



**Sussex Montessori School
Board of Directors
May 18, 2021**

Board of Directors Present: Linda Zankowsky, Sean Steward, Lauren Connelly, Christine Gorowara, Rebecca Thomas, Jessica Crampton-Bradley, Patricia Hermance

Others Present: Lisa Coldiron (Head of School), Michelle Hastie (Finance Director), Elaine Mulford (Administrative Assistant), Trey Butterworth (Lead Teacher)

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 p.m.

Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda was made by Christine Gorowara and seconded by Jessica Bradley. The motion passed unanimously with no objections and no abstentions.

Public Comment – None

Minutes

- Motion to approve the 4/20/21 Minutes was made by Rebecca Thomas and seconded by Christine Gorowara. The motion was approved unanimously with no objections and no abstentions.
- Motion to approve the 4/20/21 Executive Session minutes was made by Christine Gorowara and seconded by Jessica Crampton-Bradley. The motion was approved unanimously with no objections and no abstentions.

Opening Remarks

Linda Zankowsky expressed delight that it is already May, and a year has almost gone by! She thanked all board members and staff for their hard work during this challenging year.

Montessori Moment

Trey Butterworth presented the Montessori checkerboard and how it teaches the students multiplication, place value and numbers. This is one of the traditional Montessori materials.

Committee Reports

Finance Committee

- Sean Steward reported on the 5/11/21 meeting of the Finance Committee and noted the following discussions:
 - We have received 100% of budgeted revenue.
 - We received a check for \$435,000 for ESSER III funds – has been transferred to PNC capital account to offset the cost of the modular units. We are approximately \$50,000 short of what we expended on modular units.
 - Discussed ways to grow our local reserves.
 - How important enrollment is, and we have and should reach out to local representatives to

- provide a Guidance Counselor – HB100
 - We spent extra funds for transportation that was not budgeted.
 - Looking for ways for Montessori training to continue
 - Sent out RFP for audit for next 5 years; received 3 responses.
 - Allocated funds from Burris Foundation funds for transportation and for Social Worker.
- Michelle Hastie presented the financials to date through 4/30/21 including operating income/expenses and federal grants.
 - We received 100% of our state and local budgeted revenues.
 - We received 67.59% of our state and local expense budget.
 - We received 66.62% of our federal budgeted revenues.
 - We spent 91.41% of our Covid Grant (remaining money can be carried over)
 - We are in very good shape!
 - Should be receiving ESSER III funds by May 24, 2021.
 - Transportation funding – districts spent less money so we will be held harmless.
 - FY22 preliminary draft was presented.
- Motion to accept the April 2021 Financial Report was made by Sean Steward and seconded by Jessica Crampton-Bradley. The motion was approved unanimously with no objections and no abstentions.
- Michelle discussed the RFP's that went out to the four auditors. She recommended that we use Belfint, Lyons & Shuman, P.A.'s, as they are familiar with the school (they are SMS's current auditors) and are the lowest cost - \$116,000/yr. for five years. Motion to accept Belfint's proposal was made by Sean Steward; seconded by Lauren Connelly. The motion was approved unanimously with no objections and no abstentions.

Facility Committee

- Jessica Crampton-Bradley presented the Phase II Financial Package – statement of sources and uses of funds as of April 30, 2021.
 - Total cash available \$1,427,752
 - Total loan funds available start on Phase II \$1,085,997
 - Total unrestricted cash available \$2,296,930
 - Total remaining Phase II budget total is \$1,933,006.
 - Going to begin keeping track of small projects, i.e., barn stabilization, porch, carriage house doors and landscaping.

Development Committee – Linda Zankowsky

- An Event on the Coast is tentatively scheduled for September 9, 2021, at the Lewes Yacht Club. The goal is to raise \$300,000 for the barn.

Covid Task Force – Lauren Connelly

- Lauren presented the two-question survey that was sent to the Covid Task Force:
 - 1. Do you believe SMS should require that all staff be vaccinated at this time (for the 2021-2022 school year)? Recommendation – not at this time
 - 2. Do you believe that SMS should require that all staff disclose their vaccination status to the school nurse/Head of School, or should this be voluntary? Recommendation – no, this should not be required.

Head of School Report – Lisa Coldiron

- Calendar Revision – to change the reduced days on Wednesdays to full days and adding 4 days of professional development for staff. Motion to approve the 2021-2022 calendar revision for SMS was made by Trish Hermance; seconded by Lauren Connelly. The motion was approved unanimously with no objections and no abstentions.
- Professional Development Update – Responsive Classroom will be at SMS for two days in August, one day in November and one day in February. We have also contracted with Playworks Education (conflict resolution). Also, an intensive literacy program will be held this summer for six weeks.
- Hiring Update – four full-time teachers are needed for 2021-2022; we have received two commitments; one offer letter was emailed and one candidate we are still working on. Several Associate Teachers will be taking Montessori training and the hope is that they will become Lead Teachers in the future.
- Enrollment Update – we will have 14 classrooms and 339 enrolled students; we also have a strong waiting list of 250 students.
- State Assessments were taken by the third-grade students today.
- Pilot of DTGSS – Teacher Evaluation: Will table this discussion until Peter McClure (Director of Teaching & Learning) can provide more information. This evaluation will be more child centered instead of teacher centered.

At this point, a motion was made by Trish Hermance and seconded by Jessica Bradley to move to Executive Session. A personnel update was discussed.

A motion to adjourn was made by Sean Steward, seconded by Jessica Bradley, and passed unanimously at approximately 9:04 p.m.