



Sussex Montessori School
24960 Dairy Lane
Seaford, DE 19973

Public Board Meeting Minutes
September 15, 2020

Meeting Start Time: 6:01 pm (Meeting held via Zoom Conference Call)

Meeting Adjourned: 9:16 p.m.

Meeting Location: Zoom Meeting

Board of Directors in Attendance: Linda Zankowsky, Jessica Bradley, Christine Gorowara, Sean Steward, Penny Short, Trish Hermance, C. Janiszewski

Others in Attendance: Lisa Coldiron (Head of School), Peter McClure (Director of Teaching & Learning), Michelle Hastie (Finance Director), Elaine Mulford (Administrative Assistant), Sara Poole (Special Education Coordinator), Rebecca Thomas (Lead Teacher)
Associate Teachers – Farhana Kousar, Sasi Kala Muthusamy, Ingrid Poffenberger, Willie Mobley, Cierra Cox

Public Attendance: Edwin Santos

Regrets: Toby Hurley & Lauren Connelly

A Message from the Board Chair

Board Chair motioned to approve the agenda - Motion to accept the agenda made by C. Gorowara; Second by P. Short. No objections. No abstentions.

Montessori Moment - Introduction of Teachers: All associate teachers present introduced themselves to the Board and guest and gave a short bio. All the teachers are excited for the upcoming school year and for being a part of Sussex Montessori School!

Public Comment: No Public Comment

Consent Agenda

Minutes

Motion to approve August 18, 2020 Board Minutes was made by C. Gorowara; Second by S. Steward. T. Comments: C. Gorowara discussed making some procedural changes on the minutes going forward. L. Zankowsky requested that the Board email the motions to be presented to E. Mulford prior to the meetings in an effort to streamline the process. Vote: Abstentions: Hermance; no objections.

Family Handbook

Motion to approve the final version of the Family Handbook pending links to the appropriate policies on Sussex Montessori Charter School's website was made by T. Hermance; Second by C. Gorowara. Comments: The handbook is in its last edits. T. Hermance and T. Hurley are cleaning up links and other language. No objections. No abstentions.

The mission of the Sussex Montessori School (SMS) is to nurture the development of empathetic, collaborative, persistent and innovative global and community citizens in accordance with the time-tested philosophy of Maria Montessori.

Committee Reports

Finance Committee

- August 2020 Financial Report
M. Hastie presented the August 2020 report.
Motion to approve the August 2020 financial report as presented was made by S. Steward;
Second by P. Short. No questions or comments. No objections. No abstentions.

- ***Expenses related to COVID-19***
M. Hastie presented the budget and expenses related to Covid-19 and the Cares Act.

- ***Policy Approvals – Second Reading***
 - ***Inventory Policy***
M. Hastie presented this policy; the synopsis is that the school will keep a computerized inventory (this includes a spreadsheet) of all items (furniture, electronics), over \$400. If any federal grants are utilized, we must keep this information.
Motion to approve the Inventory Policy with a change of items purchased from \$150 to \$400 made by S. Steward; Second by C. Janiszewski. Vote: No objections. No abstentions.
 - ***DIA Agency Fund Policy***
M. Hastie presented this policy; the synopsis is that these funds are authorized only for approved student purchases (such as student field trip accounts).
Motion to approve the DIA policy made by S. Steward; Second by J. Bradley. Vote: No objections. No abstentions.
 - ***Time & Effort Policy***
M. Hastie presented this policy; the synopsis is the school is mandated to track time the employees work on a federal grant.
Motion to approve the Time & Effort Policy with a change from 2020 to 2021 was made by S. Steward; Second by J. Bradley. Vote: No objections. No abstentions.
 - ***Allowability of Costs Policy***
M. Hastie presented this policy; the synopsis is how the school can utilize a federal grant – the guidelines, terms and conditions from the federal government – that the school must follow.
Motion to approve the Allowability of Costs Policy was made by S. Steward; Second by T. Hermance. Vote: No objections. No abstentions.
 - ***Travel Policy***
M. Hastie presented this policy; the policy outlines the approvals needed for board and/or staff travel on behalf of the school.
Motion to approve the Travel Policy was made by S. Steward; Second by J. Bradley. Vote: No objections. No abstentions.
 - ***Funds Balance Policy***
M. Hastie presented this policy; the synopsis is that the school will maintain adequate fund balances and reserves to provide sufficient cash flow to offset revenue shortfalls related to emergencies.
Motion to approve the Funds Balance Policy with the change of “the minimum assigned funds to 30 days and replenishment funds balance falls below 30 days” was made by S. Steward; Second by J. Janiszewski. Vote: No objections. No abstentions.

Citizens Budget Oversight Committee (CBOC) Process

The mission of the Sussex Montessori School (SMS) is to nurture the development of empathetic, collaborative, persistent and innovative global and community citizens in accordance with the time-tested philosophy of Maria Montessori.

- S. Steward discussed that an update was sent to DDOE to establish the selection committee for the CBOC committee. The Finance Committee has approved the process and will need to go to the Charter Office for final approval. The goal is to start the committee by October, but this may not happen until November.

PNC Loan Signer

PNC has recommended that we change the signatory of the capital loan.

Motion to authorize the Chairman of the Sussex Montessori School Board Chair and/or Finance Committee Chair on behalf of Sussex Montessori School for all loan draws related to the PNC capital project loan was made by S. Steward; Second by J. Bradley. Vote: No objections. L. Zankowsky and S. Steward abstained.

Nutrition Policy

Motion was made to accept the school nutrition policy with the change of Jennifer Passwaters' phone number to the school telephone number was made by S. Steward; Second by T. Hermance. L. Coldiron discussed the payment policy plan for free and reduced meals, costs and notifications – for vended meals. Questions were raised by C. Janiszewski. L. Zankowsky moved to table this policy until the October 20, 2020 board meeting; Second by J. Bradley. Vote: No objections. No abstentions.

Facility Committee

J. Bradley presented the progress; a decision was made to focus on Phase II with Bancroft for four additional classrooms.

Covid-19 Task Force

C. Janiszewski indicated there is no formal report at this time. T. Hermance presented the teacher pages she created on the school website to help foster learning and communication.

Executive Committee

- Sussex Montessori School Board Resignations
E.M. Harrison has tendered her resignation. T. Hurley will be resigning as soon as a replacement is found. Lead Teacher Rebecca Thomas has accepted a position on the board as a teacher board member.
Motion was made by T. Hermance to approve Rebecca Thomas as a board member; Second by S. Steward. Vote: No objections. No abstentions.
- Personnel Handbook (amendment for COVID-19 quarantine for travel purposes)
Motion was made by C. Gorowara to approve the personnel handbook amendment; Second by J. Bradley. Votes: No objections. No abstentions.

Head of School Report

L. Coldiron discussed the wonderful first few days of school as well as some challenges. Enrollment is still somewhat fluid. Some families are struggling with working remotely and having two working parents in the household. The school is applying to be its own summer food vendor. Open enrollment for the 2021-2022 school year will begin on November 2, 2020. Outreach to the surrounding communities has started and the board discussed their engagement in these activities.

Executive Session

Just Cause Appeals

The mission of the Sussex Montessori School (SMS) is to nurture the development of empathetic, collaborative, persistent and innovative global and community citizens in accordance with the time-tested philosophy of Maria Montessori.

C. Gorowara made a motion to correct the Executive Committee motion made at the August 18, 2020 meeting to “accept withdrawal requests for 13 students pending a request of records from the receiving school or proof of home school” to read “accept withdrawal requests for 15 students from 13 families pending a request of records from the receiving school or proof of home school.” Second by S. Steward. Vote: No objections. No abstentions.

C. Gorowara made a motion to accept withdrawal requests of 7 students from 5 families pending a request of records from the receiving school or proof of home school. Second by T. Hermance. Vote: No objections. No abstentions.

Close of Meeting

Motion to adjourn by S. Steward; Second by P. Short. Passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:16 p.m.

Next Meetings

Regular Board Meetings FY 21 Third Tuesday of each month (6:30 -8:00), September 15, October 20, November 17, December 15, January 19, February 16, March 16, April 20, May 18, June 15.