

**CORNERSTONE MONTESSORI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
OCTOBER 21, 2025, TUESDAY – 6:00 P.M.**

Board Members Present: Julaine Roffers-Agarwal, Alyssa Schwartz, Carolyn Ganz, Rachel Droogsma, Rohan Chougule, Sarah Stocco, Megan Riemer

Board Members Absent: Tom Fendt

Other Attendees: Chris Bewell, Joe Aliperto (Dieci Finance- 6:07PM; left at 6:38PM)

Board Members attending via Zoom	Reason for virtual attendance
Carolyn Ganz	Carolyn had a commitment prior to the meeting that made it impossible to make it in person in time
Rachel Droogsma	Rachel was sick
Rohan Chougule	Rohan did not have enough time after his work day to drive to CMES to be at the meeting in person
Megan Riemer	Megan had transportation issues

Meeting called to order by Julaine Roffers-Agarwal, Board Chair, at 6:04pm.

AGENDA

Public Comment Period: Comments limited to 3 minutes per person.

Consent Agenda

- Draft September 2025 Meeting Minutes
- Total Special Education System Document

CAROLYN MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE CONSENT AGENDA. ROHAN SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS NO FURTHER DISCUSSION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE VOTES WERE:

Board Member	Aye	Nay
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Chougule	x	
Droogsma	x	
Fendt	AB SE NT	
Ganz	x	
Riemer	x	
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

Approval of Agenda & Declaration of Conflict of Interest

SARAH MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE EVENING'S AGENDA. RACHEL SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS NO FURTHER DISCUSSION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Chougule	x	
Droogsma	x	
Fendt	AB SE NT	
Ganz	x	
Riemer	x	
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

Julaine asked whether, given the approved agenda, there were any conflicts of interest. None were disclosed.

Treasurer's Report - Joe

- Current enrollment is 135 and ADM is approximately the same
- We are budgeted for 136, paid for 140 right now
- Cash balance of \$247,213 and CD balance of \$427,197
- 25% of the way through the year, 16% received, 13% spent
- Grants: \$30,000 from the St. Paul & Minnesota Foundation for General Operations
- Holdback is still 10%
- Estimated that \$74,224 is currently being held back from the School which will get paid back during the holdback payments in 2025.
- No donations in September
- We re-invested \$100,000 from one of our CDs at NE Bank that matured on October 3 in a six-month CD at an interest rate of 3.5%
- More details in reports -

CAROLYN MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE SEPTEMBER FINANCIALS. ROHAN SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE VOTES WERE:

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Chougule	x	
Droogsma	x	
Fendt	AB SE NT	
Ganz	x	
Rierner	x	
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

Treasurer's Report: Audit results - Carolyn

- Clean Auditors Opinion: "Unmodified Opinion under Generally Accepted Accounting Principles"
- Meets Minnesota Legal Requirements: "No instance of noncompliance."
- CMES ended the year with a Net Operating deficit of \$26,343
- Year over year consistency in terms of enrollment and financial management
- Consistent Food Service Fund compared to what was budgeted
- Better than average General Fund Balance Percentage and shows the school has some reserves for the future
- CMES continues to have a high need in Special Education costs. Special Education funding is currently threatened at both the Federal and State levels.

ROHANMADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE 2024-2025 AUDIT RESULTS. CAROLYN SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE VOTES WERE:

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Chougule	x	
Droogsma	x	
Fendt	AB SE NT	
Ganz	x	
Rierner	x	
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

Head of School Report - Alyssa

- Preparing for parent/teacher conferences October 30 & 31
- School Lunch Program review in October
- Upcoming events Board members are welcome to attend
 - Cornerstone Café, 11/14 8:30-9:30AM
 - Upper Elementary Middle School options, 11/17, 6:00-7PM
 - Contact Alyssa to schedule a time to observe in an environment

Director of Budget Operations - Chris

- Current Enrollment: 135
- Current applications pending: 1
- Food Service review will happen tomorrow (10/22)
- Resource management review (having to do with finances) is coming up. Joe and Chris will coordinate
- MN State will be reviewing invoices from the Covid years having to do with food services
- At the retreat, Chris will have the Lease Aid Agreement for everyone on the Board to sign

Advancement Committee

- Reflections on Fall Fest: went really well and was very well attended! The weather was rainy, so it was moved inside. Alyssa estimated at least 200 people attended. Lots of excitement about the pizza, popcorn, face painting, a photo booth, and games. In the future, we'd like to think about making it a community event.
- Current Plans for Book Fair: 30th & 31st of October during conferences. Get money back to the school if we reach a certain threshold. This will be an experimental year! We need some more volunteers. If we get \$500-2000 in sales, we'll get 10% back to the school
- Carolyn asked about Give to the Max. The Advancement committee will be meeting this Friday and will have something ready for promoting Give to the Max!

Community Agreements for 2025-2026

Relational Agreements

Communication

- We seek to communicate directly, respectfully, and transparently. We listen with curiosity, and we aim to engage in clear, honest, and responsive communication in person and online.

Time

- We stay grounded in our work by making time individually and in meetings to process information and gather perspectives.

Operational Agreements

We support each other and our work in many ways. Specifically, we agree to:

- Distribute existing agreements in the July board packet and revisit board member roles and agreements every year during our September meeting. In addition, we will condense the relational agreements to review at every board meeting
- Provide board meeting materials to the board chair by expected deadlines.
- Read board emails and respond as requested within 48 hours.
- Read board packets and other materials in full ahead of time.
- Attend at least 2 school events in the course of the year
- In person Board Meeting attendance is preferred; we may identify specific meetings where in-person meetings would be expected

Board Retreat

Proposed schedule for our upcoming Board Retreat on Sunday, October 26th:

1:00-1:15 Review current Strategic Plan

1:15-1:30 Where are we at in the Strategic Plan

1:30-2:10 How do we want to proceed in the immediate future?

2:10-2:20 BREAK

2:20-2:30 Review financial projections and analysis

2:30-3:00 Advancement

3:00-3:30 Board member recruitment

- Please bring some food to share. Allergies: melon, hazelnuts. Alyssa is vegetarian; Julaine does not eat beef. Rohan will make a spreadsheet to share.
- Materials for the retreat will be sent out this week. Please review before the retreat.
- Advancement discussion: how do we keep the current activities going? What other aspects would we like to add?
- Board member recruitment: this is a difficult lift every year! How do we find new board members and recruit people with skills to balance out the board?

Board Chair Report – Julaine

- CMES parent/teacher conferences will be on October 30-31. Contact Julaine if you would like to contribute to a food donation for the staff on those days.
- Give to the Max is coming up! Please distribute information once it has been collected
- Alyssa emailed Ben Moudry about the Mark Frankel training that often happens this time of year.
- UST site visit will likely happen in November

CAROLYN MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:11 PM. ROHAN SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE VOTES WERE:

Board Member	Aye	Nay
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Chougule	x	
Droogsma	x	
Fendt	AB SE NT	
Ganz	x	
Riemer	x	
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

***The next CMES Board Meeting is November 18th, 2025 at 6 p.m.
Respectfully Submitted by Sarah Stocco, CMES Secretary.***