.
- Jess is auditing the Certificate in Reading course newly offered by AMS.

Administrative

- Quinn and Jess are scheduling tours and enrollment
- Development committee has been working on the annual campaign (sponsorships, appeal letters, updating donation links and materials, Giving Tuesday plans, etc.)
- ABAR committee is developing a Diversity & Inclusion survey that will go out to parents and finalizing an ABAR commitment statement to be adopted by the school.
- Gathering documents to support Covid restrictions for the tax credit.
- PEOP
 - Continued to attend Department of Education and Indiana State
- Department of Health briefings monthly
 - Continued updates
 - Tracking and documenting all illness absences per PEOP protocol. Tracking and documenting all illness absences per PEOP protocol.

Community Partnerships

- Continuing discussions with IU Department of Education regarding a Montessori Teacher Education Program. Our contact there is retiring, so we are making sure we get as far as we can before she leaves.
- IU Permaculture class will donate their time to design value-aligned landscaping for the campus.
- Sycamore Land Trust will work with most classrooms on service projects about native vs. invasive plants and accompanying learning/presentations this year.
- Jess is involved as a BMS representative in planning the City of Bloomington MLK, Jr. Remembrance Walk in April (will take place near Fairview, a historian guided walk mixing MLK info with a walk around Black Bloomington historical locations).

Facilities:

- **COMPLETED:**
 - HVAC Replacement – Quotes received and project on hold
 - Lighting Project
 - Window replaced in Sycamore
 - Plumbing repairs – Magnolia, Maple, Commons Bathroom
- **PENDING:**
 - Hand sink in Walnut, scheduling in progress
 - Commons bathroom drywall repair and painting
 - Magnolia gate repair – got quotes and scheduling date
 - Security cameras – awaiting quotes
 - Mulching of the Sweetgum/Hickory playground – will be completed during Thanksgiving Break
 - Hand sink in Walnut, scheduling in progress
 - Window well replacement in Sycamore – awaiting material delivery

Communications:

- Bi-monthly Newsletters, emails to the community
- Facebook posts
- Event Flyers
- Website updates
- Parent Informational meetings

Finances as of 9/31/22:

- Main checking: \$269,934.76
- Money market: \$181,010.98
- CD-IUCU: \$238,197.25
- CD-Live Oak \$238,509.98
- Fundraising: \$83,441.51

- Café Account \$5,361.24
- Tuition delinquency - \$7,791
- IUCU Loan balance - \$ 606,208.68

Closing

Allison O'Boyle – President – 8:09pm

- Allison thanked everyone for attending.
- No closed session this month.
- Meeting Adjourned: **8:12 pm**

Respectfully submitted by Christine Lovelace, Board Secretary