

**CORNERSTONE MONTESSORI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 18, 2023, TUESDAY – 6:00 P.M.**

**Board Members Present:** Jess Goff, Julaine Roffers-Agarwal, Carolyn Ganz, Alyssa Schwartz (6:11), Sarah Stocco, Tyler Bouwens, Jean Melancon, Rohan Chougule, Jeremy Miller

**Board Members Absent:**

Other Attendees: Emma Cornwall, Chris Bewell, Julie Richards (guest speaker), Joe Aliperto of Deici Finance(6:31-7:03)

**Meeting called to order by Julaine Roffers-Agarwal, Board Chair, at 6:07 pm.**

**AGENDA**

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

- Emma Cornwall – SPED teacher at CMES just coming to observe

**Consent Agenda**

- August 2023 Meeting Minutes

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

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

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

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

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Bouwens	x	
Chougule	x	
Ganz	x	
Goff	x	

Melancon	x	
Miller	x	
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

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

#### **Board Education – Guest Speaker, Julie Richards**

- Julie is a former board member and parent of a former student at CMES
- Presentation about East Side of St. Paul – Demographics and Community (slide show)
  - o Map
  - o Population demographics – 106,409, not growing, median age 32, children are the largest population, overview of racial groups, languages, home ownership, income, etc
  - o Brief overview of Hmong, Karen, Somali communities – lots of immigrants here
  - o Really good information and overview of the East Side

#### **Treasurer’s Report – Joe Aliperto, Dieci Finance**

- Reports from August
- Current ADM is 136 (budgeted at 141 ADM – so this may be revised in fall budget revision)
- Healthy strong cash balance (over \$900,000)
- No updates on grants, no changes since August
- Revenue and expenditures are balanced
- Nice graphs in reports!
- Addition in reports of end dates for ESSER funding – nice info to have
- Large fund balance, beyond what recommended – something to think about as we move forward
- No donations in August
- Clear audit
- November 1<sup>st</sup> is deadline for Title applications
- Joe talked through financial report overviews.
- Discussion of Safe and Sick time – new law affecting hourly employees

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

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Bouwens	x	
Chougule	x	
Ganz	x	

Goff	x	
Melancon	x	
Miller	x	
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

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

- No lead detected!
- UST visit next week 9/28 – board members are invited to a 9 am meeting that day
- Upcoming Events – Board Members welcome!
  - International Day of Peace Celebration, 9/21 11:00
  - Fall Festival, 9/22 4:30-6:00
  - Cornerstone Café, 10/6 8:45-9:45
  - Parent Partnership, 10/23 5:30-6:30
- Recap of MCA scores from spring 2023
  - Overview of testing at school (Fastbridge, MCA, ACCESS)
  - MCA
    - Numbers assessed are very small, which can lead to large fluctuations year to year
    - Reading scores - higher than St. Paul, higher than MN
    - Math scores – higher than St. Paul, lower than MN, but within 10 points
    - Science (5<sup>th</sup> grade) – 45 percent higher than St Paul, 20 percent higher than MN
    - Very hard to look at growth over the last few years: no assessments 2020, 2021 25% did not participate
    - However, starting to see patterns emerge: consistent growth over 2019 (last “normal” year) and percentages fairly consistently positive 2021-2023
  - Fastbridge – used internally, scores similar but more nuanced than MCA, looking good
  - Montessori Effect – we see steady improvement over time, 6<sup>th</sup> years are showing most proficiency
- Outdoor improvements
  - Shade sail
  - Irrigation for recess yard
  - Water fountain in recess yard as well
  - Stage! – part of CMS capital improvement
  - Working on more nature play equipment for building, etc but backorder issues
  - Back of the building space for adults outside is looking nicer too

### **Director of Business Operations – Chris Bewell**

- Enrollment continually fluctuating

- Last Friday 138, yesterday 137, tomorrow 139 – so we will look at ADM as it settles in October
- Moves are generally because of distance
- Transportation with Monarch is a continual work in progress – getting better little by little. Arrivals seem on time, but departures are getting better.
  - Chris on the phone with bus company daily at 3:50.

### **Proposed Retreat Agenda – Rohan**

#### Schedule

- Check In & meeting kick off
- Progress Check: CMES Strategic Plan (2019-23)
- Break (10 mins)
- CMES's Strategy & Vision 2024-29
- Break (10 mins)
- Review standing committees 2023-24 annual goals
- Break (10 mins)
- Next steps in CMES Expansion Strategy
- Q&A and Closing remarks

#### Deadlines

- Create pre work related templates by Tuesday September 19
- Share pre work related templates by Wednesday September 20
- Request completed pre work related templates by Wednesday October 4
- Communicate consolidated completed pre work & pre reading material to board members and support staff by Friday October 6
- CMES Fall retreat: Sunday October 15

### **Advancement Committee**

- Helped with tabling before school
- Meeting regularly with Jennifer, grant writer
  - Did not receive a recent grant but got nice feedback
  - Looking at more applications in October and November
- Would we like to have representation at the ESABA Gala?
  - If so, reach out to Tyler.

### **BOARD CHAIR REPORT**

- Thank you for all who attended Back to School Open House in August
- Ongoing meetings scheduled for lease renewal discussions with MCM
- We got a long list of parents interested in committee and/or task force work – working on how to include all and be welcoming in helping them get connected (Tyler, Sarah, Julaine working together on this)
- Next meeting will include audit information

**Feedback – what went well?**

- Julie's information was helpful and would like to see her back

**JEAN MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7: 45 PM. SARAH SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE VOTES WERE:**

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

***The next CMES Board Meeting is Tuesday, October 17, 2023, 6 p.m.  
Respectfully Submitted by Jess Goff, CMES Secretary.***