

Laramie Montessori Board of Trustees
Regular Board Meeting – Minutes
Location: Laramie Montessori Charter School Gym
Laramie, Wyoming

September 22, 2022
6:30 PM

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Emily Vercoe (Chair), Rich Miles, Shawn Bunning, Megan Hawken, Amy Roberts

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Jeff Verosky (LMCS Director – joining via Zoom from Estes Park training event), Norman Frost, Yuki Ayukawa (UW’s new Japan Outreach Initiative Coordinator), Leslie Wurta (PTO), audience member KC Becker (parent)

I. Opening (6:40 pm)

Mission Statement: “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:

- Norman – football at recess continues with no major injuries. He commended their consideration with one another.
- Emily said her child is obsessed with the lunchtime football games – he talks about it a lot.

B. Roll Call:

All members present and introduced to audience. Leslie Wurta (parent and PTO volunteer), KC Wheeler (parent, studied Zoology), Yuki Ayukawa (JOI Coordinator based at UW, here to promote Japanese culture and promote friendly relationships between Japan and the U.S.)

C. Approval of Agenda:

Shawn moved and Rich seconded that the agenda be approved as included in the packet. Passed unanimously.

II. Minutes

A. Approval of Minutes, Board Meeting, August 25, 2022:

Megan moved and Amy seconded that the August 25, 2022 minutes be approved as submitted and included in the packet.

III. Audience Communication I

KC Becker, parent of a pre-schooler attended to discuss her positive experience and growth of her son at the Montessori school.

A. Teacher Representative:

No teacher representative present due to school commitment, report will be reflected in Director's comments.

B. Open Communication:

PTO is rebooting and building community support – see report below

IV. Monthly Financial Report

A. Financial Statements July and August:

ESSER will reimburse professional development and Friends of Montessori has also provided funds to reimburse some staff training.

Rich moved and Megan seconded that July financials be approved. Passed by consensus.

Rich moved, Megan seconded that the August financials. Passed unanimously.

B. Budget Discussion:

Preschool contribution line shows that preschool is contributing value to the school and its general budget. Title I revenue increased and will be used for an additional Title teacher. Building a reserve emergency fund in budget going forward to protect against issues like COVID.

LMCS will hire a new English Language Learning (ELL) teacher this year.

Motion to approve budget – Megan moved, Rich seconded. Passed unanimously.

Megan proposed changing the check signing procedures by raising the amount on which the director can sign. Megan and Norman propose increasing the cut off amount to \$2500 since costs have increased with inflationary pressures. General agreement that raising the limit to \$2500 is reasonable.

Norm requested approval to accept Grooms and Harkin out of Casper as the school's new auditor. Board approved unanimously.

V. Reports

A. Director's Report:

Jeff reviewed his report and shared an overview of the MECR conference he and other LMCS staff are attending in Estes Park Colorado.

Megan asked about **Title Night**, which went well and received positive feedback from families. Several multi-person families (just over 120 persons came, but number of students was down just a little). Spring title night will focus on math.

The “**Free and Reduced**” paperwork is required in October. Jeff working with families to complete and submit forms. Goal is 100% participation this year, same as last.

Hosted a **lockdown drill** that lasted 5 minutes and students did well. This drill reflected an outside threat to the school. Will host a lockdown drill for a situation inside the school in the future, will work with the board to determine appropriate communication and approach with parents. It’s important we find a balance between fear and safety and so people in the school know what to do if a threat occurs. Amy will work with Jeff to build a strategy.

Working with the **Student Intervention Team** to develop ways to engage students who may need additional interventions for behaviors to help them have a stable, calm, and enjoyable experience at school. Have had success with this process over the last two years. Continuing to streamline and make the process more efficient. Has been going well.

WYTOP Scores were released and will be presented to the board shortly.

Teachers will work on their grade-level Montessori albums during the upcoming **Professional Development (PD) day**. They will also participate in teambuilding exercise as a staff. Jeff noted that each grade level has a large binder of Montessori instruction approaches for each subject area and level. If teachers are teaching a specific concept, the binder has resources to help teachers find best practices and tips to present the concept in a Montessori method.

B. PTO Report – tentative:

Leslie is building a team to host the fall carnival in November and working to engage additional volunteers.

PTO is soliciting volunteers to help with crossing guard duty.

C. Committee Reports:

Finance Committee – completed the budget!

Facilities Committee – researching how other charter schools have approached growth issues and strategies. Will be meeting with the previous Board chair from 2018 when the school moved into its current facility. Shawn will be researching other states’ approaches to charter schools and growth.

VI. Old Business

A. Review Board Goals 2022-2023:

Brief review of goals previously identified.

B. Lease Updates:

The lease has been fully executed, signed, and sent to the State. Will begin negotiations again in June, but the consensus for now is that we will be able to just renew. Fire alarms, locks, and cameras are all on the list to address shortly.

VII. New Business

Afterschool program:

Norman presented information on the opportunity to pursue 21st Century Community Learning Center funding (CCLC) to create an afterschool program at Laramie Montessori. Norman wants to build an ad-hoc committee to pursue the proposal and begin an implementation strategy. He has surveyed parents and there is strong interest in this offering, with content focused on social emotional learning.

This program is tied to Full Title I School status and would be considered a school improvement grant. LMCS is currently in the process of applying for full title.

Rich moved, Megan seconded to form the ad hoc committee as requested. Passed unanimously.

Norman will head the committee and will report back to the Board at the next meeting with a proposed charter.

VIII. Audience Communication II

Parent in attendance: advocated for internal lockdown drills, I know everyone is concerned about talking to little kids about the issue and scaring them, but society has been dealing with this for so long now that we need to understand that kids already know about this and sheltering them will not be in their best interests. We need to proactively prepare kids and families to know what to do in situations like this if one were to happen.

IX. Adjourn

Rich moved, Megan seconded the meeting be adjourned. Passed unanimously.