

**School Board Guide**

Updated 2021

*The mission of 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.*

*The vision of Sussex Montessori School (SMS) is to use the Montessori Method to educate children through authentic personalized learning experiences, respectful relationships, opportunities to innovate, and a focus on global citizenship.*

**Thank you for your interest in serving as a Sussex Montessori School board member!**

The school board at SMS plays a vital role in guiding the school toward sustainability and providing an excellent Montessori education for students in grades K-6. Should you be selected to serve on the School Board, you will help craft effective school policy, oversee student outcomes, ensure SMS adheres to our charter and meets the requirements of the Delaware Department of Education.

By applying for a seat on the SMS School Board, you understand that if selected, you agree to serve a three-year term during which you will be required to complete financial and governance training programs, attend the scheduled monthly meetings either via Zoom or in-person and participate in additional committees or projects as needed. The SMS School Board is active in proposing student success strategies, adopting a thorough understanding of a Montessori education and implementing wrap-around projects to support the mission of the school. The SMS School Board holds itself to a high standard of student and community engagement and professionalism.

Should you have any questions regarding the Board or Board member application, please e-mail the Chairperson of the Board.

Thank you and we look forward to hearing from you!

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| **Board Composition** |

The SMS board currently requires a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 12 seats, including 1 parent and 1 teacher, with no obligation to always have all 12 seats full. A seat may come available due to the end of a term, or due to unforeseen situations. SMS accepts applications for a Board Member position throughout the year. New Board Members are typically voted on in the October Board Meeting.

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| **Application & Selection** |

Board Member applications may be found on the school’s website under the Board section. Board applications are to be completed online by clicking the link below. While there is no timeline for the application to be returned, you must ensure that all information on your application is up-to-date, complete, and accurate to the best of your knowledge at the time of submission.

***https://www.cognitoforms.com/SussexMontessoriSchool/SussexMontessoriSchoolBoardApplication?v2***

Once the SMS Board Committee has received your application, it will hold it until a seat is available. Once a seat is available, applicants may be contacted to review or provide clarity on their application and supporting documents. Providing a resume and/or letter of intent in addition to your application is encouraged as it allows the Board to learn more about you and identify where you could best contribute to the mission of the Board and vision of Sussex Montessori School.

In a regular term cycle, the SMS Board Committee will send a complete list of applicants to the Board prior to the October board meeting, as well as their recommendations for new Board Members from that list with their application documents. Applicants are reviewed on the basis of applicable skillset, community engagement, and reflection of the demographics of the local community. Applicants will be reviewed and voted on in the executive session of the October Board Meeting. Selection to the board requires a three-quarters (3/4) vote and once someone has been voted on, they will be notified by the Board. After accepting the Board’s membership offer, the new Board Member will be included in Board correspondence and meeting invitations.

Should unforeseen circumstances arise, and a seat is vacated mid-term it will be filled, or not filled, by the decision of the remaining active members of the Board for the balance of the term. The seat cannot be taken back by the vacating Board Member should their situation change, and the vacating Board Member would need to re-apply for future consideration for Board membership. Active Board members are required to attend at least three quarters (3/4) of all regularly scheduled Board Meetings during the course of each fiscal year. Failure to attend the minimum required number of Board meetings will result in automatic removal of the member from the Board, unless otherwise determined by resolution of the entire Board of Directors. If the term of the Board Member has ended, a three-quarters (3/4) vote to renew the Board Member’s term for another three-years term will be required. A Board Member may not serve more than two consecutive terms. Should the participation of a Board Member be unsatisfactory, or any conflicts of interest or ethical concerns arise, the Board retains the right to terminate the term agreement of any Board Member by a three-quarters (3/4) vote in the best interest of the school.

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| **Required Trainings** |

All Board Members are required to complete the below training courses provided through the Delaware Department of Education. Instructions for how to complete these courses will be provided.

* Financial Responsibility Training for Charter Board and CBOC Members (Course #26379)
* Session 1: Great Schools Need Great Boards: How effective is your charter school board? (Course # 28301)
* Session 2: School Leaders Need Love Too: Does your charter school board provide the evaluation and support that school leaders need and want? (Course # 28302)
* Session 3: The Board’s Role in Academic Oversight: How do you know whether students are on track to achieve at high levels? (Course # 28303)