

# Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School

Governance Committee Meeting Minutes (minutes in purple)

Tuesday, January 30, 2024, 6:00 pm, Online

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

## AGENDA

- 1) Call Meeting to Order 6:06 pm
- 2) Public Comment Period – Comments limited to 3 minutes per person
- 3) Goals for today's meeting:
  - a) Review strategic planning data
    - i) SOAR summary: send compiled data Word document of Board responses to Board, add to February Board packet folder. Work on new survey document for current staff members, key parents, former Board members, alumni. Rohan will start putting together, then send to Julaine, Chris, and Jean for revision. After new document is streamlined, then will send to Alyssa for distribution to staff. Targeting 10-15 staff members, let Alyssa choose. Distribute to staff on February 12 (Monday morning), soft deadline of Friday, February 23, actual hard deadline February 29. Then Rohan will compile responses and bring back to Board. Will also ask Alyssa for a list of key current parents- will consider characteristics of key parents and convey to Alyssa.
    - ii) Marketing update:
      - (1) Phase I: going forward with postcard mailer using currently budgeted marketing funds. The price scales up as we increase the radius from the school that the campaign will target.
      - (2) Phase II/III: After reviewing the packages from the firms interviewed, Nido currently looks to be the best candidate. Expect to have an estimate of costs in about 3 months. Discussed how it would be helpful to have an estimate in time to craft the 2024-25 budget.
  - b) Review policy progress
    - i) Policies to review:
      - (1) New policies and procedures (none this month)
      - (2) Policies in need of updating (approaching 3 years since last reviewed, due for review this school year):
        - (a) 413 Harassment (due 8/18/23, Alyssa will review first)
        - (b) 524 Internet Acceptable Use and Safety (due 6/20/23)
        - (c) Question from Alyssa: This is a question to hold for later - we have a sex nondiscrimination policy (#522), a disability nondiscrimination policy (#402), and a general nondiscrimination policy that seems to be included in the parent handbook but nowhere else. I guess it's two questions: should we adopt the general nondiscrimination policy as its own policy? And, do we need three separate policies or is there a way to combine them?
      - (d) Policies aiming to add for review this year:
        - (i) 806 Crisis Management Plan and Emergency Procedures: Alyssa (summer 2024)
        - (ii) 406 Public and Private Personnel Data: Chris
        - (iii) 415 Purchase of Group Health Insurance: Chris
        - (iv) 511 Fundraising: Jean reviewed, **ready to discuss**. Will change language to Fundraising Task Force so can use Task Force charge form and parameters for Task Force which have already been discussed. Will send for Consent Agenda.
        - (v) 506 Behavior and Dismissal: Alyssa and Julaine
        - (vi) 513 Acceleration and Retention: Alyssa and Julaine

(vii) 691 Inclusive Education Program: Alyssa and Julaine (Equity)

- 4) Education (orientation, ongoing education, etc.)
  - a) Education for next board meeting- Maybe discuss SOAR results? Marc Frankel presentation review? Feedback about Scott Flemming education session- debrief results from Jean/Rohan's post meeting with Scott as well as Board members' feedback. Send out an email reminder to review the presentation slides/recording and ask each person to bring one or two items that came to mind. Julaine will send out an email linking to resources separate from Board packet email and consent agenda email.
  - b) Any additions to list of future board level education topics
    - i) Nancy Dana- governance training
    - ii) Understanding the budget
    - iii) Paris Dunning (ESABA Executive Director)
    - iv) Presentation about elected officials for the area- who represents us in the area at different levels, who we contact for what
    - v) Recap of Marc Frankel MN Montessori presentation- February?
    - vi) Julie Richards- How to build community (part 2 of her previous presentation)
    - vii) Julaine communicated with Sarah to coordinate an Equity-facilitated education session in the spring focused on why pronoun identification and usage is important *and why this is important for Board work and policies*, Sarah will let Julaine know when the presenter confirms date.
    - viii) Follow up review to page 2 terms for Financial Statements after they are distributed for a month or two.
    - ix) Book report presentations- schedule for end of Board year
    - x) Embracing Equity- can we get a session with them? Is that part of our contract?
    - xi) Cybersecurity and school- bring in an expert?
    - xii) David Greenberg- finance training, referred by Terry from UST
- 5) Board Evaluation tools
  - a) MACS Governance Award- Jean reviewed categories and found portions that would be good exercises for entire Board evaluation (see attached document) looked through entire document, we are already doing the vast majority of the points. Biggest exception is publishing the 990 form and annual audit report on the website. Chris reviewed several other schools' websites and noted that the only school she saw that includes these documents is Global Academy, whereas other charter schools do not. Chris also checked in with Joe and he did not think it was necessary to post them on the website. This is not a requirement by MDE. We will make these documents available upon request but prefer to keep them off the website.
  - b) Jean compiled table comparing several assessment tools for annual Board performance (see attached document), committee members can review before February Governance Committee meeting and then we can discuss Jean went through the comparison and asked that all committee members look at the individual Board member and entire Board evaluation tools before the February meeting. Jean, Rohan, and Julaine will meet to develop a tool that works best for CMES.
- 6) Cybersecurity review update
  - a) Rohan and Chris met with Steve, Steve will start pushing updates to staff computers, will be requiring Board members to use two factor authentication for CMES email accounts sometime in the near future. Also signed up CMES for federal security program- CIS, MS-ISAC- to help monitor CMES website for cyber attacks.
- 7) Review upcoming Board meeting tasks from schedule spreadsheet
  - a) Finance is working on current year budget revision
  - b) Need to prepare for upcoming Board elections. Julaine is contacting potential parent candidates suggested by Alyssa for parent seat that will be opening up July 2024. Committee will also need

to discuss Board seat composition at the February meeting to determine if we need to expand the Board.

- c) Will need to initiate whole Board and individual Board self review processes after new tools are developed.
  - d) Also discussed that sending out a Friends of CMES newsletter in February some time would be a good to build support and keep information flowing.
- 8) Next Meeting
- a) Tuesday, February 27, 2024 at 6:00 pm (Zoom link)
- 9) Any other business Discussion of implementation of formal funding request process. As we have more active Board committees and task forces, these groups may need funds for their activities. To ensure that the Finance Committee is able to appropriately plan for an accommodate these activities and requests, it would be beneficial to develop a formalized process to request funds. It makes the most sense for the Treasurer and Finance Committee to develop these tools. Julaine will contact Carolyn and ask her to develop something to bring to the February Finance Committee meeting and, hopefully, to the February Board meeting after review.
- 10) Adjourn 7:36pm