

Bloomington Montessori School Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

October 18, 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
- Nick Beatty

Preliminaries

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

Welcome

Approval of Minutes from September 2022 Board Meeting

- Allison asked for comments, questions, or edits. There were none.
- Russ motioned to approve the minutes and Hilary 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 \$971,321 in bank accounts and the Live Oak CD (which is giving a better return than IU as expected). These balances are 15.87% larger

than as of September 30, 2021. Long-term liabilities are only \$611,160. As such, the school has the ability to cover its debts.

- Overall, net income is \$11,825 higher than budgeted for the month. This overage is similar to what was reported in August 2022. Most of the overage is due to lower-than-budget salary expense. As Quinn explained during the 9/13 meeting, there is a placeholder in the budget for an IT staff or any IT work we might need.
 - There is a charge for \$518.57 in September for Personal Protection Equipment, which was not in the budget. Additionally, there was a \$522 overage in “Academic year curriculum”. All other overages are nominal.
 - These are a line item; however, they are covered by grants.

Other Items

- Cyndi noted some pending corrections that are required related to tuition and a year-end closing entry. This was last month and due to FACTS accounting system and the way the journal entries had to be changed. Everything has been corrected.
- Lunch tuition is not showing up as a line item in the system because of last year’s free summer lunch. This is being corrected.
- Tri-annual Assessment of the Wellness Policy is required by the National School Lunch Program. It was compiled in April. There systems are not running properly so we are waiting to hear back.
- Cyndi is cleaning up the categories so the accountants can do the compilation.
- 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 (change in operations due to state mandates for Covid).
 - Needed a few items: Change in gross income, State mandates on social distancing, a map of the school so we could show how many students could be in the classroom. This information is kept as backup in case of an audit.
 - The IRS is getting more aggressive in auditing and identifying fraudulent claims for the second options. Bridgette suggests doing our due diligence before submitting even if the consultant feels we qualify.
 - We will only apply if we qualify and would keep any money received in a separate account for the 5 year statute of limitations before being used.
- The 2021-2022 financial statements will be reviewed by Desmond & Ahern.
- Financials are tracking well with budgeted amounts.

Governance Report

Janelle Terkhorn – Vice President- 6:17pm

- Governance has sent out a post Board Orientation questionnaire regarding formatting of future meetings. Please check your board email or contact Janelle with questions.
- Assisted gathering and creating materials for the first Board newsletter.
- Updated Governance and Nominating Charters for the 2022-2023 agendas.
- Will be checking in with current Board members to see if anyone will be leaving or changing positions.

Executive Committee Report

Allisson O'Boyle – President - 6:21pm

- The Executive Committee met several times between the September and October Board meetings. Primary projects in the past month have included:
 - Development of new PEOP policies relating to the disclosure of employee vaccination status and an in-house check testing program.
 - Review and updating of the strategic plan. The plan is under initial review at this time.
 - Assistance and processing for the loss of shared folders and files on Google Drive, discovered two weeks ago.
 - Solicitation of feedback on the proposed bylaws and policy handbook revisions.
 - Operations and PEOP updates and consultations with Quinn as needed.
- In the next month, the Executive Committee intends to work on the following projects:
 - Oversight of employee goal-setting. Goal-setting meetings will be held by Quinn. Executive Committee receives progress reports and will conduct goal-setting meetings for the Head of School and Assistant Head of School.
 - Further review of the strategic plan. Initial review has focused on updating information on past initiatives. The next stage of the review will look at prioritizing current initiatives for this school year.
 - Compiling feedback from the first reading on the bylaws and policy handbook proposals

- Discussion of technology policy – the loss of shared files on the Google Drive revealed that the school’s policies and procedures on file sharing, organization, and long-term storage are no longer adequate for our needs, or well aligned with the technology available to the school. The Executive Committee will start to review current policies and procedures and compile a list of areas that need addition and/or revision.

- In addition, the Executive Committee discussed, and decided to delay, edits to the proposed testing policy and paperwork focusing on COVID-19 boosters. As a group, we feel that the guidance available on booster shots is not well-developed or consistent enough at this time to enable us to proceed with confidence in developing policy or paperwork in this area. We will continue to evaluate guidance as it becomes available.
 - Monroe is rated at low.

 - We have two families who were upset about the masking policy for classroom exposure. We are still following CDC guidelines.

- Complaint about teacher behavior and a complaint about student behavior.
- Security Camera Discussion
 - Steve Mascari has volunteered his time and some of the equipment to install security cameras at the exterior doors of the school.
 - 8-12 Hikvision cameras with night vision
 - NVR
 - Monitor
 - Cable
 - Expense to the school
 - Expected monetary investment is under \$500
 - Volunteer hours for one or two helpers for installation
 - Some reasons to have entry surveillance:
 - Just the signage and visible cameras helps deter crime and mischief.
 - Allows for administrators to see who is on school property.
 - Entry access control
 - Improves emergency response (if a sound is heard or threat brought to the school’s attention, administrators can use the cameras to safely monitor the exterior of the building and guide response decisions).
 - Greatly helps in the event of an incident in terms of documentation and evidence (active shooter, missing child, parent incidents, vandalism, theft...).
 - Peace of mind for parents and staff.
 - Monitoring video feed:
 - A designated surveillance technician to monitor the feed is not necessary to reap the benefits of the cameras. A video monitor can be located in the front office for use as needed. Office staff can see the footage as it scrolls through each camera feed.
 - Storage and access of video footage:
 - The data is securely kept on the NVR and only authorized users will have access. Depending on how long the Board decided they needed to keep data, the hard drive storage space can be increased. The data automatically overwrites itself.
 - Authorized users can also access live video footage via smartphone but not record that footage to their device.

- Policy Considerations:
 - IU and MCCSC have policies that we can learn from
 - Cameras in entries are common and lawful
 - Who has access
 - Data security and storage
 - Legality
- Legal Considerations:
 - The three main legal documents that pertain to Surveillance Cameras are Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act: FERPA (20 U.S.C. 1232g 34 C.F.R. 99.1-99.67), Title I of the Electronic Communication Privacy Act of 1986 (18 U.S.C. 2510-2521) and Indiana Access to Public Records Act (“APRA”), Ind. Code § 5-14-3-1. If the footage will ever have disciplinary uses, then the footage is protected under FERPA. Courts have made different determinations when families or other individuals petitioned for access to footage. In one such case in Martinsville, the school was advised to allow the parent to view but not copy the video footage in which their student was depicted although the school’s original decision to deny access was rooted in law and not unreasonable.
- Other Considerations:
 - Do the “what ifs” warrant security cameras?
 - What about when parents want to see the video feed?
 - What other issues might arise from having cameras?
- Questions and Comments from the Board
 - What is the life expectancy of the hardware?
 - Security cameras are becoming more and more standardized - are we exposing ourselves to liability by NOT having them?
 - There are US restrictions placed on Hikvision China - can Steve look into security issues?
 - Ge says security issue are minimal when it’s a closed loop system
 - Quinn noted that we have 15 doors
 - Is there a policy on how many bids you would need to have before moving forward?
 - Yes, three bids.
 - Ge offered to help Steve.
 - Allison: We have very few issues but where we have an issue is on the lower playground - can we get cameras there?
 - Rob - from a parent perspective, the low probability but high significance events of active shooter or parent violence make cameras seem worth the investment. From a marketing perspective it could either deter or make parents feel safer.
 - How many parents have been asking about cameras? Two have asked Christine.
 - Quinn will move forward with scheduling two more bids if the Board is ready to move on this.
 - Russ commented that it is better to have it and not need it and suggested that we ask other bidders some of the questions we have so we can get multiple perspectives.
 - Janelle is in favor of some sort of security cameras but is worried about the FCC banning Hikvision.
 - Rob said, “I love the idea”. I think about the hundred year flood - low investment, not a monthly subscription - cheap insurance.

- Bridget - what do we currently have?
- The camera at the front door captures 26 still images and overwrites. The other front door doesn't capture any images.
- Quinn noted that the extra benefit for her is the random times on the weekend that the alarms go off; she would be able to see who was there and not have to go in person and check. Some classroom doors are left open during class and some parents have been concerned about this, so monitoring these doors would be beneficial.
- Jess mentioned that there is a rub between Montessori and max security. Our videos will show an open patio door and could bite us in the butt.
- Christine suggested that we might need to create policy around the decisions we make that balance the gray areas between Montessori and safety.
- Rob agreed that this gray area between Montessori and what public schools do may come up as an issue in the future, and deserves policy attention.
- Janelle remembered that the school had issues in the past with front office staff not locking the doors, and that windows can also be an issue.
- Hilary stated that she is not against it. The issue that gives her pause is the risk of parents wanting to access data. We don't know the risk until we write the policy. What is the full cost of replacing the system at the end of its life?
- Alison recapped that as a group, we are open to the idea but need more information.
- Cyndi asked what the monetary minimum for bids is.
- \$500
- Alison suggested that Quinn get two more quotes and Christine get answers from Steve. The cameras won't go in until a policy is voted on.
- Tracey asked what happens if we don't like them after a year.
- They can be easily removed.
- Jess commented that the policy should be reviewed if not drafted by the lawyer. Others agreed.

Development Committee Report

Allison O'Boyle – President - 7:00pm

Development Committee Membership and Meetings

- No recent changes in membership

Development planning/structural support

- Return on investment analysis – loading comments into the draft, will have more discussion at the November meeting
- Volunteers recruited to help with school merchandise, For Small Hands, promotion of passive fundraisers, merchandise sales

Development Event Planning

- Collaboration with PAC to develop Fall Festival fundraiser

Annual campaign

- Giving Tuesday planning
- Database editing
- Gift levels chart is in development
- \$2092 raised through Charleston wrap
- PAC raised \$190 at the Parent Night

PAC Report

Tracey Warren – PAC Co-Chair - 7:03pm

Events

- Parent night
 - had 17 people in attendance
 - Bloomington Trivia was good
 - Raised \$190
 - Cardinal Spirits would be willing to host again
- Fall Festival
 - This Saturday
 - IU is having a science fest
 - Parents are volunteering
 - Photobooth, potluck, merchandise table
 - 6th grade classroom will sell items for a fundraiser

2022-2023 Schedule

- In the 2022-2023 academic year, The PAC plans to host or assist with the following events:
 - Fall Festival (October 22nd, 2022)
 - Take & Make: Seasonal Craft (December 2nd, 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)

September 2022 Notes and Updates

- Welcome emails have gone out to the new families
- PAC meeting in November
- How will the Board members be identified at the Fall Festival
 - BOD should pick their nametags up at the merch table
- Do we want to gather any data about who comes to the Fall Festival?

- We don't traditionally collect data because its too hard to monitor who is coming and going as people flow in and out.
- If there is a greeter – they could give out nametags and document who attends.
- The dishes can give clues since each class are given a type of dish to bring.
- What does a successful Fall Festival look like?
 - People are safe, no injuries, everyone has a good time. Do the numbers of volunteers and attendees increase next year?
- How is the Fall Festival budget decided on?
 - It increases by 3% each year
 - The cost of renting tables and chairs has increased significantly
 - Can PAC submit a budget for next year?
 - This would have to include raising funds to cover the budget.
 - These events also have to be analyzed to make sure they compete with fundraising events.
 - If a PAC event is using resources (volunteers, calendar slots, etc.) it carries an opportunity cost that takes away from Development.
 - PAC and Development need to collaborate and strike a balance rather than compete

Operations Report

Admin Team: Quinn McAvoy, Jess Davis, Cyndi Williams —7:27pm

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 new all-day students started at the beginning of October. Two other all-day students will be leaving BMS this month.

Staff:

- Staff annual goal setting starts October 17th. Will end on November 8th.
- Anna Wegerson will be on maternity leave starting November 18th and returning February 27th.

Curriculum:

- Jess is a mentor teacher to two adult learners, Nick for his Transition to Teaching program (1 year) and Sam for his Montessori Training (2 year).

- 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
- We received a \$785 grant from MCCSC for the purchase of reading intervention materials and have received the materials.

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 attended the Montessori Public Policy Initiative in Washington DC.
- Jess has been working on the conference committee with UMSI, preparing for this year’s state-level teacher conference on October 22nd.

Professional Development:

- Quinn is completing her dissertation on Montessori benchmarks and assessment. Target to complete this summer.
- 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 working on Yoga 300 certification with a focus on teaching yoga to children. (Currently, Y200 certified)
- Jess, Eve, and Sam attended the annual conference at Montessori in the Mountains in Estes Park, CO. Jess and Eve were both speakers.

- April attended an annual conference at Hope Montessori in St. Louis, MO.
- Jess is completing two online Classes (through Trillium Montessori):
 - Onboarding Montessori Substitutes
 - Montessori Substitute Orientation Course

Administrative

- Quinn and Jess presented the “Welcome to the Progress Report and Benchmarks” parent forum and sent the video to those who could not attend.
- New copier installed in the main office.
- New EC progress report has been launched. This was in response to the parent survey. Parents wanted this information and documentation.
- Revised benchmark guide has been launched.
- Quinn and Jess are scheduling tours and enrollment
- Gathering documents to support Covid restrictions for the tax credit.
- NSLP
 - Change in systems has delayed approval of applications for the 2022-2023 year, causing a delay in filing our August claim.
 - Wellness policy review and creation of a student database for direct certification are pending.
- 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.

Community Partnerships

- Continuing discussions with IU Department of Education regarding a Montessori Teacher Education Program.
- IU Permaculture class will donate their time to design value-aligned landscaping for our campus.
- Sycamore Land Trust will be working with most classrooms on service projects about native vs. invasive plants and accompanying learning/presentations this year
- Tomas Lozano, a local musician, Will be presenting “Journey Through Time With a Hurdy Gurdy” to our Upper Elementary classrooms.

Facilities:

- COMPLETED:

- Kitchen sink repair
- PENDING:
 - HVAC Replacement – Receiving quotes
 - Light bulb replacement – \$10,000 sustainability grant awarded, to be completed October 21st.
 - There will be a \$10k grant opportunity for solar panels next year that Quinn has been asked to be considered for.
 - 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: \$284,333.64
- Money market: \$120,843.61
- CD-IUCU: \$238,096.12
- CD-Live Oak \$238,509.98
- Fundraising: \$83,022.45
- Café Account \$6,481.97

- Tuition delinquency - \$3,875.75
- IUCU Loan balance - \$ 611,160.83

Closing

Allison O'Boyle – President – **7:37pm**

- Allison thanked everyone for attending.
- No closed session this month.
- Meeting Adjourned: **7:40 pm**

Respectfully submitted by Christine Lovelace, Board Secretary

