



Minutes of a Meeting of the Board of Directors
of
Casa Esperanza Montessori
held on
December 16, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

The following are minutes of the meeting of the Board of Directors of Casa Esperanza Montessori Incorporated, a North Carolina nonprofit corporation (the “**School**”), held via videoconference at the time and date noted above.

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

Proper notice having been given and a quorum of directors being present, the meeting was called to order by Mrs. Taylor at 6:02 p.m.

I. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Mrs. Taylor welcomed everyone.

II. CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT/MISSION STATEMENT

Mr. Slipsky read the School's Conflict of Interest statement and its Mission Statement.

III. CONSENT AGENDA

Mrs. Perry made a motion to approve the Agenda, subject to an amendment to add a Public Comment line item, which was seconded by Mr. Lee. The motion was unanimously approved.¹

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The next matter to come before the meeting was the approval of the minutes for the Board's meetings on November 18, 2021, November 29, 2021, December 4, 2021, December 6, 2021 and December 8, 2021.

Mrs. Davis made a motion to approve November 18th minutes, which was seconded by Mrs. Ward. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Slipsky made a motion to approve December 4th minutes, which was seconded by Mrs. Perry. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Slipsky made a motion to approve December 6th minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Lee. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Lee made a motion to approve December 8th minutes, which was seconded by Mrs. Perry. The motion was unanimously approved.

VII. HEAD OF SCHOOL REPORT

Next, Ms. Outlaw presented the Head of School Report. Enrollment remains the same at 561 charter and 8 pre-K students.

Ms. Outlaw reported that a floating paraprofessional is almost ready for hire. Ms. Badenchini (kindergarten teacher) has resigned; replacements are being interviewed. Ms. Fermin (substitute/BASC) will be moved to a floating paraprofessional position with 1st/2nd grade students who need interventions.

Ms. Outlaw presented a draft Organization Chart.

NC Check-ins were completed. These were 30-minute tests that gave the School an indication of how the School's students might perform on EOGs. As a whole, the students did better in reading than in math.

¹ All votes taken by the Board at the meeting were taken by roll-call vote.

Some of the tested standards might be concepts that the students haven't yet learned in the classroom. Teachers will be reviewing these standards with the students.

The School has ordered GoGuardian software to enable teachers to monitor inappropriate use of Chromebooks in the classroom.

The School's Student/Parent Handbook is under review/update by Assistant Head of School Nerey Lane. The School's Employee Handbook is being worked on by Ms. Outlaw and Ms. Cauble. Ms. Outlaw also recommends an update of the School's Social Media Policy.

Ms. Outlaw reported that the School currently has zero active Covid cases. Family surveys have indicated that there is not much interest in the State testing program—a total of 14 parents indicated interest for 28 children.

The School has applied for a grant for a Summer Bridge academy program for at-risk students between 2nd and 5th grade. The program would provide intense instruction in reading, writing and math, plus service learning. Participation would be on an invitation basis, based on specific benchmark assessments. The School has also applied for a Summer Career Accelerator grant, which would provide instruction in technology for 6th-8th graders. The accelerator program would be open to all, but with priority for economically disadvantaged and disabled students. If the programs are approved, the School would apply for a larger competitive grant for additional funding.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. **PERSONNEL (CLOSED SESSION)** – to be addressed at the end of the meeting.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

A. PARAPROFESSIONAL COMPENSATION

Ms. Outlaw gave this presentation. Data indicates that the School is competitive on compensation overall, but the entry-level pay is a bit below the competition. The School's administration wants to be fair to its employees and prevent attrition. Ms. Outlaw presented the proposed new paraprofessional compensation model, which would become effective as of January 1, 2022.

Mr. Slipsky made a motion to approve the School's new paraprofessional compensation model effective as of January 1, 2022, which was seconded by Mrs. Ward. The motion was unanimously approved.

B. GRADE LEAD STIPEND

Ms. Outlaw gave this presentation. She noted that Ms. Connor created a system of stipends for teachers who take on additional duties. In accordance with that system, Ms. Outlaw would like to create Grade Level Leads (five total) who would receive \$500 annual stipends.

Mrs. Davis made a motion to approve Grade Level Lead stipends, which was seconded by Mrs. Perry. The motion was unanimously approved.

C. EMPLOYEE BONUSES

Ms. Cauble gave this presentation. She proposed that teacher contracts would be updated to reflect an increase in the School's allotment funding from the State and to remain consistent with the School's pay scale policy. There would be one catch-up payment in January 2022, then monthly thereafter.

Mrs. Ward made a motion to approve the teacher pay increases as presented, which was seconded by Mr. Slipsky. The motion was unanimously approved.

D. PRE-K PROGRAM PRICING

Ms. Cauble then introduced a proposal to increase the pre-K program's pricing to \$6,000 for half-day and \$9,500 for full-day. This would constitute an 11% increase over existing pre-K tuition levels. Mrs. Davis made a motion to add this proposal to the Agenda, which was seconded by Mr. Lee. The motion was unanimously approved. Mrs. Ward then made a motion to approve the proposed price increases, which was seconded by Mr. Slipsky. The motion was unanimously approved.

E. EMPLOYEE BONUSES

Ms. Cauble then presented the Board with information regarding State-funded bonuses to be paid in January under the newly passed State budget, which will be between \$1,300-\$2,800 per employee based on qualifications. Finance Committee recommends additional bonuses in June, subject to further discussion.

F. NOVEMBER FINANCIAL REPORT

Ms. Cauble gave this report. Through November, the School's percentage spend for the year is 2-3% ahead of schedule. The same areas being monitored: private programs, property lease, immigration sponsorship, legal and audit. After the new year, Ms. Cauble and Mrs. Ward would like to re-visit the School's budget to reflect updated revenues and the like. Ms. Cauble expects that the School will continue to be in good financial shape thanks to the bond closing and federal Covid funding.

G. SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Mrs. Taylor presented an updated version of the School's Social Media Policy. The updated version inserted language from Ms. Outlaw from the NC Code of Ethics for Teachers. Language was also added to clearly state that employees should not post any pictures or identifying information regarding students on social media.

Mrs. Perry made a motion to approve revised social media policy pending its review and approval by the School's attorney, which was seconded by Mrs. Davis. The motion was unanimously approved.

H. FACE COVERING POLICY

Pursuant to SB 654, the Board then considered the School's face covering policy. Ms. Outlaw's recommendation is to continue with current face covering policy. Mrs. Ward made a motion to continue with the School's current face covering policy, which was seconded by Mrs. Perry. The motion was unanimously approved.

I. BOND CLOSING

Mrs. Ward updated the Board on the upcoming bond closing, which is scheduled for December 17, 2021 at 9:30am.

J. FACILITY CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Mrs. Perry presented the facility construction update. Mrs. Perry reported that she had a meeting on December 14, 2021 with BCCG, and that they will be scheduling pre-construction meetings soon. The groundbreaking ceremony should take place on February 25, 2022, and BCCG thinks that everything is on track to meet the targeted completion date.

X. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. BOARD AFFAIRS

Mrs. Davis reported that the Board Affairs Committee is in the process of reaching out for broader community ties on the Board. Part of that is making connections with educators and community members in Wake Forest and Raleigh.

B. DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Lee reported that the Charleston Wrap fundraiser is completed. It resulted in \$2,000 in gross sales and \$500 net to the School. The Development Committee will be reaching out to Heather Hu to try to schedule a presentation to the Board re: a potential capital campaign engagement with her firm.

C. EXECUTIVE

Mrs. Taylor reported that the Executive Committee is collecting its thoughts for next steps and improvements.

D. FINANCE

Mrs. Ward reported that, consistent with Ms. Cauble's prior comments, the Finance Committee will be looking at revising the budget after the new year. The Committee will also be mapping out the reporting and compliance tasks for the bonds.

XI. PERSONNEL (CLOSED SESSION)

Due to the sensitive nature of the personnel matters to be discussed, Mrs. Perry made a motion to go into closed session, which was seconded by Mr. Lee. The motion was unanimously approved, and the Board went into closed session at 7:41 p.m. No action was taken in closed session. Mr. Lee made a motion to exit closed session, which was seconded by Mrs. Perry. The motion was unanimously approved, and the Board left closed session at 7:48 p.m.

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 7:49 p.m.

Monique Taylor / 4/30/22 Monique Taylor, Board Chair

Michael Slipsky / 4/30/22 Mike Slipsky, Board Secretary
