

# Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School

## Governance Committee Meeting Agenda (Minutes in green)

Tuesday, January 6, 2026, 1:00 pm, Online

Members: Chris Bewell, Rohan Chougule, Jean Melancon, Julaine Roffers-Agarwal (Chair)

### AGENDA

- 1) Call Meeting to Order 1:05pm
- 2) Public Comment Period – Comments limited to 3 minutes per person
- 3) Goals for today's meeting:
  - a) Review policy progress
    - i) Policies to review:
      - (1) New policies and procedures- none this month
      - (2) Policies with review dates [spreadsheet](#). Policies in need of updating (passed 3 years since last reviewed, due for review). Note that Alyssa mentioned there were no major changes to the parent and employee handbooks this year so no input on upcoming policy review. There are some new requirements that we need to implement for Family and Medical Leave. (Alyssa has policies highlighted in blue and is doing initial review):

#	Title	Due date
410	Family and Medical Leave <i>Chris has received information from Kraus Anderson HR staff about what we need to add to the Employee Handbook and will consult with Alyssa on how to incorporate into the policy revision. She does know what we are required to do at this point and has done it as appropriate. Chris will send out a draft revised policy and Handbook as soon as it is drafted. Chris has drafted an update in the staff handbook section covering Family and Medical Leave using Kraus Anderson and MetLife resources and discussed with Alyssa. Need to confirm if we need a separate policy or if having information in our staff handbook is sufficient. If we need a separate policy, existing policy 410 must be updated to be in line with the staff handbook.</i>	8/18/2025
402	Disability Nondiscrimination Policy	11/15/2025
402.1	Section 504-ADA Grievance Procedures	11/15/2025
492	Nepotism	11/15/2025
522	Student Sex Nondiscrimination	11/15/2025
534	Service Learning	11/15/2025
415	Purchase of Group Health Insurance <i>Chris will start reviewing after 410 is wrapped up</i>	1/17/2026
510	Flexible Learning	3/21/2026
725	Record Retention Policy and MN Records Retention Schedule <i>Chris</i>	3/21/2026
725.1	General Records Retention Schedule for MN School Districts <i>Chris</i>	3/21/2026
210.1	Conflict of Interest	4/18/2026

223	On Going Board Training Policy	4/18/2026
523	Gender Identity Policy	4/18/2026
612.1	Title I Parent Involvement	4/18/2026
503.01	Homeless Children Attendance	5/16/2026
526	Hazing	5/16/2026
802	Disposal of Property	5/16/2026
404	Employment Background Checks	6/20/2026
709	Bus Transportation and Safety	6/20/2026

- 4) Education (orientation, ongoing education, etc.)
  - a) Education for next board meeting-
  - b) Any additions to list of future board level education topics
    - i) Nancy Dana- governance training **Done September 2025**
    - ii) Understanding the budget- **Done January 2025**
    - iii) Review of charter school relevant laws from Board member self evaluations
    - iv) Paris Dunning (ESABA Executive Director)
    - v) Presentation about elected officials for the area- who represents us in the area at different levels, who we contact for what
    - vi) Julie Richards- How to build community (part 2 of her previous presentation)
    - vii) Follow up review to page 2 terms for Financial Statements after they are distributed for a month or two.
    - viii) Embracing Equity- can we get a session with them? Is that part of our contract? Julaine has asked Sarah to help identify an appropriate Equity training geared towards Boards. Asked Equity to find an equity centered Board training for March/April 2026.
    - ix) Cybersecurity and school- bring in an expert?
    - x) David Greenberg- finance training, referred by Terry from UST
    - xi) Introduction to Montessori-
      - (1) what is the Montessori concept?
      - (2) Why are we AMI Montessori and what does that mean?
      - (3) What makes CMES different? Alyssa suggested Sara Wade, Julaine has emailed her to ask about her willingness and availability
      - (4) Can we help Board members put together their elevator pitch?
      - (5) Survey for Board members about their gaps in Montessori knowledge? Send out after initial education session, then structure further education based on responses
      - (6) Use to be a better advocate for the school.
      - (7) Use resources gathered to create a Montessori quick reference guide for new Board members as well
  - c) New Board member training- need to identify training for Board 300 course for Megan and Tom as Nancy Dana may not be available before June 30 to conduct training.
    - i) Joe? **Chris is emailing him**
    - ii) Other ideas? (MACS is not conducting 300 training at this time)
      - (1) **Propel offers some training courses, check with them**
      - (2) **CharterSource?**
      - (3) **Still reach out to Nancy to see if she is willing- Chris will contact**
- 5) Board succession planning
  - a) Now that we have information from Board profile grid, Evaluation of needs of entire Board for future Board member recruitment.

- i) Priorities for skills of new Board member recruitment: project management, strategic planning, nonprofit governance, advancement
    - (1) Goal is to get Melissa Finnegan more involved in policy review on Governance, Julaine contacted her, waiting for response. Note that Melissa previously had commitments on Tuesday evenings so committee meeting schedule will need to be shifted. No response from Melissa at this time.
    - (2) How to advertise Board positions, have job description from 2019, committee members review and give Rohan feedback by Monday 12/8
      - (a) Rohan to contact MACS, MN Charter School Association to ask to post- *received some out of office messages in December, will contact again now that it is January*
      - (b) CMES website
      - (c) Phone call with Northeast Bank to ask them to bring viable candidates- *Chris has some other things to talk to Andrea about so will bring up then*
      - (d) Ask Joe if he has sources that we haven't covered: website, organization-*asked at December Finance meeting, no specific recommendations*
      - (e) Can we get Board chairs of Montessori schools around the Twin Cities together to discuss Board relevant topics like member recruitment?
      - (f) Rohan to Send description to Propel
      - (g) ESABA- have a more succinct or graphical listing
    - (3) Review outcome of Board member recruitment discussion at November Board meeting (from draft minutes)
      - o **Current member skill sets?** Financial backgrounds will be rolling off; We need a treasurer & secretary; strategic planning
      - o **What do we need our board to look like for future years?**
      - o **What would we like to add to our board?** Legal or HR experience;
        - (a) **How can we target these skills and interests?** Might be great to have definitions of expertise wanted (for example, what's the more specific skill we're looking for within Healthcare or HR background); could we have an accessibility fund for people to pay for rides to the board meetings or for childcare;
- 6) Cyclical Strategic Planning updates-*have a quick update on all three topics each meeting, rotate if there is an extensive update*
    - a) Early Childhood and working with CMS discussions- *will be included in Board Chair report if there is any update*
    - b) Advancement and Marketing- *regular Advancement report*
    - c) Recruiting new Board members

7) Review upcoming Board meeting tasks from schedule spreadsheet

Discuss authorizer renewal if applicable
Complete UST quarterly report due by Jan 10 (Alyssa is currently working on this)
Evaluate lottery process, revise as necessary

Julaine and Alyssa to attend Teams meeting for UST Authorizer review on Wednesday, 1/7

- 8) Next Meeting
  - a) To be determined (Zoom link) *Tuesday, February 10, 1 pm*
- 9) Any other business
  - a) Rohan- *are there any people/organizations that aggregate interpretations of fast paced changes relevant to CMES and funding to send the Board updates?*
    - i) *MACS has sent out updates*
    - ii) *Carolyn follows the legislature and news carefully, can we ask her to send urgent updates?*
    - iii) *Rohan will look for paid services*

- iv) Could we ask Finance to add a current update on impactful developments to their report?  
Ask Joe to give an update at the Board meeting?
- 10) Adjourn 2:20 pm