

Bloomington Montessori School

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

October 08, 2024, 6:00 pm, Zoom

Board Members Present

- Janelle Terkhorn
- Allison O'Boyle
- Christine Lovelace
- Joanna Woronkowicz
- Tracey Warren
- Hilary Kanyi
- Ge Yan
- ~~Anne Sterling~~
- Chad Lochmiller
- ~~Russ Clark~~

Staff Members Present

- Quinn McAvoy
- Jess Davis
- Cyndi Williams

Preliminaries

Janelle Terkhorn – President – **6:05 pm**

Welcome

Approval of Minutes from the March Board Meeting

- Allison motioned to approve the minutes and Ge seconded the motion. Motion to approve the minutes passed unanimously.

Call for issues not on the agenda

- Christine announced that the committee report templates have been revamped and committee chairs can reach out to her if they have any questions.
- Ge mentioned that Co-Pilot is a really great resource for taking minutes.

Executive Committee

Janelle Terkhorn, President

Committee Business

- Next meeting: November 7, 2024, 11 am
- No policies to be read this month

Current Issues

- Air Quality Testing was performed by the Department of Health regarding Co2 levels that were detected by a home testing device sent with a child. The Department of Health did not find any citable issues and the Administrative team has been following through on an intensive HVAC evaluation to further improve numbers. The Administrative team will continue to monitor air quality in the building while assessments are being made and improvement plans are being put together.
 - Janelle sent an email to the Board prior to Quinn's message to the community but the email did not go through to the Board. She will look into what happened.
- The president, secretary, and HOS met to discuss current organizational practices in the Drive. The secretary is currently working with committee chairs to streamline folders and eliminate redundant files. This should further improve the workflow for board members as they access needed information.
- The EC is working with the secretary on a system to ensure that policy changes made in the handbooks or other important documents are reflected in the drives and simpler to access.
- Articles of Incorporation questions will be sent to our lawyer. Changes needed to the AOI include how we regard family membership at the school and what legal obligations we may or may not have regarding this language. These AOI changes will result in major revisions of the bylaws being conducted by the Governance Committee.
- EC would like to remind chairs of committees to check in and update strategic plan information

Next meeting: November 7, 2024, 11 am

Operations

- Please see Quinn's operations report.

Strategic Plan Accountability

Project Updates

- Strategic Plan Management
 - Plan Monitoring

- EC, Secretary
 - Monthly report documents to be altered to meet needs of the strategic plan and group
- EC Procedures and Practices
 - Consistency in Practice
 - EC, Secretary
 - Checklists and best practices for handbook updates to ensure consistency

Next Month's Goals

- Strategic Plan Management
 - Monitoring Overall Plan
 - Template Progress for monthly reports

Development Committee

Allison O'Boyle, Committee Chair

Committee Business

- Fun Run Promotion
- New member: current parent DeJohn Rose
- Board Member Giving Form and match planning - please complete by the November Board meeting
- Discussion item: Vision Statement review. "The vision of Bloomington Montessori School is to become a center of peace and education for our community."
- Next committee meeting: October 28, 2024, 9 am, on Zoom

Current Projects

- 5K Trail Run/Family Fun Run: 5 sponsors, registrations ongoing. Staff, Sophia, and committee members have made sponsorship asks and promoted the event via flyers and

community websites. Donation requests underway for refreshments for runners. Google Form use for capturing sponsorship information [3A; 3B; 4A]

- o 72 people have registered so far.
- Annual campaign planning underway; letter and imagery developed. One sponsor committed and other asks will begin in late October.
- Sponsorship packet reviewed by the committee. Feedback will be incorporated by the November meeting. [2A; 2C]
- Legacy packet to be reviewed at October meeting [1A; 1C]
- Development policy review slated for spring semester [3C]
- RaiseRight Scrip physical gift card ordering underway
- Believe Kids fundraiser finished well and has been renewed for 2025-2026. Catalog fundraisers were planned for a 3-year cycle based on prior performance.
 - o 173 people chose the \$20 donation option rather than purchasing an item, of which BMS gets 70%.
 - o This will be considered when looking at other catalogs.
- Fall merchandise has been ordered and will be delivered soon. Merchandise will be incorporated into monthly coffee/popcorn events to market scrip program, other events.
- Is the board open to considering an evaluation and potential reworking on our mission and vision statements? This would be something that would need to be started in the Spring semester to prepare for the start of a new Strategic Plan cycle.
 - o Jess explained that the teachers created the value statement and it was not created strategically. The statement may not be optimal in regards to community engagement, teaching alignment or development.
 - o First steps would include stakeholder surveys to see what is valued most about the school.
 - The Board was excited to get feedback from the school families as well as the greater community.
 - o It was mentioned that this seems like an important inquiry to have as the school evolves and transitions into a more structured nonprofit.
 - o What does BMS add to the educational community of Bloomington and how do we want to be perceived among other educational options?

- o Chad sees it as a marketing issue and that mission and vision work should happen alongside the next strategic plan cycle and outside the framework of marketing. A strategic marketing angle can be created if development needs to assist donors in seeing the value of our mission and vision.
 - Allison and Jess both commented that the language used does not accurately illustrate the current goals or values of the school.
 - Bloomington public schools are hemorrhaging students to other districts (due to cost of living) and to private schools (school vouchers). This may be an opportunity for BMS to position the school as a top choice among those leaving public school.
- o Who will lead the process?
 - Joanna suggested that there be a special committee to hold responsibility for the evaluation of the mission and vision.
 - Chad suggested that we get clear on the process of inquiry so that we know where we are looking to go. He suggested John Bryson's model which lays out a process and sets the intention of the data collection.
 - To what extent is the vision and mission of the school understood by our stakeholders and how does it impact the community's willingness to contribute?
- o The Development Committee will come up with a formal plan and questions to drive this assessment and bring it back to the Board.

Fundraising Update (caveat: numbers are reported as soon as net is available or updated monthly; may not match fundraising accounting)

- Annual Campaign: \$3650 received for 2024-2025 Annual Campaign
- \$105 received in FACTS for past campaigns
- Believe Kids: \$5200 net proceeds
- Merchandise: New spirit wear pre-sale orders totaled \$2,452.50.
- 5K Trail Run/Family Fun Run net proceeds available in November.
- RaiseRight Scrip: \$77 net proceeds from August 1 to September 30, 2024.
- Kroger Rewards: not received to date this year (usually received in spring)

- Scholastic Books: not received to date this year (No catalog orders yet; book fair in January)
- Art to Remember: not received to date this year (March project)

Finance Committee

Joanna Woronkowicz, Treasurer

Report given by Cyndi Williams

Committee Business

- The Finance Committee had its first meeting and discussed multiple items related to the strategic plan.
- Next meeting: December 9, 2024 from 6-7pm

Financial Review

- The school's financial position is relatively similar to this time last year, with around \$2.159 million in cash and investments. Current assets are up approximately 4.81% over last year, and total liabilities are down by 2.49% compared to last year. Equity is up by 6.93%.
- The current balance in investments is \$679,098. Since July 1, the school's investment funds have generated \$27,024 in returns (net of fees), gains of 4.14%.
- Allison noticed that the balance of the scholarship fund was larger than she expected.
 - o This account also holds capital improvement funds and professional development.
 - o Quinn said she used all of last year's budget allocation for capital improvements.
 - o Joanna would like to see as much of our operational money in the investment funds while retaining the liquidity we need for immediate use. Right now, the finance committee is watching how the funds move month to month before deciding on how much more money can be invested.

Current Projects

- The Finance Committee met on October 7 and discussed a system for monitoring investment performance. [1C]
- The Finance Committee met on October 7 and discussed creating an FAQ page for the website. Joanna will begin drafting and circulate to the committee by the end of October. [2A]
 - Hilary shared her support for more financial transparency on the website.
- The Finance Committee met on October 7 and discussed a plan for reorganizing Google Drive. Joanna will take the lead and have this completed by the end of the year. [4C]
- Once the new BMS website is up and the 990 is filed (December), the 990 will be posted. [2B]
- Guidestar is automatically updated by the IRS. Quinn will update Guidestar with the auditor's financial report as soon as it's available. [2B]

Governance Committee

Allison O'Boyle, Vice President

Governance Committee Business

- Please complete the board member return/self-assessment Google form by Friday, October 18.
- Next meeting: November 13, 2024, 11 am

Current Projects

- Research proceeding on best practice recommendations for board member requirements in bylaws. [2B]
- Edits to the board member self-assessment forms and board application have converted both to Google Form format. Both forms assess interest in leadership positions on the board to assist with recruitment. Procedures for both forms are outlined within each document to ensure consistency of use and storage. [4B]

Nominating Committee Business

- Committee is still in need of a staff member.
- The committee will convene in late October or early November once the self-assessments have been reviewed and needs determined.

Parent Action Committee

Tracey Warren, PAC Co-Chair and Board Member-at-Large

Past Events/Current Projects

- Pac General Body Meeting, September 13, 2024, 9:00 AM
- Food Truck First Friday, Switchyard Park, October 4, 3:00 p.m.
- Internal Zoom Fall Festival Wrap-up meetings
- BMS Bowls at Classic Bowling, Sunday, September 15 @ 4:00 p.m.
 - It was fun! People like ' just come or show up' sometimes.
 - Approx. 107 people in total; 100 during pre-registration; 7 walk-up payments ... less than 10% walkins versus roller skating. No complaints either way.
 - Most all age ranges attended: K through 4-6th grade sections
 - Lots of photos
- Fall Fest at Fowler Park, off Greene Cty Line Road, Saturday, October 26th
 - 9:00 AM Fun Run ... impressed with signage
 - 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM(Noon) Fall Festival
 - Coordination Continuation of Fall Festival at Fowler Park
 - Will post to BMS Board about needs shortly

Updates Opportunities and Needs

- Some Parents' Perspective regarding PAC ... continued strategic in.
 - Like having a PAC for parent/admin. hierarchy order
 - No voice or at least not heard
 - Follow-up is minimal with suggestions
 - Better order of operations with how PAC operates regarding BMS board; meaning what needs Board approval versus what can be done internally with PAC led decisions

- Meeting purposes - foot soldiers to simply implement ideas from chairs, additional sub-committees for event coordination since only 2 general body meetings, want for more community involvement
- Suggestions for new PAC name: Family Engagement Committee, Parent Participation Network, Parental Involvement Team, Parent Involvement Group *, Parent Involvement Committee, Parent Engagement Council, Parent Involvement Association, Family Support Group, Family Involvement Team (FIT)

Operations

Quinn McAvoy, Jess Davis, and Cyndi Williams

Enrollment Update

- Enrollment tours continue.
- We have a waitlist for the all-day middle group, lower elementary, and upper elementary programs.

Group	Actual September Enrollment 2024-2025	Classroom Capacity 2024-2025	Budgeted Spots 2024-2025
Half/Full Day	37	54	49
Half-Day Lunch Program	18	24	19
All Day	56	60	60
Lower EL	66	66	64
Upper EL	39	39	39

Staff

- We've hired three new subs.
- We've run three sub-training sessions and two new staff training sessions (Montessori philosophy, Positive Discipline, and employee handbook overviews).

Curriculum

- Our annual focus area is the development of executive function skills.
- DIBELS administered (pilot for reading assessment tool); currently being scored (K-6)
 - BETA test year - looking for more robust data collection to inform teaching
 - This is an open source test from University of Oregon that tests many literacy skills. It also has a self-scoring app that is more of an investment, which the school would only make if utilizing it on an ongoing basis.
 - We used to align with MCCSC (Fountus and Pinnell) but they are looking for a new assessment tool.
- Jess is teaching Universe Book lessons to first graders.
- Jess will be doing direct services for reading intervention for a few children in the school. While we are SO fortunate to have a full-time special education paraprofessional this year, the certified special education teacher may only be on campus about three hours per week. (It is an algorithm based on the number of students eligible here and the number of private students eligible in the whole district.)
- New Terra Nova tests (the new edition: Terra Nova NEXT) have been ordered and received for standardized testing. We should be able to go back to our January testing window. This year's total cost for testing and scoring will be around \$4,600.

Advocacy

- Jess continues her work as President of the United Montessori Schools of Indiana.
- Jess is continuing her work as Secretary of the Board for the Montessori Public Policy Initiative (Washington DC)
- Jess chaired the United Montessori Schools of Indiana's annual professional learning conference September 20-21 at Trine University. She attended as a Board Member and afternoon keynote speaker.
- Jess attended the national Montessori advocacy conference (Montessori Public Policy Initiative) from September 27 to 29. This conference is an opportunity for all sectors of Montessori education in the US to come together, discuss issues, and find collaborations to strengthen advocacy efforts across states.

Student Services

- Ongoing ISP and accommodation plan review meetings with families/teams.
- We have several children going through the referral process with MCCSC.
- Student service eligibility rosters have been updated for the first quarter.
- We have a new SLP and special education teacher (Libby and MJ), and they have settled their classroom schedules and begun working with children.
 - Summary by services: We have 23 children receiving speech and language services, 4 receiving direct services from special education (MJ), and 36 receiving direct services from Terri Chase (Full-time MCCSC special ed paraprofessional).
 - Summary by student services tier:
 - Early Childhood:


- Tier 2 students-22
 - Tier 3 students-4
 - Elementary
 - Tier 2 students-33
 - Tier 3 students-8
- We are currently working out the details of a year-long contract with Sky Adams, the therapist we worked with last year. The contract would provide student observation/teacher consultation for tier two and three students, with the option of direct services as needed for tier three students who do not have regular access to mental health care. He will also host a parent forum related to our executive function year-long focus. This will mostly be covered by MCCSC Title 4 grant funds and the parent forum budget line item.

Professional Development

- Jess continues a master's degree in Teaching, Learning, and Curriculum
 - The final project for the current course is a strategic plan for a school equity audit, which will be a nice resource for our current work.
- Jess is continuing the AMS Emerging Leader Fellowship. She has been assigned a mentor (the Director of the Montessori Education Department at Xavier U, Dr Vanessa Rigaud, and the Chair of the AMS ELF program, Dr. Eric Dustman).
 - Jess's research has been chosen for an IRB and publication. She has completed IRB training. Data collection just closed and dissemination will be in March.
 - Topic: Montessori Educator Perception of Professional Development Effectiveness
 - Implications: Strategic Planning of Effective Professional Development at the Building and District Level
- Jess has been chosen as a spotlight speaker for "The Montessori Event," the national American Montessori conference in March. (Woo-hoo! It took me four years to apply! I feel good!) This gets her and one colleague free registration.
- Jess is completing ASQ (Ages and Stages Questionnaires) training, and we plan to implement the developmental screener for all EC students as soon as possible.
- Jacinta and Lyndsey attended the UMSI Annual Conference.
- Sam Cusack is in his final year of Montessori teacher certification training.
- Cyndi attended NSLP webinars "Traditional Verification Methods" and "Verification Preparation".

ABAR

The DEI strategic plan approved last year has been mapped out on a timeline. Once the planning/implementation steps are included, the three-year plan will likely be extended to four years.

 DEI Strategic Plan 2024

[DEI Strategic Plan Timeline By Role/Task](#)

We are continuing our DEI interviews as outlined in the strategic plan (we are moving to interviews instead of surveys at the recommendation of community experts—we could potentially follow up with a general survey if needed).

Project notes:

- ABAR member Jen Silva is a professional in this area and has been a fantastic resource for the project.
- Questions are drafted and going through a final review.
- Outreach is happening to grad students to be our unbiased interviewers.
 - A confidentiality agreement will be required.
 - We will pay grad students \$16/hour for interviewing and helping code responses.
- Jen will be providing some training and oversight for the interviewers.
- We have a family outreach list and will give all families a general invitation to participate.
- We have drafted a consent form and are going through a final review.
- Our goal is 40 participants.

Timeline:

- By October, 6th-final additions to questions and feedback on the consent form are due
- Communication and invitations to parents mid-October
- List of interviewees and returned consent forms by Thanksgiving Break
- Interviews completed between winter and spring breaks
- April-coding→ data
 - Discussion of data
 - Create a summary to communicate findings and recommendations
- Disseminate to the community in May

Administrative

- Our marketing campaign continues. Social media posts have been boosted. We will have 52 ads (26 radio, 26 TV) running as underwriters on WTIU/WFIU and are now listed as a business partner on their website. We are sponsoring the City of Bloomington Community Zoo (3 more occurrences on the second Tuesday of the month, at which we set up a booth at Switchyard Park).
- Entity Annual Report submitted to the State of Indiana.
- NSLP: Direct Certification Completed; currently, 21 students are participating in the program.
- The copier in the annex can no longer connect to devices that do not operate on Windows. It is over ten years old and needs to be replaced. We are working with our copier company to find a replacement.
- Jess is working with expert parent Luke Frydenger on promotional videos, social media, and website SEO optimization.
 - New permission slips will need to be sent out for participation. He hopes to collect footage of classrooms this month and record talking to teachers on November 5.

- Jess has all the content to Go Montessori for the website and has scheduled a final meeting with our designer to review the remaining questions and decide on images. We hope to launch the new site by the end of the month.
- A boosted ad campaign went out for EC enrollment. We've gotten 4-6 inquiries since the ad went out. The inquiry system form does not collect "Where did you hear about us" to know if they are directly related. (Apps will, though, and so far, 3:3 tours have put in apps)
- The annual campaign is in process.
 - [2024 Annual Campaign Letter](#) , social media ads and flyers have been created.
 - Giving Tuesday planning and sponsor outreach is starting. If you or someone you know is interested, please help us connect with sponsors for Giving Tuesday matches!

Community Partnerships

- Reflect Taekwondo Studio (Eve Cusack) is offering an after-school club.
- We have reached out to an advocacy group that offers after-school programs for ASL immersion taught by individuals who are "profoundly deaf" to learn more (they work with several Montessori schools, both as after-school programming and as integrated curriculum).
- We are hosting our first public version of the Family Fun Run, the Bloomington Montessori Fall Fun Run 5K Trail Run, and Family Run. It will be from 9-10 at Fowler Pumpkin Patch on 10/26 before the fall fest starts at 10 for BMS families. We have a professional timing company, medals have been engraved, yard signs are out, fliers are up around the community, it's an event on social media (please share!), and registration is live through RunSignUp.com. There are 1-mile and 1.5 mile family loops. PAC is gathering after-run food and water donations from local businesses. T-shirts are included with registration and will highlight sponsor logos. We are still reaching out to sponsors. If you know of a person/organization that might be interested, reach out and ask and connect us if they seem open! (Or connect with Allison if it's just a referral, but if you have a personal connection, that original introduction is very valuable!)

Facilities

Completed

- Water fountain filter changed.
- Magnolia toilets rodded.
- Bathroom toilet paper holder repaired.
- Wifi boosters installed in annex.

Pending

- Walnut water fountain repair; part ordered.
- Roof leak repair above Magnolia; awaiting estimate.

- Replacement of toilets in Magnolia: bids gathered.
- Air quality measures, as recommended by the recent ISDH testing/report
 - Three companies have come to give quotes.
 - HFI is designing an ERV system for fresh air exchange and adding dehumidifying components to balance out the additional fresh air (humidity), as these two measurements can be in contention. We will likely require a sophisticated system, and engineer, Jacob Hupp of HFI, is working with us on that. HFI has been very responsive and helpful.
 - Our inspector from the ISDH loaned us his testing equipment, which has helped us get baselines and results after several smaller solutions have been tried, which had enough impact to solve the problem.
 - In the meantime, the humidity decreasing outside has allowed us to use opening windows and doors as a short-term solution without worrying about increasing the humidity too much for allowable measures.
 - We will continue to measure the effectiveness of short-term solutions and work with the engineer on a long-term solution.
 - This process has illuminated some issues with our current HVAC provider.
 - Levy has done many “band aid” fixes.
 - They also neglected to send invoices for 4 years of small repairs and maintenance and then sent a large bill. Their quarterly maintenance was more expensive than expected.
 - We will be transitioning to HFI as our HVAC provider

Communications

- Bi-weekly newsletters, Facebook posts, flyers
- Quinn and Jess are continuing to work with Morgan on the new website. An active staging site, a map, and examples of preferred website visuals have been submitted. Jess is providing Morgan with new content to add to the new site.
- Luke Frydenger is helping with social media (his area of expertise), and I am building a strategy document based on his recommendations (he recommends we move away from school account posting goals and use funds to target search results).

Finances as of 9/30/2024

- Main checking: \$142,557.88
- Money market: \$218,630.41
- Café Account \$1,263.44
- Fundraising Accounts: \$49,569.85

Investment Accounts:

- Fundraising : \$65,841.00
- Cash Management: \$101,515.00

- Long Term Fund: \$501,090.00
- Tuition Delinquency - 2023-2024 - \$3,505 (one family; they have asked for consideration for the time being before we send their account to collections), 2024-2025 - \$5,874 (four families).
- IUCU Loan balance - \$ 488,385.94 (4% Interest paid YTD in 2024 = \$13,832.68)

Strategic Plan Accountability

Project Updates

Operations-Curricular

Executive Function focus is in progress through professional learning groups (teacher and admin-led) and Sky Adams; I am also seeking a neuroscientist for a forum.

Operations-Organizational

- Project: Increase Student Diversity-THREE-YEAR ABAR STRATEGIC PLAN IN PROGRESS-SEE DOCUMENT; blog posts updating families on the project will begin once the blog is up on the website.
- Project: Investigate and Implement Extracurriculars for Elementary Students-Taekwondo (STATUS-ONGOING, BUT GOALS HAVE BEEN MET)
- Project: Consistent Social Media presence-great parent resource helping with vision-level guidance, SEO/analytics, and content! (In progress)
- Project: Website Review and Revisions-IN PROGRESS
- Project: Higher Receptive and Expressive Communication Engagement with Families-
- Project: Parent Event and Task Engagement Improvement-
- Project: Foster Community-
- Project: IU Teacher Education Program Exploration-ON HOLD DUE TO LOW SCHOOL OF ED ENROLLMENT; WILL STAY IN CONTACT WITH IU

Value-Alignment

- Project: Evaluate Solar Possibilities-COMPLETED, though may have a phase 2
- Project: Hire Interventionist-CONTINUING SEARCH
- Project: Hire Counselor/Therapist - COMPLETED, Partnership with Counselor Sky Adams
- Project: DEI Survey-SEE ABAR STRATEGIC PLAN
- Project: Equity Audit-SEE ABAR STRATEGIC PLAN

Closing

Janelle Terkhorn – President

- Janelle thanked everyone for attending.
- Meeting Adjourned: **7:42pm**

Respectfully submitted by Christine Lovelace, Secretary