

**Laramie Montessori Board of Trustees
Regular Board Meeting Agenda
September 28, 2023**

6:30 PM

Location: Laramie Montessori Charter School

Zoom:

<https://acsd1-org.zoom.us/j/93415596199?pwd=WThlaEJURExzNUV6R1JyNWVoVEFnQT09>

I. Opening (6:35)

The Mission of Laramie Montessori School is to support the development of the whole child through an authentic Montessori environment that honors the child's intrinsic motivation to learn and supports each individual's unique intellectual, physical, social and emotional development.

a. 15 second Montessori Moments

- i. Carter: His son came home from school and created his own Montessori work. He made some "addition plates" where you put two things together.
- ii. Norman: Explained "Montessori Moments" to the audience (multiple community members/parents in attendance). Norman also likes the older kids helping the younger kids with transition time.
- iii. Shawn: His son came home and had a conversation with his wife in the car. He started reflecting on the layout of the town and the geometric layout of the streets. He also enumerated reasons why it was nice to live in Laramie: the University, outdoor sports, etc.
- iv. Kaleigh: Gave a lesson on the seasons, particularly on the equinox. Students understood why we have the seasons in the order we do, and they wanted to research further other places in the world. They went on a nature walk and the students did a great job of team building between the classes.

b. Roll Call

- i. Everyone was present. Emily remotely.

c. Approval of Agenda

- i. Carter motioned to approve. Megan seconded. No discussion. Unanimous approval.

d. Minutes:

- i. Approval of Minutes, from August 31, 2023
- ii. Carter motioned to approve. Megan seconded. No discussion. Unanimous approval.

II. Audience Communication

a. PTO Updates

- i. Emily: Trying to reimagine the PTO. Leslie doesn't have the capacity to work on the PTO and hence we are trying to recruit new members.

b. Teacher Representative

- i. Staff meeting Friday 9/29/2023: Heidi and Makena are looking forward to passing the "fish" on (see Director's Report below)
- ii. Kaylie's practical life:

1. Kindergarteners are always excited to go to Kaylie's class.
 2. 3rd Graders and 6th Graders got to walk downtown and go to Chalk and Cheese.
 3. Learning life skills, they might not otherwise learn (how to cross streets, how to behave in businesses, etc.)
- iii. Transition through the beginning of the year: Went very well. Everyone is excited about how together the teaching staff is with each other.
 - iv. Summer School: After assessments, kids who attended summer school showed growth or maintained their previous levels. A few kids who did not attend slid backward.
- c. Open Communication
- i. Makena Update on Website
 1. The website is live!
 2. Makena gave an overview of the new layout.
 3. Board members need to provide images for the website.
 4. Contact page goes to Christina.
 5. Norman has "a bunch of little things" that need to be on the site for the audit.
 6. Also noted that the Montessori has a Facebook page.
 - ii. Friends of the Laramie Montessori (FLM)
 1. Fawn: Representing Friends of Laramie Montessori (FLM). Her daughter is in 3rd grade in Janelle's class.
 2. FLM helped found the school.
 3. They have done several fundraising activities in the past, but the most recent one was "Larabee" from pre-COVID times.
 4. The board is run by volunteer members who recently met to do strategic planning goals. They recognize that a lot of their goals align with the school's goals.
 5. Fawn is going to serve as a liaison between the school and FLM.
 6. Some goals:
 - a. Continue to fund the Laramie Montessori Preschool Scholarship
 - b. Implement a playgroup at the Albany County Public Library as outreach to the community.
 - c. Partner with the school or PTO on an event in the next year to help support the school.
 - d. Major fundraising event in 2024 or early 2025 to help support the school.
 7. We may possibly want to have a liaison from the LMCS board at the FLM board meetings.
 - iii. Michael: New here. His son was a kindergartner last year and is now in first grade. His littlest one is in pre-k 1. Looking forward to getting more involved.
 - iv. Mandy: Her daughter also attends the Montessori.
- III. Monthly Financial Report
- a. Discuss and Approve 2023-2024 school year budget.
 - i. Finance committee met and updated budget.
 1. Title I funds to match the lower amount that actually came in.

2. Professional Development adjusted now knowing what was spent at MECR over the summer.
3. Preschool now matches the final numbers.
4. Adjusted counselor funding due to uncertainty over ESSER III funds.
- ii. Added additional hires.
 1. Teaching aids and recess monitors
- iii. Jeff:
 1. 5 Staff going to a traveling symposium for the American Montessori Society in Denver.
 2. Training for PD days to bring the previous trainer from Denver back up here to continue the Montessori training.
- iv. Shawn: Under revenue, afterschool care and pre-school donation is 0%.
 1. Norman: This is not part of the budget.
- v. Megan: Likes having the padding on the budget which is only possible because of the pre-school.
- vi. Rich motioned to approve 2023-2024 budget. Megan seconds. Unanimous approval.
- b. Review Monthly Financials
 - i. August
 1. Norman:
 - a. It is important to note that these financials were created against the previous budget before adjustments.
 - b. Professional development looks higher than the budget but is accounted for in the new budget.
 - c. Custodial service is high for beautification, but it is important to spend all of it or the church can claim anything left over.
 2. Megan motioned to approve August Financials. Carter seconds. Unanimous approval.
 - ii. June
 1. Norman:
 - a. Does not need to be approved now.
 - b. Brief update on the audit:
 - i. Getting all documents to the auditor
 1. Income Statement
 2. Balance Sheet
 3. Assets

IV. Reports

a. Director's Report

i. Enrollment Summary

1. Lost 3 Students from August to September
2. 2 students returned.
3. Back up to 104 students. 92 are ADM and 12 are preschool.
4. Lower elementary has been closed.

5. Upper elementary has quite a few spots open but that is expected and larger than they have been in the past.
- ii. Fish
 1. Something that was started at the first staff meeting in August to help build the school culture.
 2. These are stuffed animal fish and were presented to Makena and Heidi for all the hard work they did at the summer school.
 3. Makena and Heidi will present those to two new staff members who, over the last month, did something great for the students at the school.
- iii. Practical Life Classes
 1. Kaylie has done an incredible job with this program.
 2. Emily and Jeff have talked with another school in the district that does something similar.
 3. The state has picked this up as well and will be starting some schools across the state.
 4. Jeff believes that our program is already a couple of steps ahead of the state program and hopefully our program will become a model for other schools.
- iv. Directors Report Modifications
 1. School Culture Updates
 2. School Communication Updates
 3. Walk-Throughs
- b. Committee Reports
 - i. Finance: Updated the budget
 - ii. PTO: A few parents would like to be on the PTO. Emily and Jeff will work on this offline and present it to the board.
- V. Old Business
 - a. Strategic Plan Y2 Dates and Assignments Review and Discussion
 - i. Emily: This document was co-created by members in the room. Jeff will take this back to the leadership team to assign people and target dates.
 - ii. Jeff:
 1. Family and community engagement had the most ideas to attain the goals.
 2. Loved ideas of getting families into the school, not just for performances.
 3. Teachers will prepare lessons kids will work on for the parents to show how the classroom runs. These will highlight the difference between lower and upper elementary classrooms. Specifically, the preparation for middle school for the upper elementary students.
 4. Kaylie is a big part of the community engagement with her practical life classroom.
 5. Makena will be helping community engagement with electronic communication via email and Facebook.
 6. Communications are also happening within the building. Sending out a weekly calendar is an example.

- 7. Facilities: The building is crowded and hopefully will have some answers in the next 6 months.
- iii. Emily: Would like to have the Director's report oriented around the strategic plan.
- b. Board Responsibilities per Strategic Plan
 - i. It might make sense to align the committee work with the strategic plan.
 - ii. Rich: We have committees that rarely meet, it might make sense to make committees based on the strategic plan.
 - iii. Carter: It seems to make sense.
 - iv. Amy: Are there any examples? Rich: Increase Family Engagement could have a committee related to it.
 - v. Emily: It feels like we are running down parallel roads with the board work and the strategic plan.
 - vi. Carter: This seems to make a lot of sense. It seems like there isn't a lot of committee work that happens. This is an opportunity to bolster the work.
 - vii. Megan: Likes the idea of focusing the existing committees to goals on the strategic plan.
 - viii. Amy: Might be a good method for documenting progress.
 - ix. Norman: It may set up a good strategic plan for next time.
- c. Observation Schedule
 - i. Jeff:
 1. Was able to divide the staff to 3-4 staff starting in December.
 2. Would be able to get all reviews done between December and April
 - ii. Emily:
 1. Curious if there are informal evaluations written in the calendar.
 - iii. Jeff:
 1. There are weekly walkthroughs.
 2. Trying to set up a Google doc to be able to send feedback immediately to teachers.
 3. Emily: Would like to add shining stars in observations to Jeff's board report.

VI. New Business

- a. Java with Jeff Review
 - i. It was successful for the first one. Hopefully, more parents will show up as word-of-mouth spreads.
 - ii. The biggest piece of feedback was the time of day to try to attract more parents.
 - iii. Currently looking at quarterly but it could be a monthly event.
- b. Lockdown Drill Discussion
 - i. Jeff:
 1. School has not had a drill with an inside threat during his tenure.
 2. Feels that it's important.
 3. Has been in contact with law enforcement regarding drills.
 4. Is going to purchase a workbook then:
 - a. Present findings to the leadership team.
 - b. Bring those learnings to the board.

- c. Get feedback from parents.
 - d. Alter plans according to this feedback.
 - e. Train the teachers based on this plan.
 - f. Teachers would then train the kids.
 - g. School resource officers would guide the teachers and the students.
 - ii. Rich:
 - 1. Expressed concerns about active shooter training involving students regarding mental health. Especially students who have suffered trauma.
 - 2. Would prefer the program be an opt-in program vs an opt-out.
 - 3. Would like the school to provide care for parents whose kids opt-out.
 - iii. Amy: Would like to know what other elementary schools are doing.
 - iv. Carter:
 - 1. Wanted to know what instigated the need for this type of training.
 - 2. Will wait to see what the finalized plan looks like before offering feedback.
 - 3. However, he is interested in some mental health aspects to the training.
 - v. Shawn:
 - 1. What are the skills teachers need to know? Is there a method to minimize the stress involved in such training?
 - 2. Opt-in could be beneficial and could be performed on an in-service day.
 - vi. Amy: Suggests that Jeff perform additional research and report back after acquiring the workbook.
- VII. Audience Communication II
 - a. Michael: Appreciates all the work we're putting in.
- VIII. Executive Session: Personnel matter citing Wyoming Statute 15-1-105
 - i. Time Entered: 8:40 PM
 - ii. Time Exited: 9:30 PM
- IX. Adjourn (9:30 PM)
 - a. Megan motioned to adjourn. Carter seconded. Unanimous approval.