

Bloomington Montessori School

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

January 14, 2025, 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
- ~~Gyndi Williams~~

Preliminaries

Janelle Terkhorn – President – **6:06 pm**

Welcome

Approval of Minutes from the December Board Meeting

- Hilary motioned to approve the minutes and Anne seconded the motion. Motion to approve the minutes passed unanimously.

Call for issues not on the agenda

- Allison has a question for the group that can be done during the Governance Committee agenda item tonight.

Executive Committee

Janelle Terkhorn, President

Committee Business

- Met on Jan 9th, 11am
- Next meeting: March 6, 2025, 11 am

Current Issues

- First Reading, Live Animals in the Classroom
 - o Anne and Tracey wanted to know the definition of “dangerous animal”.
 - Janelle said this would be left up to the Head of School.

- Anne pointed out that most reptiles carry salmonella and wanted to know if there would be guidance for leadership.
 - Jess mentioned that Wildcare has brought an owl into classes and it was a beloved memory for many children.
 - Janelle believes leaving this undefined, allows the Head of School to make the decision.
 - Tracey asked if an expert would be with any wild animals or animals needing unique handling or care.
 - Hilary suggested that we take out the dangerous animal statement and replace it with “All animals will have prior approval from the Head of School before entering the classroom”.
 - The Executive Committee discussed
 - Anne liked the addition of the statement “this is not an exhaustive list...” - she felt it was good
 - Anne suggested that we change the statement about all animals having a quiet space when stressed should simply be that all animals have a quiet space since all animals need a place to retreat to and humans don’t always know what distress looks like in different species.
 - Anne liked the statement “opportunities to engage in natural behaviors”
 - All Board members are invited to make comments on the document until next month’s meeting, when we will have the second reading.
- Adding additional policies required by the Health Department. Chemical hygiene policy is still in development. Classification of some chemicals has recently changed with the state and may be banned from classrooms. Expecting guidance updates from the state in the next few months.
 - Progress on Articles of Incorporation was delayed this meeting due to other needs. Executive will continue to work on this topic between now and the next March meeting.
 - Executive committee had a closed-session discussion on current board practices regarding budget readings and salary evaluations. Current recommendations include having a closed session at the first budget reading to allow for a more detailed discussion on the decision-making process and to ensure that all questions are answered openly during the first reading. A general review of current practice/procedure documents will occur to ensure that this process is supported throughout future role changes. The Finance committee, as well as the Executive committee, will also work on a process to ensure board due diligence in oversight and understanding of the budgeting and salary process.

- Work on legacy and guidance documents is progressing slowly. These documents will include workflows for Executive issues and guidance documents for the President's role.
- Christine's work on revamping the drive organization will continue over the winter.
- EC is reviewing the Employee handbook regarding continuing education support. Some wording needs to be updated to be more inclusive of the different types of educational support that we offer staff as well as to match wording with our current contracts

Operations

- Please see Quinn's operations report.

Current Projects

- Adding and updating policies in compliance with ISDH requirements and recommendations. [Strategic Project 2A]
- Guidance documents and workflow charts for EC and the President role are being generated for review by EC. [Strategic Project 3B,3C]

Finance Committee

Joanna Woronkowicz, Treasurer

Committee Business

- Next meeting: April 7, 2025 from 6-7pm

Financial Review

- The school's financial position is relatively similar to this time last year, with around \$1.683 million in cash and investments. Current assets are up approximately 1.13% over last year, and total liabilities are down by 7.06% compared to last year. Equity is up by 4.73%.

- As of December 31, the current investment balance is \$674,305.71. The market came down from its high in November. Since July 1, the school's investment funds have generated \$22,230.85 in returns (net of fees), gains of 3.4%.
- Hilary asked what the 1000% increase was and that is due to the fact that interest income is not budgeted.
- We are over budget on our legal fees.
 - We had a big policy revision and some HR issues that required guidance from the lawyer.
 - This year we will need bylaw revision and articles of incorporation assistance from the lawyer

Current Projects

- The Finance Committee continues to monitor investment performance, which involves checking in on the investment accounts monthly and discussing them at each Finance Committee meeting. [1C]
- Christine is taking the lead on reorganizing the Google drive and will loop in Joanna when appropriate. [4C]
- The Finance Committee will address Scholarships in the 2025-2026 academic year. [3]

2024-2025 Budget Review

Quinn McAvoy, Head of School

- The only question from last meeting was about the FACTS rate increase.
 - Last year it was budgeted at \$17,000 and Cyndi had originally increased this in anticipation of a rate increase from FACTS.
 - FACTS is not raising their rate so the budget item will remain at \$17,000.
- Our increases relative to inflation.
 - Annual inflation rate in 2023 was 4.1% and 2024 was 5.5-6%.
 - We are raising our expenses on par with inflation.
- Christine motioned to approve the 2025-2026 budget as proposed and Allison seconded the motion. The budget was approved unanimously.

Development Committee

Allison O'Boyle, Committee Chair

Committee Business

- Shop the Scholastic Book Fair this week, Jan 13-17, in the Commons!
- Help needed: Thank you notes and merch days
- Next committee meeting: January 27, 2025, 9 am, on Zoom

Current Projects

- The annual campaign is underway, with the Giving Tuesday kickoff on December 2, 2024. To date, 65 people have donated for a total of \$28,879.00.
- The Scholastic Book Fair will be held in the Commons from January 13th to 17th. Book fair dollars can be more beneficial than money raised from online/catalog sales because if we reach the sales goal (\$3,500+), we can receive 25% of our sales back in cash. We also have the option to receive 50% of our sales back in scholastic dollars, or we can use a combination of both.
- The RaiseRight program continues with online and in-app sales. From February 12th to 26th, 2025, a third window for ordering physical gift cards will occur.
- Sponsorship packet reviewed by the committee. The Testimonials page remains to be edited. [2A; 2C]
- Legacy packet to be reviewed at a future meeting [1A; 1C]
- Development policy review slated for spring semester [3C]
- Popcorn events are ongoing, including Friday, December 13. Dates for the spring semester are January 31, February 28, March 28, April 25, and May 16.
- Vision statement editing has been returned to the Development Committee for a more formal proposal of how and when to edit. Based on Board feedback, the preference is to make edits as part of the strategic planning process. [2A]
- Planning is underway for the Art to Remember fundraiser in March.
- Planning is underway for February trivia night.
- A parent has volunteered as Box Tops coordinator, reviving a dormant, passive fundraising program. Allison will connect with McKenzie and the parent to log in to BoxTops.

Fundraising Update

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

- Annual Campaign: \$28,879.00 received in FACTS for the 2024-2025 Annual Campaign from August to January 9, 2025. The number reported here reflects transactions recorded through FACTS Giving and may vary from financial reports based on deposit and data entry schedules.
- \$535 received in FACTS on older campaigns or not attached to a campaign, since August.
- Believe Kids: \$5,200 net proceeds
- Merchandise: \$3,412.50
- 5K Trail Run/Family Fun Run: \$3,015 net proceeds.
- RaiseRight Scrip: \$947.23 proceeds from August 1 to December 31, with 19 families participating.
- Kroger Rewards: \$387.41 from July 1-September 30, 2024
- Scholastic Books: will be updated following book fair
- Art to Remember: not received to date this year (March project)

Governance Committee

Allison O'Boyle, Vice President

Governance Committee Business

- The committee is reviewing information identified from the National Association of Independent Schools and BoardSource.org. Bylaws edits are in progress.
- The annual Board self-evaluation process is scheduled to begin in January. Please look out for surveys by the end of month. One survey will ask about your individual experiences as a Board member. All Board members also will receive a survey for each standing committee on which they serve.

- o Typically Governance sends out surveys about each committee throughout the winter and spring but as the months progress, fewer and fewer responses come back.
- o Allison suggested the surveys be condensed to one survey with skip logic so that all the committees that a member is in could be reviewed in one place.
- o Hilary asked whether or not someone could do this longer survey over time or if the survey would timeout.
 - Allison was pretty sure that as long as the survey link was left open, a Board member could come back to it.
- o Christine and Quinn commented that they liked this format.
- Next meeting: January 15, 2024, 9 am

Current Projects

- Research proceeding on best practice recommendations for board member requirements in bylaws. [2B]
- Research proceeding on best practice recommendations and models for board member evaluation, conflict resolution, and conditions of leaving the Board. [2B]

Nominating Committee Business

- Committee members are parents Eric Walsh-Buhi and Sierra Lee, staff member McKenzie Holmgren, and board members Hilary Kanyi, Anne Sterling, and Allison O'Boyle.
- The Board member application was opened on November 15. To date, it has been advertised on the current parent email list and the alumni/supporter email list and shared directly with several recommended applicants. There are five applicants for the Board at present. The application will remain open until January 20, 2025.
- Three other candidates have expressed interest and will be reminded of this week's application deadline.

Parent Action Committee

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

- No report was provided for PAC this month
- Reevaluating the strategic plan objective of the landscape analyses because the PAC type committees that Tracey reached out to have not gotten back to her.
- Roller skating event was a success.
- The next PAC activity is the service project.
 - They are looking to simplify it.
- Tracey presented a draft of the PAC Bylaws and Roles and Responsibilities
 - Allison spoke about the charters for the standing committees that were created a few years ago. PAC was not outlined as a standing committee.
 - She asked the Board if this type of document needs two readings and a vote.
 - Jess asked if this was in response to the strategic plan to create guidelines.
 - Tracey explained that because there are two co-chairs, there needs to be a clear document about how this runs.
 - Jess suggested that this duplicates other articles created for the Board. She also
 - Christine reminded everyone that this wasn't on the agenda as a discussion and the document wasn't shared previously. She motioned to send this back to committee.
 - Janelle reminded everyone that when a member motioned to table a discussion and send it back to committee, Roberts Rules dictates that another member should second and then the Board should vote.

Operations

Quinn McAvoy and Jess Davis,

Enrollment Update

- Enrollment tours continue.
- We have a waitlist for the all-day middle group and lower elementary programs.
- Re-enrollment will start with Intent to Return forms being sent out on January 17th.
- New student enrollment for the 2025-2026 school year will start at the end of January.

Group	Actual October 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	55	60	60
Lower EL	66	66	64
Upper EL	38	39	39

Staff

- Staff Intent to Return forms for the 2025-2026 school year are due on January 17, 2025.

Advocacy

- Jess continues her work as President of the United Montessori Schools of Indiana.
- Quinn joined the board of the United Montessori Schools of Indiana.

Student Services

- Ongoing ISP and accommodation plan review meetings with families/teams.

Professional Development

- Jess continues a master's degree in Teaching, Learning, and Curriculum
- Jess is continuing the AMS Emerging Leader Fellowship.
- Sam Cusack is in his final year of Montessori teacher certification training.
- Nick started a master's degree in Teaching, Learning, and Curriculum.
- Staff CPR and First Aid training is scheduled for Feb. 20th, and a co-op grant will pay for $\frac{2}{3}$ of the staff to receive training on campus (2:3 sessions for the day covered by the grant, with the third session provided at a discounted rate because we needed more people trained than the grant could cover).

ABAR

- Working to hire grad students to be interviewers; Jen Silva will train
 - Jess said it has been difficult to find people to hire
 - There were issues with having parent volunteers do the interviews
 - Bias, confidentiality, interview skills
 - Hilary has folks she thinks may be interested.
 - Quinn will share the posting.
 - Tracey asked if IU Indy campus students would be ok
- Interviews in January, hopefully
- Data analysis after spring break

Administrative

- The Ages and Stages Developmental Screener was administered to all children under 60 months of age and scored. Teachers incorporated the information into conferences as needed.
- NSLP: October and November claims filed
- SFA verification collection report filed
- Board annual campaign is almost complete; we are waiting for one more pledge form/donation
- Annual Campaign
 - \$13,620 was raised for Giving Tuesday!
 - The current total is \$28,879!

Community Partnerships

- IU representatives from the school of education will visit campus to continue conversations about a possible training program.
 - Hilary asked if we can quantify the benefits of teaching a Montessori 101
 - This would be a temperature taker. There is no guaranteed financial benefit for the school.
- Reflective Martial Arts Inc., Eve's Taekwondo studio, will rent space from BMS while its usual rental space undergoes construction. Classes are twice a week, on Tuesday evenings and Saturday afternoons.
- Alumni Simon Yeley and Aden Davis will run the Lower Elementary Chess Club in January and the Upper Elementary Chess Club in February.

Facilities

Completed

- Magnolia toilet replacement. Drywall was replaced and the paint is being completed now.
- Back door sweeps were repaired in the kitchen, Sweetgum, and Willow.
- Pest control mitigation in the main building.
 - Mouse droppings were found in the kitchen but no mice.
 - Traps were set, no poison, over Holiday Break. The traps didn't catch anyone and there have been no new droppings.

Pending

- HRV installation pending parts delivery. They anticipate everything coming in by early next week.

Communications

- Bi-weekly newsletters, Facebook posts, flyers

Finances as of 12/31/2024

- Main checking: \$ 104,599.63
- Money market: \$ 220,174.19

- Café Account \$ 6,885.95
- Fundraising Accounts: \$ 59,216.87

Investment Accounts:

- Fundraising: \$ 66,227.47
- Cash Management: \$ 102,015.54
- Long-Term Fund: \$ 506,062.70

• 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 - \$10,010.87 for three families.

- One family made a large payment towards their delinquency since this report was
- IUCU Loan balance - \$472,318.77

- Anne asked if there were going to be another club.
 - Quinn said there may be run club and/or an ASL club
 - Anne mentioned that during sports club there was some confusion about walking the children to the YMCA and whether or not it was advisable to walk along the road.
 - Quinn said that parents should bring this to Quinn who would take it up with the head of the club. Or they can go directly to the head of the club.

Strategic Plan Accountability

Project Updates

Operations-Curricular

Executive Function focus→first phase complete, second phase will be completed in May.

Operations-Organizational

- Project: Increase Student Diversity-THREE-YEAR ABAR STRATEGIC PLAN IN PROGRESS-SEE DOCUMENT;
- 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-COMplete
- Project: Higher Receptive and Expressive Communication Engagement with Families-
 - Changes have included:
 - Exit survey implemented
 - adding a table of contents to the top of newsletters
 - shortening them when possible with a link to the blog for more info for those

- who are interested
- Engaging families and students in creating content
 - Walnut is creating a newsletter about their winter service project that will be shared
 - Families have been invited to share cultural experiences through writing an article for the newsletter, and our first is about to be submitted.
- Will also be trying:
 - smaller embedded images to make newsletters feel shorter so that people are more likely to look at the whole thing
- Results so far:
 - Newsletter engagement has had a 50% increase during this strategic plan.
 - Newsletters continue to have an open rate between 70-85% (previously in the 50's).
 - Click rates fluctuate between 5-15%.
 - Stand-alone emails have a 50-60% engagement rate.
- This is pretty good engagement!
- Project: Parent Event and Task Engagement Improvement-
 - Sign-up genius has been implemented for volunteers and this seems to be working (vs. just email announcements and responding)
 - People sign up well at the beginning of the year, so we will add more things earlier to see if we have better sign up
 - Next experiment
 - Online form with Parent Volunteer preference information that is required during the enrollment process each year
- Project: Foster Community-5K was a great success for this. This will never be “done”, but goals have been met.
- Project: IU Teacher Education Program Exploration-ON HOLD

Next step: They want an intro adjunct course to help gauge interest. Jess plans to develop and teach Fall 2026 and has reached out to IU for forming an agreement around this.

Value-Alignment

- Project: Evaluate Solar Possibilities-COMPLETED, though may have a phase 2
- Project: Hire Interventionist-CONTINUING SEARCH-ON HOLD (Financial reasons, and we have a full time special education para and one-day special education teacher from MCCSC right now)
- 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: **7:40pm**

Respectfully submitted by Christine Lovelace, Secretary