

**CORNERSTONE MONTESSORI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
SEPTEMBER 16, 2025, TUESDAY – 6:00 P.M.**

Board Members Present: Julaine Roffers-Agarwal, Alyssa Schwartz, Carolyn Ganz, Rachel Droogsma, Rohan Chougule, Sarah Stocco, Tom Fendt, Megan Riemer (had to leave at 7:30pm)

Board Members Absent:

Other Attendees: Chris Bewell, Joe Aliperto (Dieci Finance- 6:11pm)

Guests: Nancy Dana (Board Education)

Meeting called to order by Julaine Roffers-Agarwal, Board Chair, at 6:03pm.

AGENDA

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

AUGUST MINUTES

RACHEL MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE AUGUST MINUTES. CAROLYN SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS NO FURTHER DISCUSSION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE VOTES WERE:

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Chougule	x	
Droogsma	x	
Fendt	x	
Ganz	x	
Riemer	x	
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

Approval of Agenda & Declaration of Conflict of Interest

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

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Chougule	x	
Droogsma	x	

Fendt	x	
Ganz	x	
Riemer	x	
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

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

CD FUNDS

One of the \$200,00+ CD's is maturing on October 4. The checking account was very low in August and early September, so it would be better to have more cash there. Finance Committee recommends a reinvestment of \$100,000 and the rest go into our checking account

CAROLYN MADE A MOTION TO ALLOW THE FINANCE COMMITTEE TO REINVEST \$100,000 OF FUNDS FROM THE CD HELD AT NORTHEAST BANK, WHICH WILL MATURE ON OCTOBER 4, 2025, FOR A PERIOD UP TO 13 MONTHS. ROHAN SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE VOTES WERE:

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Chougule	x	
Droogsma	x	
Fendt	x	
Ganz	x	
Riemer	x	
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

Treasurer's Report - Joe

- End of the year (review from July due to the software error which made the report unavailable for our August meeting): enrollment was 136 and ADM of 133.39. The State paid school off of 140, so payments will be reconciled in August, September, and October.
- Current enrollment is 136 and ADM is 132
- \$51,414 Cash balance and \$427,197 CD balance
- 17% of the way through the year, 11% received, 9% spent
- \$30,000 Grants from the St. Paul & Minnesota Foundation at the end of the year.
- Holdback is still 10%
- \$45,822 is currently being held back from the School which will get paid back during the holdback payments in 2025.

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- More details in reports -

CAROLYN MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE JULY FINANCIALS. RACHEL SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE VOTES WERE:

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Chougule	x	
Droogsma	x	
Fendt	x	
Ganz	x	
Riemer	x	
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

AUGUST FINANCIALS

- Current enrollment in September: 136
- \$51,414 Cash balance and \$427,197 CD balance
- 17% of the way through the year, 11% received, 9% spent
- \$30,000 Grants from the St. Paul & Minnesota Foundation at the end of the year.
- Holdback is still 10%
- \$45,822 is currently being held back from the School which will get paid back during the holdback payments in 2025.
- Fund balance of just under 32%
- Once we get the revised budget, we will adjust the numbers
- More details in reports -

SARAH MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE AUGUST FINANCIALS. CAROLYN SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE VOTES WERE:

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Chougule	x	
Droogsma	x	
Fendt	x	
Ganz	x	
Riemer	x	
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

New MNPFML State Requirement

Paid Family and Medical Leave has been adopted by the State, so we are required to cover this for employees. Current CMES ancillary lines of coverage are being offered through

MetLife, and therefore CMES is able to take advantage of MetLife's competitive premiums on the MNPFML product without any impact to our current lines of coverage.

State of MN:

- 1/1/26 rate: 0.88% of total payroll (full and part time)
- Next renewal: 1/1/27
- 1/1/27 rate: capped increase of 1.1%

MetLife:

- 1/1/26 rate: 0.87% of total payroll (full and part time)
- Next renewal: 6/1/28 (20 month rate guaranteed)
- MetLife will handle coordination of STD/MNPFML benefits on behalf of CMES. If we would select to go with the State's program, coordination of benefits would be the responsibility of the employer.

CAROLYN MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE METLIFE MNPFML COVERAGE STARTING 1/1/26. MEGAN SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Chougule	x	
Droogsma	x	
Fendt	x	
Ganz	x	
Rierner	x	
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

Board Education: Nancy Dana. Division of Labor between the School and the Board

Nancy will lead the discussion about Board Roles and Responsibilities. Nancy has been connected to Cornerstone from its inception and is passionate about charter schools and board governance.

Everything we do in the meetings is written in law, and we must follow that law. There are trainings required of all board members, and those must be completed by all members. Board terms must begin on July 1. Meetings should be held in person. Up to three times a year, a voting member may participate by interactive technology.

One of our major responsibilities is being the manager of the Head of School. Another job as a Board Member is to think big picture. Why does the Board exist? To accomplish what the stakeholders want. Strong and durable links to the community. To ensure nothing illegal, unethical, or imprudent occurs. High performing goals, safe place, financial accountability.

Three duties:

- Duty of Care
- Duty of Loyalty

- Duty of Obedience

Most authorizers are asking Board Members for a Statement of Assurance.

Suggestion:

- Keep attendance chart of members over the course of the school year at the top of each month's agenda/minutes

Head of School Report - Alyssa

- Great new staff! School year is off to a fantastic start.
- Upcoming events Board members are welcome to attend
 - Fall Festival – 4:00-5:30, September 19
 - International Peace Day Celebration – 11:00, September 26
 - Parent Partnership – 5:30-6:30, September 29
 - Cornerstone Café – 8:30-9:30, October 10
 - Contact Alyssa to schedule a time to observe in an environment (parents will get an invitation to observe after MEA break).
- MCA 2024-2025 Assessments: we encourage everyone to participate; children who do not participate actively count against our scores
 - Given to 3-6 graders annually in the spring
 - Math and reading to all grades
 - Science to 5th grade only
 - Four outcomes: exceeded standards, met standards, partially met standards, did not meet standards
 - Our scores from Spring 2025: not great. Usually our Reading is around 60% and Math is near 40%. Spring of 2025 scores: Reading 47.2% Math 19.2%
- ACCESS: given in winter to children k-6 for whom English is not their first language
- FASTBRIDGE: Reading, math, and social-emotional assessments given 2-3 times/year
- Upper Elementary: State has added a new dyslexia assessment

Director of Budget Operations - Chris

- Current Enrollment - 136
- Current applications - fluctuating. Currently, we have 8 on the waitlist across K-2. We have room from 4th-6th grades (4th at 17; 5th at 17; 6th at 16).

Governance Committee

Policy 533 Wellness: updates required for Food and Nutrition review this fall.

RACHEL MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE REVISED POLICY 533: WELLNESS POLICY. ROHAN SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS A SHORT DISCUSSION ABOUT WHY WE NEED A WELLNESS POLICY. CHRIS CLARIFIED THAT IT'S BEING DRIVEN BY BOTH

STATE AND FEDERAL MANDATES. ALYSSA AND CHRIS CONFIRMED THERE WAS A GREAT DISCUSSION WITH STAFF ABOUT IT. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Chougule	x	
Droogsma	x	
Fendt	x	
Ganz	x	
Riemer	AB SE NT	
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

Advancement Committee

Update on Fall Fest: 4-5:30pm on Friday! Will have a carnival-type atmosphere with a photo booth, a popcorn machine, games, etc. We have lots of lawn signs to give away, so spread the word! Also working on a Book Fair, which will take place at the end of October during conferences.

Equity Committee

No report

Board Education: Community Agreement with Jess

Review of discussion with Jess: Notes from Jess included 2024 Agreements. Jess pointed out that a lot of what we discussed as agreements for 2025 were very similar to 2024.

Relational Agreements:

Communication:

We seek to communicate directly, respectfully, and transparently. We listen with curiosity, and we aim to engage in clear, honest, and responsive communication in person and online.

Operational Agreements:

We support each other and our work in many ways. Specifically we agree to:

1. Distribute existing agreements in the July (*in every?*) board packet and revisit board member roles and agreements every year during our September meeting.
2. Provide board meeting materials to the board chair by expected deadlines.
3. Read board emails and respond as requested within 48 hours.
4. Read board packets and other materials in full ahead of time.
5. Attend at least 2 school events in the course of the year.
6. *Guideline about recommended in person board meeting attendance?*

Board Chair Report – Julaine

Please respond to email for When2Meet asap.

All members have returned the Oath of Office document.
Any new items to add to the October agenda, please contact Julaine.

CAROLYN MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:48PM. ROHAN SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE VOTES WERE:

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Chougule	x	
Droogsma	x	
Fendt	x	
Ganz	x	
Riemer	AB SE NT	
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

***The next CMES Board Meeting is October 21st, 2025 at 6 p.m.
Respectfully Submitted by Sarah Stocco, CMES Secretary.***