

**CORNERSTONE MONTESSORI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
FEBRUARY 18, 2025, TUESDAY – 6:00 P.M.**

Board Members Present: Jess Goff, Julaine Roffers-Agarwal, Jean Melancon, Alyssa Schwartz, Carolyn Ganz, Rachel Droogsma, Rohan Chougule, Sarah Stocco

Board Members Absent:

Other Attendees: Chris Bewell, Joe Aliperto (Dieci Finance, 6:10-6:25)

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

AGENDA

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

- No guests present

Consent Agenda

- January 2025 Meeting minutes
- HOS Evaluation Midyear review minutes

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

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

Approval of Agenda & Declaration of Conflict of Interest

SARAH MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE EVENING’S AGENDA. RACHEL SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS NO FURTHER DISCUSSION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

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

Melancon	x	
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

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

Head of School Report - Alyssa

- Invite for you to come to upcoming events!
 - Cornerstone Cafe - 3/14, 8:30-9:30
 - Parent Partnership - March 10 - Right to Read
 - Schedule with Alyssa to come observe in the classrooms!
- We are looking for a speech/language pathologist - please let Alyssa know if you have a lead on this for her.
- Question about White Bear Montessori visit and expansion
 - They built a new wing that houses elementary (4 primary, 2 toddler, 1 elementary)
 - New building code requirements include hurricane proof building (wing has to have the possibility to be sealed off from the rest of the building)
 - Behaviors that we have in our school don't really exist there - generally get counseled out, must be less challenging situation for teachers (good folks there, just different setting)

Treasurer's Report - Carolyn

- ADM about 132, revised budget reflects this number, state is currently paying at 140, we haven't been able to update that yet, but will as soon as able
- Good cash balance and CD balance - no concerns with outside borrowing
- More details in reports - everything healthy and nothing unexpected
 - Cash flow healthy
 - Hold back is still 10%
 - We're about 60% of the way through the year, have spent a slightly smaller percentage (54%) of money, but there's a natural lag.
 - Living within our means
- Title grants will have deadlines in the next couple months, nothing upcoming soon
- Question about Federal Education money - could it go away? At the moment, title monies and special education monies are safe - but that could change. The state is recommending that we draw down (meaning get reimbursed) our money as we go rather than waiting in case something happens.

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

Board Member	Aye	Nay
Chougule	x	

Droogsma	x	
Ganz	x	
Goff	x	
Melancon	x	
Roffers-Agarwal	x	
Stocco	x	

- Donations: \$80.60 total
 - \$50 for the "annual fund" from a local small business
 - \$30.60 from Boxtops
 -

JEAN MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE JANUARY DONATIONS OF \$80.60. JESS SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE VOTES WERE:

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

Finance Committee - Carolyn

- Working on budget revisions, but want to have a little more time to work with Joe and review it before bringing it to the board in March
- Joe recommends that we are ok to wait the extra month because of the healthy financial state we are in (definitely the grant money helped offset the lower enrollment that requires budget adjustment)

Director of Business Operations - Chris

- Enrollment is the same as last month - at 134 students, but ADM is still 132 point something across the year - we would need about 4 more children to get a 1 ADM rise at this point
- No details about next years enrollment yet - we will need to wait until April for that - but we have been already seeing more online and paper applications compared to last year.

Board Education - Julaine

- Discussion of Marc Frankel's presentation
 - 7 P's - Bedrock Principles - would be good to review regularly - just so clear and helpful

- Three areas - Partnership, Resources, Strategy - helpful to look at to identify balance
- One of the 7 p's - Perspective - detached observer - good reminder
- Why Montessori school are different - good reminders about teachers, etc
- Relevant to Alyssa's report - we need to be cognizant of the extra layer of public charter, both resources and challenges
- He says vetting people is really important - but because our governance committee has so much policy work as a public school, this isn't as realistic - how are we going to set aside time to vet to help build the board?
- Staying in our lane - he emphasizes keeping boundaries and we do a good job of this
- Have we been a good partner with the HoS this year? Julaine will be adding this question into the evaluation forms for board members.
- More balanced perspectives (public, private) than in the past
- He emphasized culture of inquiry vs conclusion and judgment (challenges to manage vs problems to solve) - such a helpful way of looking at it
- Balance of oversight vs foresight - both are work of the board, different balance at different times of year

Strategic Planning - Julaine

- Julaine, Jean, Rohan, and Alyssa met to review current goals and preliminarily discuss ownership (document in packet).
- Any feedback on the preliminary ownership assignments?
- Alyssa had Lindsay put together a list of all the organizations CMES has partnered with and it's an impressive list - she will send it to small group and then share with the whole board after
- Ownership looks good as is

Board Chair Report - Julaine

- Whole Board and individual Board member self evaluations are coming - this includes self assessment and a meeting
 - I will contact each of you to schedule a time to meet before the March Board meeting.
 - Please do your best to spend quality time reflecting on your work as a Board member this year.
- Alyssa released a statement on CMES and CMS's values to the community
 - Does the Board want to release a statement of support? Something else? Came up during the Equity meeting and in conversation
 - Sarah did a little looking for other schools statements - some schools, some unions, some politicians, lots of websites just look like business as usual, MDE released a statement (<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/MNMDE/bulletins/3d0c7a9>)
 - Not necessarily a political statement at all, but a statement of support for our

HoS, our students, and our staff

- Should we vote on a general motion that we support Alyssa's and MDE's statements? Not introducing new things.
- Alyssa's statement was from her and the CMES Board of Directors - this is what is most important
- Stepping Stones could also make reference to the statement - a reminder about strategic plan and Equity
- On website - About Us section - Values and Commitments - that's where Alyssa's statement is posted
- Julaine wanted to make sure that current approach is something we are all in alignment with
- Periodic updates - we continue to monitor - biggest priority is students and staff - link to statements, but also further links
- Question for Alyssa and Chris: do we have a procedure in case of ICE?
 - Yes, we have a facility wide approach that has been shared extensively with all staff at MCM and CMES. At this point, we don't see a need for additional legal support. Alyssa and others have spent a lot of time thinking about this, attending webinars to prepare, etc
 - Rohan wants to make sure that the board supports further legal advising if needed - very helpful as situations develop
 - https://www.chartersource.org/boardchat?utm_medium=email&hsenc=p2ANqtz--PsxPa01Erpeqd-8EaS5i6bdP9IIFN64XabuKQEury4I7ZPjp6GquzkAj6MCQ7WPHzFuHQuC5cGCyglexf_BXpC-T61ZEO0_PMIV1lh5Oj4jzEt59xPyDNpJnCfu6g6mAsuF&hsmi=347914925&utm_content=347915201&utm_source=hs_email

Next Month's Meeting

- Budget revisions
- Evaluations
- Reminder about Parent Partnership (March 10) - should be really fun!
- Additional agenda items - send to Julaine

- Feedback - let Julaine know what went well, what could be improved

SARAH MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:10 PM. CAROLYN SECONDED THE MOTION. THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. THE VOTES WERE:

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

***The next CMES Board Meeting is Tuesday, March 18, 2025 at 6 p.m.
Respectfully Submitted by Jess Goff, CMES Secretary.***