

**CORNERSTONE MONTESSORI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – VIRTUAL AND INPERSON
TUESDAY, JUNE 21, 2022 – 6:00 P.M.**

Board Members Present: Jean Melancon, Jess Goff, Julaine Roffers-Agarwal, Carolyn Ganz, Alyssa Schwartz, Sarah Stocco, Maisah Outlaw (6:08), Marcus Almon (6:32 – 7:13)

Board Members Absent:

Other Attendees: Chris Bewell, Tyler Bouwens (board member as July 1, left at 7:58), Nora Springer (social worker, left after presentation), Suzi Splinter (special education teacher, left after presentation), Joe Alipero from Dieci Finance (6:35-7:36)

Meeting called to order by Jean Melancon, Board Chair, at 6:02 pm.

AGENDA

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

- Tyler - excited to start and contribute to board’s work.

Consent Agenda

Document Name	Brief Explanation of Content/Changes
514 Bullying Prohibition	The MDE policy has been adapted as a replacement for our current policy. The MDE policy contains the same information as our current policy, however it provides better clarity on the subject. Our current CMS 514 policy is also included in this packet for comparison.
524 Internet Acceptable Use and Safety	Reviewed annually, change indicated in red to include a sentence about students not using personal devices to access the internet while at school, including on the bus.
516 Student Medication	No changes
Board and Committee Meeting Dates 2022-23	The board is required to annually accept the schedule of board and committee meetings for the following year. Once accepted, changes may be made as necessary.
Staff Roster for 2022-23	The board is required to annually accept the staff roster. Once accepted, employment contracts are finalized. The motion for accepting the roster is: THE BOARD ACCEPTS THE STAFF ROSTER AS LISTED.
Price for breakfast/lunch Food/Nutrition Program	The board is required by MDE to annually approve breakfast and lunch prices. Prior to the covid years we were charging \$1.75/breakfast and \$3.50/lunch. We will be paying our vendor CKC Good Foods \$2.32/breakfast and \$3.72/lunch. There’s still a chance that the federal government might decide in August to feed all children for free. In the meantime, the motion for approval is: CMES ESTABLISHES THE FOLLOWING PRICES FOR SCHOOL MEALS FOR THE 2022-23 SCHOOL YEAR: \$2.25 FOR BREAKFAST AND \$3.75 FOR LUNCH AND THAT CMES WILL NOT DENY ANY CHILD A MEAL.
Draft May Meeting Minutes	

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

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Almon ABSENT		
Ganz	x	
Goff	x	
Melancon	x	
Outlaw ABSENT		
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

Approval of Agenda & Declaration of Conflict of Interest

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

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Almon ABSENT		
Ganz	x	
Goff	x	
Melancon	x	
Outlaw ABSENT		
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

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

Board Education – Specialist teachers

- Nora Springer, social worker
 - o Tiers of intervention
 - Tier I: General, whole class and small groups
 - UE Mindfulness - Move, breathe, rest
 - Lunch groups – 6-week cycles of social skills for all children this past year, relationship building, building empathy, identifying emotions, problems and reactions, etc
 - Tier II: Need-based as identified by staff, family, SAEBRS screening – one-on-one interventions for children needing support, but not qualifying for special education services
 - Tier III: Special education services
 - o Staff support – *Onward* by Elena Aquilar book club – optional for staff, monthly meetings, working on relationship and resilience

- Trauma sensitive school setting – core of this work are trusting, predictable, safe relationships. Individual and community trauma response – Nora spoke of Cornerstone’s strengths in these areas.
- Suzi Splinter, special education teacher
 - Tiers of intervention applies to academics too
 - Tier I is something everyone in the school gets
 - Tier II are targeted interventions, these are formulated by Child Find teams made up of guides and specialists to address questions and concerns raised by anyone working with the child, can be in any category, these are short-term, goal is to get to Tier I, but if that doesn’t work, new plans might happen including possible special education evaluation (this would happen with large team of educators)
 - Tier III is special education, IEP services – for children who qualify for services for additional support, lots of categories (including developmental delay (under 7); autism spectrum disorders; emotional and behavioral; specific learning disability – often reading, writing, math, oral language or communication; other health disabilities – could be chronic illness, ADHD, other diagnosis; speech and language
 - We use many outside specialists – speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical education, etc
 - IEP is individualized – measurable goals that are changed as student masters skills and grows, timing and minutes of services are different for each, ongoing communication and collaboration between team members to best support
 - We focus on keeping children in classroom, great team of paraprofessionals to support children in room, specific support for individual children
 - Question about Montessori and Special Education

Treasurer’s Report – Joe from Dieci Finance

- ADM at 137, ending year slightly below (136 plus) but that’s ok
- More grants and donations than budgeted
- No concerns about fund balance or year to date financials, strong cash balance
- Currently we are 92% of the way through the budget year and have received 89% of our Revenue and have spent 88% of our Expenditure budget. This is in line with expectations given the 10% holdback from the state for revenues as well as not having all of our Federal Grants approved nor being able to draw on these funds.

CAROLYN MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE MAY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS. JESS SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE VOTES WERE:

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Almon	x	
Ganz	x	
Goff	x	
Melancon	x	
Outlaw	x	
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

In the month of May, there was \$10,911 in donations. One personal check donation of \$800, BoxTops for Education for \$44, Amazon Smile for \$67, and the Vangaurd Charitable Fund in the amount of \$10,000. The total donation amount year to date is \$14,610.

JULAINÉ MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE DONATIONS OF \$10,911. MAISAH SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE VOTES WERE:

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Almon	x	
Ganz	x	
Goff	x	
Melancon	x	
Outlaw	x	
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

Next year's budget

See reports – Joe talked through some changes from this year – some highlights

- This year 137 - next year 141. The goal is to get closer to 143-145 depending on how many we can fit
- Some changes – adjusted state aids based on higher enrollment
- Some grants we won't have next year (student support grant)
- Summer programming grant
- Jean asked Alyssa to talk through line item about admin support
 - Lindsay - elementary program manager – tremendous support - keeping that position
 - Recess lead position 0.25 – Toli Reigada also take a lot off plate – problem solving and behaviors
 - Full time social worker will also help with behavior
- Transportation – general and special ed
- Intentionally spending down a little bit of fund balance

- AMI sponsorship (Lindsay, online and in person, Denver, 2 year program), staff development, equity in education (following audit from last year, set aside money for training and adjustments to program)
- What are concerns of the future – ESSER 2, ESSER 3 – COVID related dollars – won’t come again 215K that would be coming in as revenue in 2024 – have been pushing things off to balance
- Questions about how to look at benefits and salaries over all – Joe’s recommendation is to start working on next year’s budget already this fall – there are some things in the works in the legislature that could impact us – food services, SPED services
 - Alyssa – planning on salary comparison done for July (if held, if not, then August) board meeting

MAISAH MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE 22-23 PROPOSED BUDGET. SARAH SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE VOTES WERE:

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Almon	x	
Ganz	x	
Goff	x	
Melancon	x	
Outlaw	x	
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

Discussion - Forming an ABC (affiliated building company) - Joe

- Timeline seems to be running about 9 months from application to approval so it’s something it would be good to do ahead of any need for it
- ABC’s construct or purchase and renovate facilities for a school. The school then leases from its ABC.
- Anticipated expenses
 - Major expense is the attorney - ABC creation by Atty Craig Kepler, \$5000 – he is known to Joe and CMES
 - ABC annual audit approx. \$750 includes filing 990 form
 - CMES incurs annual payment to ABC for expenses or
 - ABC could run as a deficit for 5 years with deferred expense for CMES budget

Questions:

- How does it work financially, how does money change hands, etc?
 - Money comes to ABC from school in form of lease aid, pays for bonds or maintenance costs
 - ABC is kind of a pass through entity to pay bonds

- ABC can run a capital campaign to purchase building
- Board can be small – just 2 people even – one staff, one community member, doesn’t often meet unless something big going on – construction, etc – but not shared board member with ABC and school

MARCUS MADE A MOTION TO AUTHORIZE DIECI FINANCE TO CREATE AND AFFILIATED BUILDING COMPANY (ABC) FOR CMES. CAROLYN SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE VOTES WERE:

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Almon	x	
Ganz	x	
Goff	x	
Melancon	x	
Outlaw (unavailable)		
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

Employee Retention Credit

- similar to PPP loan - but a credit passed on past payroll taxes and such.
- Available to non-profits of 25 employees or more
- Likely a credit of about 650,000 – it’s a credit based on previous taxes paid - no restrictions on spending
- Larger than PPP loan – can apply now to both instead of just one
- Desk review by IRS – approved or denied – no need to pay back money
- Concerns about charters not qualifying but Joe is figuring out with national consultant
- Downside? Consultant expert, acting in good faith, due diligence, we have the money and can just have it sit there until we are sure we can spend it
- Questions about consultant, ethics, optics, - we wouldn’t touch the money but we would be paying a consultant 6% to help us get it.

JEAN MADE A MOTION TO AUTHORIZE THE FINANCE COMMITTEE TO PURSUE APPLICATION FOR THE EMPLOYEE RETENTION CREDIT, PENDING FUTURE BOARD APPROVAL OF FINAL CONSULTANT CONTRACT. SARAH SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS NO FURTHER DISCUSSION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE VOTES WERE:

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Almon ABSENT		
Ganz	x	
Goff	x	
Melancon	x	
Outlaw (UNAVAILABLE)		
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

Head of School Report -Alyssa

- End of year celebrations – very nice
 - Graduation in person
 - Fly up
 - Ice cream social
- New hires for the fall – math specialist, social worker
- Bringing back entire staff except one person moving out of state
- Summer school 60 children in each session (3 sets of 2 weeks)
- MCM Executive Director – Joe McDonald – July 11 - Molly planning to step back – exciting to see how those relationships move forward
 - Question about how to welcome – MCM planning meet and greets – Alyssa and Jean will pass on info as they have it

Director of Business Operations – Chris Bewell

- Ended year 6/14/22 with 135 ADM
- Enrollment looks strong and being finalized.

Governance Committee – Julaine

- Proposed staff sabbatical policy
 - Looked at other schools, at statutes
 - Worked with Alyssa to make sure that it wouldn't add difficulty with hiring dates, etc – notification date for sabbatical leave would be early enough
 - One year – unpaid
 - If more than one staff member requests, seniority at the school will take priority, as well as consideration of who has taken a leave recently.
 - Alyssa requested concrete rules since having more than one staff gone for a year would be extra difficult
 - Questions about funding education experiences during that year and strong support for professional development plan funding that could happen during

this year as well – this is a separate conversation and separate policies – could absolutely come up in individual cases separate from sabbatical policy,.

JULAINÉ MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE STAFF SABBATICAL POLICY AS WRITTEN. CAROLYN SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE VOTES WERE:

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Almon ABSENT		
Ganz	x	
Goff	x	
Melancon	x	
Outlaw (UNAVAILABLE)		
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

Governance committee wanted to acknowledge and thank Marcus for his time and contributions during his term.

Equity Task Force – Jean, Sarah, Maisah

- This task force has been a lot of work. Main task was to identify firm to work with CMES for audit. This task has been completed.
- Task force is now being decommissioned. Please thank all who participated and keep those folks in mind for future equity work
- Sarah

Next steps:

- Alyssa (HOS for CMES and CMS) and Sarah Stocco (CMES board rep) to:
 - Review the Equity Report and Alex’s Hermida’s presentation
 - List all major items for improvement
 - Group similar items for improvement into categories
 - Prioritize items within each category, noting any dependencies across categories.
 - Recommend who is best to address categories.
 - Ex. could be just staff, parents, HOS, board, or mix of constituents
 - Alyssa and Sarah to present recommendations at August board mtg
- Board creates task force charges for each major category
 - Task Force’s goal: to conduct any further analysis and recommend action plans, timeframe, and any anticipated expenses.
- Present recommendations and executive summary – presenting report in context
- Create new task forces

- Questions about MCM/CMS and full report, etc - public school open meeting law, data privacy because small population

Board Chair Report

- Update on Ames property, 1647 house
 - Our approved motion shared with MCM following 7/14 meeting
FOR CMES TO SUPPORT MCM PROCEEDING TO SUBMIT PURCHASE APPLICATION FOR 1647 AMES AVENUE, NOTING THAT CMES IS NOT CURRENTLY IN A POSITION TO MAKE A COMMITMENT FOR FUTURE USE OR PURCHASE, AND REQUESTING FIRST RIGHT OF REFUSAL IF MCM WERE TO CONSIDER A FUTURE SALE.
 - MCM considering whether or not to consider an offer for the 1647 Ames Avenue Property – Finance Committee met last week – Finance Committee meeting this Friday, June 24th , Joe and Jean to attend – Property still available as of today
- “Resurface” expansion task force
 - Modify charge based on what the board initially needs to know to make a decision on expansion feasibility and best method
 - Produce preliminary recommendations and present to the board at the August board meeting.
 - Interested to date: Carolyn, Jess, Sarah, Julaine, Jean

Suggested Agenda Items for Next Board Meeting

- Annual cycle of board responsibilities
- Equity – Alyssa and Sarah, recommendations
- Expansion TF – recommendations
- Welcome new board member Tyler Bouwens

Adjourn

JULAINÉ MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:13 PM. JESS SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. VOTES WERE:

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Almon ABSENT		
Ganz	x	
Goff	x	
Melancon	x	
Outlaw ABSENT		
Roffers-Agarwal	x	

Stocco	x	
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***The next CMES Board Meeting is Thursday, August 18th, 6 p.m.
Respectfully Submitted by Jess Goff, CMES Secretary.***