

**CORNERSTONE MONTESSORI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
MAY 21, 2024, TUESDAY – 6:00 P.M.**

**Board Members Present:** Jess Goff, Julaine Roffers-Agarwal, Sarah Stocco, Jean Melancon, Rohan Chougule, Alyssa Schwartz

**Board Members Absent:** Carolyn Ganz, Jeremy Miller, Tyler Bouwens

**Other Attendees:** Chris Bewell, Joe Aliperto (6:16–6:45), Kelsey Leonardsmith (6:34 – 7:10). Megan Reimer, Tom Fendt (6:12)

**Meeting called to order by Julaine Roffers-Agarwal, Board Chair, at 6:01 pm.**

**AGENDA**

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

- Megan Reimer – K-6 reading specialist at Cornerstone, here to observe.
- Tom Fendt – former staff member, returning to Cornerstone as LE guide next school year

**Consent Agenda**

- Feedback on 2nd Quarter Report from University of St. Thomas
- Feedback on 3rd Quarter Report from University of St. Thomas
- Draft 2023-24 School Calendar with snow day
- Draft April 2024 meeting minutes

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

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Bouwens	A	
Chougule	x	
Ganz	A	
Goff	x	
Melancon	x	
Miller	A	
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

**Approval of Agenda & Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

**SARAH MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE EVENING’S AGENDA. JESS SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS DISCUSSION OF FLEXIBILITY OF THE ORDER BASED ON ATTENDANCE. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Bouwens	A	

Chougule	x	
Ganz	A	
Goff	x	
Melancon	x	
Miller	A	
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

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

**Director of Business Operations – Chris Bewell**

- Enrollment update 137 current, but ADM will still be 138 something
- 24-25 enrollment applications – we have 15 K enrolled so would like to have more. Our waitlists are sparse.
- We still will push to enroll over the summer, maybe send people to community events to share, etc

**Marketing Update – Rohan**

- Enrollment challenge - We are challenging each Board member to identify a student to apply to CMES for the 2024-2025 school year.
- Community engagement
- Formal documentation of marketing strategy
- Progress to date – postcards, flyers, etc
- Would still like to make a 3-year marketing plan and work on transitioning task force activities to internal staff
- Seeking Board approval to extend Marketing Task Force term to December 31, 2024 to carry out Phase B activities

**JEAN MADE A MOTION TO EXTEND THE MARKETING TASK FORCE TERM THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2024. ROHAND SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE VOTES WERE:**

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Bouwens	A	
Chougule	x	
Ganz	A	
Goff	x	
Melancon	x	
Miller	A	
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

**Governance Committee**

- Board member self-evaluations discussions with the Board Chair have been completed

- Whole Board evaluation tool will be distributed to Board members later this week.
- Reminder: complete two factor authentication from instructions sent out earlier

**Treasurer’s Report – Joe**

- o 138 ADM
- o Budgeted currently at 138
- o State is paying us a little bit higher, but that will be reconciled later.
- o 83% of the way through the year, have received 80% of revenue, 78% of expenditures, everything tracking in line with what we anticipated
- o No new grant opportunities right now
- o Esser 3 funds are expiring – these are used for before and after school activities, programming outside of the normal school day
- o Fund balance - strong healthy – no concerns
- o Due dates – see reports
- o Food service – revenues are always a month or two behind because of reimbursements from the state
- o Overall – revenues are what we anticipated, expenditures are looking better than expected,
- o Question: what percent we get back for transportation?

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

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Bouwens	A	
Chougule	x	
Ganz	A	
Goff	x	
Melancon	x	
Miller	A	
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

- There were three donations in April: \$280 from MN Orchestral Association, \$360 from Ordway, \$120 from t-shirt sale donations

**JEAN MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE APRIL DONATIONS TOTALING \$760 FROM THE MN ORCHESTRAL ASSOCIATION, THE ORDWAY, AND T-SHIRT SALE DONATIONS. ROHAN SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE VOTES WERE:**

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Bouwens	A	
Chougule	X	

Ganz	A	
Goff	X	
Melancon	X	
Miller	A	
Roffers-Agarwal	X	
Stocco	X	

**Budget for 24-25 school year**

- Side by side comparison between this year and next
- Lots of things are generally staying the same, similar enrollment anticipated, etc
- ESSER funds are going away – so back to “normal” as in pre-covid funding years
- 2% increase from the state, also means 2% increase in some expenditures (staffing)
- Shortfall will be covered from fund balance
- Fund balance projected to remain just above 37%
- Questions:
  - o Funding for new hires? – these are all either current positions that we already pay for, new SPED teacher salary would be offset
  - o Is Cornerstone considering offering stipends to support teachers who will be going through READ training? Lots of stuff came out of the latest legislative session including some funding for this, MACS will help us wade through what that means, nothing has been said to staff yet
  - o Equity funding – not in the budget, but can be added, professional development money could be used for equity work as well
  - o Marketing budget? –same amount as this year, \$3300

**SARAH MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE 2024-2025 PROPOSED BUDGET. ROHAN SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS NO FURTHER DISCUSSION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE VOTES WERE:**

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Bouwens	A	
Chougule	X	
Ganz	A	
Goff	X	
Melancon	X	
Miller	A	
Roffers-Agarwal	X	
Stocco	X	

**Board Education**

- o Dr. Kelsey Leonardsmith (she/they)
  - Attended Harvard Medical School, residency at Allina Health United Family Medicine, certified by the American Board of Family Medicine
  - Phalen Village Clinic, University of Minnesota & the Family Tree

- Today here to talk to us about the use of pronouns, gender identity, and generally what gender affirming care looks like in children, how we as a board can support inclusive policies for folks of all ages and genders as we consider language and actions that affect our students, staff, and community
- Session being recorded for absent board members
- Genderbread person graphic
- Great slides from Dr. Leonardsmith – more detail there
  - A lot of noise in the media currently about gender diverse children. Good to come back to leaders in medicine – support children (Info from the American Association of Pediatrics)
  - Gender milestones – labeling “girl” vs “boy”, pronouns, etc – by around age 6, most kids understand gender to be fixed
  - Gender development – experimentation with toys, clothes, etc; young children use gender scripts to inform their expectations
  - Gender diverse kids growing up - higher RISKS – all the risks
  - Gender Affirming Care – what does it have to do with schools?
    - Recurring suicidal ideation at school – using name and pronouns at school – percentages
  - PDF from State of MN
  - Questions
    - When reviewing policies, are there things beyond gender-inclusive language that we should be sure to be looking at? Surely there are – thinking about bathrooms, clubs, sports, names, etc.

### **Head of School Report – Alyssa**

- School operations – hiring can move forward as we have an approved budget
- Upcoming School Events
  - Going outs and UE 6<sup>th</sup> grade overnight!
  - Ice Cream Social – June 7, 4:30
  - Kindergarten Fly-Up – June 12, 11:00
  - 6th Year Honoring Ceremony – June 12, 1:30 (at First Hmong Assembly)
  - July 10 – Embracing Equity webinar on public school board leadership
    - (<https://www.embracingequity.org/webinars>)

### **Board Chair Report – Julaine**

- Met with Kelsey Echols, Liza Davis, Molly O’Shaughnessy, Jean, and Alyssa to discuss progress since last meeting
- CMS program manager position is being re-envisioned to a HOS administrative assistant, job description was being finalized and will be posted shortly (has been posted internally already) - hopefully in place soon, certainly by fall

- Forming working group to do a strengths and opportunities evaluation of CH classrooms becoming part of CMES and early childhood
- Continuing discussion of partnership between CMES and MCM going forward, MOU, and what a productive Joint Board meeting might be like (maybe a speaker that could pertain to both boards, making it a valuable experience for all)
- Don't forget to set up two-factor authentication – Chris will send out emails to all

#### **Next Meeting – June 18<sup>th</sup>**

- Committees will report/discuss – and also share plans for next year – all committees will have ready some sort of plan for next year – to leave us with a to-do list before we go away for the summer
- Email Julaine if you have other agenda items

#### **Feedback – what went well?**

- Really appreciated Kelsey's board education – very good
- Email Julaine if you have other feedback

**SARAH MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:24 PM. JESS SECONDED THE MOTION. BEFORE VOTES COULD BE CAST, JEAN LEFT, RESULTING IN NO LONGER HAVING A QUORUM, SO THE MEETING ENDED IMMEDIATELY.**

***The next CMES Board Meeting is, Tuesday, June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 6 p.m.***

***Respectfully Submitted by Jess Goff, CMES Secretary.***