



**Minutes of a Meeting of the Board of Directors
of
Casa Esperanza Montessori
held on
September 2, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.**

The following are minutes of a Meeting of the Board of Directors of Casa Esperanza Montessori Incorporated, a North Carolina nonprofit corporation (the “**School**”), held via Zoom videoconference, at the time and on the date noted above. Except for the Closed Session, the proceedings were live-streamed on YouTube.

Member	Present	Absent
Monique Taylor, Chair	X	
Seraka Davis, Vice Chair	X ¹	
Alice Ward, Treasurer	X	
Mike Slipsky, Secretary	X	
Jon Lee	X	
Monica Perry		X
Teresa Outlaw, Head of School	X	

Also present at the meeting were Nerey Lane and Barbara Cooke. Proper notice having been given and a quorum of directors being present, the meeting was called to order by Mrs. Taylor at 6:10 p.m.

I. WELCOME

Mrs. Taylor welcomed everyone to the Meeting.

II. CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

¹ Mrs. Davis was absent at the commencement of the meeting but subsequently joined the meeting at approximately 6:37 p.m.

Mr. Slipsky read the School's Conflict of Interest Statement.

III. SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

Mr. Slipsky read the School's Mission Statement.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

The first matter to come before the meeting was the approval of the previously circulated Agenda for the meeting. Mrs. Taylor proposed to amend the Agenda to add items relating to contract approvals under the New Business section thereof. Mrs. Ward made a motion to approve the Agenda as so amended, which was seconded by Mr. Slipsky. The motion was unanimously approved.²

V. MINUTES FROM JULY 29, 2021

The next matter to come before the meeting was the approval of the Minutes of the Board's July 29, 2021 meeting. Mr. Slipsky made a motion to approve said Minutes, which was seconded by Mrs. Taylor. The motion was unanimously approved.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. Ms. Outlaw made announcements relating to the School's upcoming picture days (September 23 and 24, 2021) and the next early release day (October 1, 2021). She also reminded the attendees that there would be no school on September 6, 2021 due to the Labor Day holiday.
- B. Next, Seth Wood announced that he had tendered his resignation from the Board, effective as of September 1, 2021. Mr. Wood explained that increased family commitments had made it difficult to continue serving on the Board. The Board expressed its gratitude to Mr. Wood for his five years of service as a Board member.

VIII. HEAD OF SCHOOL REPORT

The next matter to come before the meeting was the Head of School Report, which was presented by Ms. Outlaw. Ms. Outlaw noted that enrollment was up to 579 students, including 8 pre-K students. She also mentioned three recent staff resignations: Vasquez (who never started work at the School), Obregon (who resigned shortly after starting work at the School) and Motamedy (who had been a long-tenured member of the faculty). The School continues to post and recruit for vacant positions, and several interviews are scheduled/underway. Ms. Outlaw also reported that Shaneki Cauble will begin work at the School as Finance and Operations Director on September 7, 2021. Ms. Outlaw then updated the Board on last year's BOG/EOG and other standardized testing scores. From a facilities perspective, Ms. Outlaw noted that she was in the process of getting quotes to paint the hallways, that several items of broken furniture had been replaced, and that a sun shade would soon be installed on the playground. With regard to curricular matters, Ms. Outlaw reported that back-ordered books and materials should be arriving soon. On the Covid-19 front, Ms. Outlaw stated that the School had experienced 11 Covid cases to date, none of which appears to have been transmitted within the School, and none of which involved any staff member. The School continues to work on ESSER grants for 2021-22 and is using approximately \$50,000 in carryover grant funds from 2020-21. Finally, Ms. Outlaw mentioned that, as part of her efforts to become familiar with the School's culture, she and the Assistant Head of School had engaged in 44 interviews with School staff.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

² All votes taken at the meeting were taken by roll call vote.

- A. The next matter to come before the meeting was the proposed job description for an Instructional Coach position at the School. Ms. Outlaw described the need for the position and the desired qualifications for potential candidates. After discussion, it was proposed that the description be modified to add a bullet point for experience and demonstrated success as an instructional coach. Mr. Slipsky then made a motion to approve the job description, as so modified, and Mrs. Davis seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.
- B. The next matter to come before the meeting was the need to hire two additional paraprofessionals. Ms. Outlaw explained that students are arriving at the School with less preparation due to the Covid-19 pandemic, including a cohort of first graders who have never been in an in-person school setting before. Ms. Outlaw explained that the new paraprofessionals would float between classes so that teachers could have additional instructional time with students who need additional interventions. She also explained that these additional positions would allow the Middle Grades paraprofessional to return to Middle Grades support on a full-time basis. Mrs. Ward made a motion to approve the hiring of two additional paraprofessionals, and Mr. Slipsky seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.
- C. The next matter to come before the meeting was a presentation by Mrs. Ward regarding the transition of the School's retirement plan from the TSERS pension to the 457 plan. Mrs. Ward gave a slide presentation regarding the potential options for School employees' eligibility to participate in the 457 plan and explained the need for the School to define who would qualify as an "eligible employee" and to provide resolutions to Prudential (as the plan's administrator) memorializing that decision. Mr. Slipsky made a motion to adopt the resolutions included in Mrs. Ward's presentation (i.e., using the ERISA-based definition of full-time employment to determine who would be an "eligible employee" for purposes of the 457 plan), and Mrs. Davis seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.
- D. The next matter to come before the meeting was the approval of the Consensus Construction Contract between the School and BCCG. Mrs. Taylor presented a redlined draft of the Contract, which showed the most recent (and purportedly final) revisions to the draft, which had been approved by the School's owner's representative (Michael Kaney) and the School's legal counsel (Mary Nash Rusher). Mr. Slipsky made a motion to approve the Contract, and Mrs. Davis seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

X. NEW BUSINESS

- A. The next matter to come before the meeting was the approval of the Apex Occupational Therapy Contract. Ms. Outlaw explained that it was on the same terms as the prior year's contract and usually requires ~4 hours/week at \$70/hour. Mrs. Davis made a motion to approve the Contract, which Mrs. Ward seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.
- B. The next matter to come before the meeting was the approval of the JESA Audiology Contract. Ms. Outlaw noted that the School typically uses approximately one hour of audiology services per quarter, at \$125/hour. This year's form of audiology contract does not include a minimum amount of services, which is an improvement on the prior year's contract. Mr. Slipsky made a motion to approve the Contract, which Mrs. Davis seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.
- C. The next matter to come before the meeting was the approval of the SPED Logs Contract. Ms. Outlaw explained that the software to be provided under this Contract would allow the School's EC teachers to better track EC students. The cost of the Contract is approximately \$3,000 in the initial year (including a one-time setup fee) and \$1,500 for the second year. Mr. Slipsky made a motion to approve the Contract, which Mrs. Davis seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

- D. The next matter to come before the meeting was the approval of a Relocation Amendment Request for the School's Charter. Mrs. Taylor explained that because the site of the School's proposed new building is just beyond a five-mile radius of the School's current location, the NC Department of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education must approve the relocation. Mr. Lee made a motion to approve the School's application for an amendment to its Charter to move the location of the School to its proposed new location, which was seconded by Mr. Slipsky. The motion was unanimously approved.
- E. The next matter to come before the meeting was the proposed authorization of BCCG's steel sub-contractor to start production on the first batch of steel that will be needed for construction of the School's new facility. Mrs. Taylor explained that a delay in giving such authorization would likely result in increased prices and construction delays. After discussion regarding the School's ability to pay the cost of such steel prior to the completion of the proposed bond offering, Mr. Slipsky made a motion to authorize the steel sub-contractor to begin production, which was seconded by Mrs. Davis. The motion was unanimously approved.

XI. CLOSED SESSION

Next, Mrs. Taylor stated that the Board would need to go into closed session to discuss certain personnel matters.

Mr. Slipsky made a motion to go into closed session to discuss such matters, which was seconded by Mrs. Davis. The motion was unanimously approved, and the Board went into closed session at approximately 7:16 p.m.

No motions were made or approved in closed session.

At approximately 7:58 p.m., Mr. Slipsky made a motion to leave closed session, which was seconded by Mrs. Ward. The motion was unanimously approved.

XII. ADJOURN

There being no further business on the Agenda, Mr. Lee made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Slipsky. The motion was unanimously approved, and the meeting adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

	<i>Monique Taylor</i>	/	10/2/21	Monique Taylor, Board Chair
	<i>Michael Slipsky</i>	/	10/4/21	Michael Slipsky, Board Secretary