

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

January 26, 2023
6:30 PM

I. Opening (6:30 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:

- MLK Day (Heidi) – read about heroes and why we have Wyoming Equality Day. Students were to write their own speech. One second grade student wrote I want the whole world to have no homeless people, people who can afford health care and people who have a meal every day. Some of this is from Montessori, but some may be due to his knowledge of others’ family circumstances and challenges.

B. Roll Call: All present.

C. Approval of Agenda: Shawn moved, Rich seconded – approved. Passed unanimously.

II. Minutes

- A. Approval of Minutes, Board Meeting, December 14, 2022: Megan moved, Rich seconded that the December minutes be approved as submitted and included in the packet. Passed unanimously.

III. Audience Communication I

A. Teacher Representative:

- a. Kids are WyTOPP testing this week. A few make-up tests to be completed tomorrow. Because of COVID (ESSER funds), the school had a number of dividers available to section off testing areas for individual students in the gym.
- b. Special lunches also this week.
- c. Teachers have finished report cards and are making plans for second semester.
- d. One of the Title teachers moved to Ms. Janelle’s room and a new Title teacher, Miss Raven Lucero, has joined the team and is a great addition.

B. Open Communication:

- a. PTO (by email):
 - i. Bought snacks for WyTOPP testing.

- ii. Intention is to revitalize the PTO, but more informally rather than as a group with organized By-Laws, etc. Informal activities have received more support than a regular commitment.
- C. Other Communication:
 - a. Janelle – has a student teacher that started on Monday. She will do well with LMCS. She will be here until her new baby is due (7 months pregnant). She needs to do 29 days with LMCS, so she will be here until April.

IV. Monthly Financial Report

- A. Financial Statements December:
 - a. Financials looking good and close to projections. Norm reported on one unforeseen issue – a file corruption in QuickBooks that necessitated the purchase of a new package. The new package, at an expense of \$4,500 spread over five years, will be good for the next 10 years.
 - b. Billing for three Title I teachers, but that revenue is not received unless it is spent in certain restricted ways. Norm and Jeff will determine a strategy for using it. If we become a Full Title school, the process for getting Title funds should become much easier.
 - c. Minor maintenance account will likely go negative this year, meaning we'll spend more on maintenance than we pay in rent. But this should balance out next year.
 - d. Rich moved, Amy seconded that December financials be approved. Passed unanimously.

V. Reports

- A. Director's Report:
 - a. Received three new students this year in January. Lost two preschooler due to planned move outs. 87 K-6 students this year compared with 80 last year, so doing better. Down a bit on preschool enrollments. Openings in primary since preschool numbers are down. In upper elementary we are totally full and will not accept new students if all continue as presumed.
 - b. New security cameras are installed throughout the building and the system is now up and running. Some 360-degree cameras are included as well. Need to talk with the church and the company because they installed a new doorbell camera that can go through the same system, but it is currently not ringing inside the school.
 - c. Jeff is working with Lower Elementary and Primary teachers and the UW School of Pharmacy to prepare a poison prevention program with the kids.
 - d. Shawn brought Yuki Ayukawa of the Japan Outreach Initiative (JOI) Program to discuss opportunities for cultural outreach activities. She is in Wyoming through the end of the 2023-2024 academic year and will plan to provide some Japan-related activities periodically to classes.

- e. Jeff will resume talking with lead teachers on Montessori core value of the three-hour instructional block during the morning. Different activities (Title, band, art, etc.) during the day can crowd the day's schedule, but he wants to guarantee that three-hour block is preserved. Some Title pull-outs will be shifted from the morning to the afternoon to accommodate this. Heidi has done a lot of work to see how her Title schedule can adjust to accomplish this without interfering with specials for Title kids also. Good coordination between the teachers and the leadership team to get this done so that the kids can have this time uninterrupted by other activities.
- B. Committee Reports: Opened the floor for committee updates and reports.
 - a. Finance Committee: Made some account receivable adjustments. Has been going mostly well, but have formalized the timing of the automatic letters that go out when accounts due reach a certain age. The new automatic timing cycle is now in place. Also thinking of starting a Preschool savings account to go along with the checking account. This will allow us to earn some interest on the Preschool money as well.
 - b. Development Committee: Met a few times and have received some input from teachers on wanting to pursue grants and other sources of funds. Micah and Emily discussed possible conflicts of interest since they are both parents and foundation members, so will bring in someone else to help make requests from the Community Foundation. Working with teachers to put together a plan to meet their needs.
 - c. Assessment Committee: Amy and Jeff will plan to meet to discuss ideas for improving and regularizing teacher assessments and communication. Amy will find a template that can be modified for helping improve teacher feedback from observations.

VI. Old Business

- A. Approve handbooks: The personnel and family handbooks have now been on display for 45 days and can now be formally approved. Rich moved, Megan seconded that these handbooks be approved. Passed by consensus.
- B. LMCS by-laws on website to be approved in mid-March.
- C. Afterschool program updates and support: Teachers have a lot going on right now and the need to have plans done is not imminent until summer. Waiting for teachers to have a lull in their schedules to begin working on this – probably after Spring Break.

VII. New Business

- A. Board member identification and recruitment: Board's working calendar indicates it is now time to start talking about board member recruitment and staff reviews. We'll be losing Megan for a little while (maternity leave), so need to discuss who we can seek to recruit. Need to appoint someone to lead the recruitment committee. Jeff noted that several of the parents currently attending PTO meetings are parents of preschool or early elementary kids. We will start doing more active recruitment in March, but think about it now and encourage interested people to reach out with expressions of interest.

- B. Prepare for reviews: Board needs to plan for staff reviews, but Emily will look into what precisely (if anything) is the Board's involvement or role in staff reviews beyond just evaluating the Director.
- C. Wyoming Charter Association Advocacy training and collaborations: Jeff provided an update. There is no Wyoming Charter Association to date, but there is a push from the national group to get a Wyoming chapter going. Have had at least two Zoom meetings so far that Jeff has participated in. Looking currently at the bill before the Wyoming legislature and seeking to advocate on its behalf. The group is planning a training event in early February (pushed back a week from February 4th original date). Monday, February 6th is Charter School Day at the Capitol. LMCS is planning to take students to the State Museum, then a short tour of the Capitol, and after that this organization will host a luncheon and the program will include educating the kids on how to talk with legislators. After that, the kids will visit the chambers where legislative debates will be going on.
 - a. Jeff will share the link to the bill and provided a summary of it in the meeting. He also outlined the planned schedule for the bill's introduction and debate in both houses. The organization is pushing for 100% ADM to go to the charter school.
 - b. Will have a training and Emily and Makenna will be involved.
- D. Child and Adult Care Food Program Sites discussion: Jeff has looked into this program and, at Emily's request, presented to the Board. This is a program where preschool age students downward and senior citizen aged people can be reimbursed for food. LMCS would have to be an adult care facility to provide adult care food, so that is not doable. But LMCS can, as a child serving facility, be reimbursed for child care food through this program. There are some conflicts with the food provision LMCS currently has in that the Federal lunch program standards do not meet this program's standards (e.g. in acceptable sugar levels, etc.). So, if we do move forward with this program, we would have to have a separate supply of breakfast and lunch items stored so that when we get the federal program's menus for the month, we would have to go through it and replace items that are not eligible with items that are eligible for participants in this program. We would also need to get a full food license (so, need to buy a commercial refrigerator since our current refrigerator is not commercial).
 - a. Amy suggested cooperating with the Food Pantry to provide food to families in need.
- E. State facilities planning process updates: Emily shared that the state facility planners are developing a new process for assessing facility needs. Asking districts to submit needs reports. Emily participated in web-based training. There will be a separate process for charter schools, and that training will be tomorrow, which Emily will also attend.

VIII. Audience Communication II

N/A

IX. Adjourn

- A. Megan moved, Rich seconded the meeting be adjourned. Passed by consensus.