



**Sussex Montessori School**  
**24960 Dairy Lane**  
**Seaford, DE 19973**

**Public Board Meeting Minutes**  
October 20, 2020

**Meeting Start Time:** 6:31 pm (Meeting held via Zoom Conference Call)

**Meeting Adjourned:** 9:30 p.m.

**Meeting Location:** Zoom Meeting

**Board of Directors in Attendance:** Linda Zankowsky, Jessica Bradley, Christine Gorowara, Sean Steward, Penny Short, Trish Hermance, Chantel Janiszewski, Rebecca Thomas, Lauren Connolly

**Others in Attendance:** Lisa Coldiron (Head of School), Peter McClure (Director of Teaching & Learning), Michelle Hastie (Finance Director), Elaine Mulford (Administrative Assistant); Kaneisha Trott (Community Engagement Specialist); Leslie Handy (Lead Teacher)

**Public Attendance:** Stefanie and Dustin Yoder

**Regrets:** Toby Hurley

**A Message from the Board Chair**

Board Chair motioned to approve the agenda - Motion to approve the agenda made by T. Hermance; Second by J. Bradley. No objections. No abstentions.

An addition was made to the agenda – A disclosure under Transportation that will go under the Finance Committee. Motion was made by T. Hermance to approve the adjusted agenda. Second by J. Bradley. No objections. No abstentions.

**Montessori Moment**

Lead Teacher L. Handy and student Luke Thomas demonstrated the geometry solids 3-pyramid lesson.

**Public Comment:** No Public Comment

**Consent Agenda**

**Minutes**

Motion to approve October 2020 Board Minutes was made by C. Gorowara; Second by T. Hermance.

Comments: Vote: Abstentions: Hermance; no objections.

**Enrollment for Fall 2021**

K. Trott presented the Marketing & Outreach Plan for 2020 for the 2<sup>nd</sup> enrollment period.

**Committee Reports**

**Finance Committee**

- S. Steward went over the highlights of the Finance Committee meeting that was held on October 13, 2020.

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.

- September 2020 Financial Report  
M. Hastie presented the September 2020 report.  
Motion to approve the August 2020 financial report as presented was made by S. Steward;  
Second by J. Bradley. Vote: No objections. No abstentions.
- **Expenses related to COVID-19**  
Nothing has changed in terms of what was needed to spend from last month.
- **Enrollment Update**  
Enrollment remains somewhat fluid due to COVID-19 and is expected to be 260 students,  
potentially 261. Unit count began on October 23 and ends on November 13, 2020.
- **Nutrition Policy**  
This was tabled from the September board meeting. Lisa highlighted the policy does not impact  
us this year, as the federal government has extended the summer food program thru the end of  
June 2021. This policy will include the guidelines, payment for free and reduced meals, costs,  
and notifications for vended meals. Discussion ensued about the percentage of students that  
are eligible for free and reduced lunch; not every student/parent has filled out the application.  
For a school to receive free and reduced status, the student population meeting this criterion  
must be at least 40% and we are not there yet. We will educate everyone and encourage them  
to apply so we are able to receive the free status. Motion was made to approve the school  
nutrition policy by C. Janiszewski; Second by P. Short. L. Vote: No objections. No abstentions.
- **Transportation**  
L. Coldiron shared that the school is committed to supporting families that have special needs  
getting to and from school (funded by Burris Fund). The school is currently using Infinity  
Transport to support two families with transportation. S. Steward's wife owns Infinity  
Transport. Their cost is comparable or less than the other companies that were researched.

### **Facility Committee**

J. Bradley presented the progress; we are winding down on Phase I and will be migrating to the new classrooms. She expects to be providing an update at the November board meeting about where with are with the budget and focusing on Phase II. There will be a ribbon cutting/dedication ceremony on November 18, 2020 and inviting personnel, donors, the board, legislators, Seaford administrators and will highlight and tour the new classrooms.

J. Bradley motioned that Sussex Montessori school enter into negotiations with Bancroft Construction for a contract for phase II. c; Second by S. Steward. Vote: No objections. No abstentions.

### **Development Committee**

L. Zankowsky indicated we have \$400,000 in grants out now for requests for the capital campaign. A couple small grants have been received – NRG and Nanticoke Rotary. The Board was encouraged to give to the school, as they are able.

### **Head of School Report**

L. Coldiron presented the Return to School – Increased In-Person Learning report. She recommended revising the hybrid model to increase the number of days that children can attend school, increasing the class cohorts to the full complement of 26 children. Motion was made by T. Hermance to accept the administration's recommendation to shift to a four-day hybrid plan as of November 30<sup>th</sup>, provided all

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health and safety precautions can be reinforced and maintained; Second by P. Short. L. Vote: No objections. No abstentions.

#### **Executive Session**

##### ***Just Cause Appeals***

Due to the exceptional circumstances of this academic year, the Board accepts the withdrawal request of the 9 families, on behalf of 10 students, who submitted a letter by 10/20/2020, pending a records request from the receiving school or proof of homeschool. Motion made by C. Gorowara, Second by T. Hermance. Vote: No objections. No abstentions.

#### **Close of Meeting**

Motion to adjourn by J. Bradley; Second by T. Hermance. Passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

#### **Next Meetings**

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