

Laramie Montessori Board of Trustees
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
November 4, 2020
Via Zoom
6:30 PM

I. Opening (6:30) – Jana Heisler-White

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 – Jana Heisler-White shared that her 1st grader sometimes struggles with remembering all items that are needed for school. He came up with idea of drawing pictures and writing words to remember his items.
- B. Roll Call- All board members are present
- C. Approval of Agenda* Will need to revise the date to 4 November and add the revised August minutes for approval.

II. Minutes-

- A. Approval of Minutes, Board Meeting September 24, 2020
- B. Approval of Revised Minutes, Board Meeting 27, August 2020

III. Audience Communication

Carol Kobulnicky & Josh Sainz are here on behalf of Montessori children's house board and will speak during the second audience communication portion.

- A. Teacher Representative-n/a
- B. Open communication- n/a

IV. Financial Report

- A. Review and Board Action to approve Financial Reports from August 2020
August appears to be a normal spending month. Percentages will not be accurate at this point, as we are going to be approving a new budget.

New lease- LMCS recouped all of the monies that we are going to get back. There was an itemized list for painting and other maintenance, and we were reimbursed about ½ of monies for those items, as well as July & August rent, custodial, & custodial supplies.

- B. Review and Board Action to approve Financial Reports from September 2020
Normal spending month. Percentages will not be accurate at this point, as we are going to be approving a new budget.
- C. Review and Board Action to approve 2020-2021 Revised Budget

Significant changes are as follows;

Part of the funding for the lease comes from LMCS and part comes from ADM. ADM is up from what Ed ACSD had given us previously.

PD hasn't been an issue due to the pandemic, but we need to think about the funding during funding cuts. The State of Wyoming has said to anticipate further cuts next year. Norman and Jeff have had some preliminary discussions about budget cuts.

How are we tracking cares act funding? It goes through ACSD #1. Monies were distributed to the state of Wyoming, the state of Wyoming distributed it to school districts, and based on LMCS ADM they gave a figure on what funds we have. Orders go through ACSD #1, they make purchases, and purchases get shipped to LMCS.

There have been discussions on how to effectively spend \$4,000.00 in funds. Purchases have to be directly related to COVID-19. Quite a few items have been ordered through the Technology CARES Act funding. The district administrative team discussed which items were needed and ordered, Chromebooks, tablets, mics, cameras, interactive displays. Etc. CARES Act funding needs to be spent by the end of the year.

When considering additional or alternate funding a stimulus package was mentioned. The Open School, in years past, has successfully turned a PPE loan into a grant. Jana suggested touching base with our bank to see if that would be a prudent decision.

V. Reports

A. Director's Report – Jeff Verosky

A large update with combined reports from Jeff and Bronwyn was sent out to parents. Enrollments are up and down. The current enrollment is 63 students, and there have been additional enrollment inquiries. Parent Teacher Conferences were held exclusively via Zoom. Teachers reported that it went well and they enjoyed doing it that way. Conference attendance rate was 84%. The goal for winter and spring conferences will be to get the percentage higher.

COVID Update- We have not had a case of COVID in our school. We have had some exposures that happened outside of school. The newsletter contained COVID-19 steps, rules and guidelines. Two staff members have been exposed to someone who had COVID-19, but have tested negative. There is currently one staff member in quarantine and four students who have been exposed and quarantined, two of those students were exposed at daycare. A call was received from the daycare to inform us, and the Department of Health, and they deemed the Montessori students not have to quarantine due to state health parameters.

We have in person and virtual and everything seems to be going well.

What is the possibility of COVID-19 testing through the District? The District has not responded, but we have spoken to the Department of Health via email and we are trying to get involved in that. Iverson Memorial Hospital is offering drive through testing. Josh Kaffer suggested that families could order free Vault tests. Wyoming Governor, Mark Gordon, used CARES Act funds for the testing program.

Randall Wilkison & Cheryl Spitler are running District COVID testing. Jeff will reach out to them to see if there is a way for them to include LMCS staff.

LMCS teacher have been doing lesson plans for virtual and in person students and have worked diligently to support students and families. Jeff has decided to give back to the staff by giving them an extra day, Tuesday, off for Thanksgiving Break, which they will make up later in the year.

We previously discussed the possibility of Montessori Preschool moving into Laramie Montessori Charter School as early as next year. Jeff got more info as per our request at the last Board Meeting. He got with the state and school wide title will allow us to support a preschool. All children are eligible to be served and we could offer preschool to everyone in ACSD. Additional steps to absorb preschool into our school would include submitting an amendment to address program and funding changes. We would need to ensure that this is reflected in next year's budget. As targeted assistance can use all or part of allocation, identify children who are most at risk of low achievement, family income can be used as one basis for eligibility but not for the sole basis.

Do we have certain students that need to be included? No. There are no restrictions in a school wide Title program. Same as answer to the above.

We can put restrictions on it but we do not have restrictions put on us. Jeff shared this with Title teacher, she agrees and is wanting to move from target assistance to schoolwide Title.

Carol & Josh (PK) want to know what their next steps should be. They are on a timeline for what they need to plan for based on board meetings coming up.

LMCS would not receive ADM for PK kids and we would have to discuss charging a tuition. Kindergarten is currently split between two classrooms, but could be moved to one classroom to make room for a preschool class. Jeff is looking into whether or not there are grants for preschool students or if it would be a cost LMCS would have to absorb. Ideally, Makena would be the primary preschool and kindergarten teacher and we would add additional assistant teachers to kindergarten and preschool classes.

There are rules such as, preschool cannot share a playground with other children. We are not yet sure if this means there has to be a separate playground, or a separate recess time.

If we cannot move from targeted to Title I schoolwide. Title and kindergarten would still like to entertain including preschool, as they feel it would still be a benefit for the school. Adding preschool would help us in moving towards a more typical Montessori model.

We need to find out what avenues are available for funding if we do not get approved to be a full Title school. Adding PK would be moving towards a more typical mont model.

An ad hoc committee will need to be started to study this. What is our mission? What are the critical questions and considerations? How would that meld? A charter would need to be written by ad hoc committee.

Carol K. – There were financial concerns when Montessori Preschool was a non-profit, as it was not sustainable. We found ourselves with a razor thin margin. COVID impacted us, as well as all 3 staff members moving out of state, and that factored into them not reopening. I believe that it was not financially sustainable because of overhead costs and not being able to build in efficiencies, because they were so small. A sliding fee scale with discounted tuition would be ideal for LMCS to support a preschool. LMCS would be able to afford it, as it's a bigger school.

Daniels fund application- Children's house can open in June- program officer – could provide upstart costs. Could write a grant to have co-teachers trained. LMCS was started with Daniel's fund

Securing community partners would be pertinent. Carol is willing to send us some potential partners. If Montessori PK were to pursue reopening they would have to start getting ready asap.

Preliminary discussions – We are looking at it as a cost savings, the TAs would be In each classroom and lead teacher would “roam” in between classrooms.

Carol mentioned that they currently have an entire pk in storage and would be willing to assist with readying the room.

Next step is to develop a charter and that group’s goal. Who would be on the ad hoc committee? Makeup and purposes. Timeline for it to exist. Bring recommendations to board Can review document, provide input, revise if necessary and approve for ad hoc committee to function.

Josh Kaffer, Heidi, Makena, and Jeff for ad hoc committee.

Josh motions for ad hoc committee to pursue the feasibility to start a PK program at LMCS.

B. Ad hoc Charter Renewal Committee

Had to change scheduled meeting due to illnesses. We have a poll for the next meeting date. November meeting (BOARD MEETING) will need to schedule a special meeting to discuss what has happened at the Ad Hoc meeting.

C. Committee Reports:

PTO- put together a trunk or treat and Josh put together a trick or treat at the skate park. Sean and Samira and teacher reps Jeff and Makena are on PTO the board. The PTO is currently in need of a treasurer and another officer or two.

Accountability (Jana)- n/a

Nominating; n/a

Grievance; n/a

Policy and Planning (Josh) – n/a

Finance (Megan)- Met on 20th, talked about budget, financials, and credit card. The credit card will be here in 2 days and Norman will do a mandatory training on the credit card tomorrow.

Facilities (Josh) n/a

Resource Development (Jana) n/a

Marketing (Ashlee) n/a

VI. Audience Communication II- above

VII. New Business

- A. Review and Board Action to approve LMCS Board of Trustees Federal Policy Statements (Need to include in packet and table for next meeting)

Reviewing the grievance policy. There were a number of shortcomings. They rewrote the policy and looked at it in July or August. Board felt comfortable with contents. Sent to Megan Hayes and she had comments, mostly in review of public policies. Megan and Jana are working on changing language and trying to mesh historic policy, etc. Megan then reviewed all policies and has recommended some changes. Board of Trustees Federal Policy statement. These will be included in parent and student handbook. We can review and do a Doodle Poll to approve policy statement, student and parent handbook. Board approval, 45-day comment period, then final approval.

- B. Review and Board Action to approve updated Parent-Student Handbook

Megan looked it over for the legality. No major changes in either document. Changed some dates, procedures, and there were a couple of changes under discipline--- procedures a major incident would take. All changes were sent to Megan and she said everything looked good. Most changes were under immunizations (pg. 22) There have been changes over the past few years. (pg. 26) confirmed immunization requirements.

- C. Review and Board Action to approve updated Personnel Handbook

One thing that is missing is grievance policy and Jeff put into handbook that that will be approved by the schoolboard and can do an addendum.

VIII. Adjourn

**Consent agenda items- items approved simultaneously with approval of agenda, unless exceptions are noted.*

Laramie Montessori Board of Trustees
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
November 19, 2020
Via Zoom
6:30 PM

I. Opening (6:30) – Jana Heisler-White

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 - Jana shared that her children talking about the new school store, has prompted discussions about currency, saving, and many other life skills. It's an Incredible tool to expose children to life skills and a real life application of math skills.

Josh added that his youngest son is accruing points. Janelle's class is also accruing points.

Jeff said Kathleen brought the school store idea to him. He thinks it's a great life lesson and it teaches students to earn, save and spend money.

Roll Call- all board members are present.

- B. Approval of Agenda*

Josh motions, Megan seconds, all are In favor of approving agenda.

II. Minutes

- A. Approval of Minutes, Board Meeting November 4, 2020

Josh motions, Megan seconds, all are In favor of approving agenda.

- B. Deferring approval of Doodle Polls until December ---

"The LMCS Board of Trustees Federal Policy Statements document was inadvertently left out of the meeting packet. Board Chair Jana Heisler White distributed the document to Board members and established a Doodle Poll to approve them. Josh Kaffer motioned to approve and Megan Hawken seconded. The motion was passed on 11/12/2020. Personnel and Parent-Student Handbooks were included in the Board Packet. The Board approved the revised Personnel and Parent-Student Handbooks on 11/15/2020 via Doodle Poll with Megan Hawken making the motion and Ashlee Kupilik seconding the motion. All Board members were in favor of the revisions and the motion passed."

III. Audience Communication - n/a

- A. Teacher Representative

Heidi expressed that all of the teachers are hoping we get to stay open. A lot of progress has been made being one on one with the kids, especially making up progress that was lost last year. We are all being cautious due to COVID, but we are working to boost social/emotional development. We are safely integrating activities such as Zoom lunch meetings, kickball across quadrants, and other socially distanced creative elements for extra interaction and socialization.

The virtual platform has been a big help to the school and has allowed teachers to teach virtually when necessary. Allows kids to go virtually as well if they aren't feeling well.

- B. Open communication - n/a

IV. Financial Report

A. Review and Board Action to approve Financial Report from October 2020

Megan stated that the new budget is not yet finalized, but that we should see more accurate numbers at December's meeting. 34.33% of our budget has been spent and it has been around 33% this time in previous years. With Teton Science School being cancelled and free lunches being extended there should be some cost savings, so it should put us where we need to be.

Significant COVID reimbursement from CARES Act. Technology Cares needs to be spent

Josh motions

Megan seconds

All In favor

V. Reports

A. Director's Report

Jeff Verosky- LMCS partnered with UW and got stencils and paint for the playground and flat top area where it was faded and we used the supplies to put in additional games. We also got stencils for classes with sounds and words. It was nice to see kids using and enjoying these at recess.

Our Facebook page is taken care of and up and running and we're still figuring out who will maintain it. It is helpful in getting information out. We are partnering with retirement facility in Casper to start Pen Pal program. Writing letters and drawing pictures for residents. The elderly in homes are isolated and we are working with a parent who is transporting mail. Great for kids to think about others and for them to communicate via writing or drawing. Have a list of residence and things they like. Will match students with residents. Hoping to make everyone's days brighter, residence and students.

We received one Newline Display for every classroom from the ACSD #1 Technology CARES grant. We will do training on them on Monday at PD. They are a great way to intertwine classroom and virtual instruction. We will be discussing winter field trips at net week's meeting. We have winter field trips coming up and we're hoping that COVID restrictions do not have an impact on that.

PD – Montessori training (teacher lead), technology training, smaller meetings, giving staff time to work and prepare curriculum and instruction for after thanksgiving. Good work time for preparation for in person and virtual.

COVID – 3 staff in quarantine, 2 who had tests come back negative. 2 were exposed to someone who was positive, 1 is waiting for a test to return. 1 student positive case was a virtual student. We have had no in person students who have tested positive. The District is having a problem with finding subs, but we haven't had an issue with subs so far.

As of now ACSD is not closing schools, but if they were to close we would follow suit. Public Health has not shut schools down, because COVID is not being transmitted in schools. Dr. Yennie sent an email out this afternoon stating that he will be holding an administrative meeting tomorrow afternoon.

Josh stated that if we did choose to open and the District shut down, bussing and food would be unavailable. Jeff's biggest concern would be that some staff are ACSD employees rather than LMCS employees. Would rather follow suit, if something starts to spread in LMCS it would be bad. Josh asked about Staffing issues vs COVID issues. COVID shut down depends on the opinion of Public Health.

Our school improvement plan was submitted at beginning of month and Jeff confirmed that it was received. It should be displayed on our website and District website. There was no official testing last year, so the state asked schools to take plans from last year and modify them as needed and they can move forward as new plan. These plans were reviewed during staff and leadership meeting then submitted. Jeff will forward to Board Member. Accountably Committee has worked with the Director on this.

We are at the same enrollment as last month with potential students who may start after Thanksgiving. We want to make sure students would be successful coming in this late in the year.

B. Ad hoc Charter Renewal Committee - We met and have spent a lot of time identifying documents that need to be updated so it is prepared for submission. Jana and Jeff will meet with Yennie to see when we need to have it in and if anyone needs to be at the board meeting. February meeting it is voted on at ACSD Board meeting. Asking for feedback and direction as this is under not normal circumstances. Will be getting emails from Jana and doodle poll for special meeting to discuss draft. 1st December is the next Ad hoc meeting. Approximately 40 pages of substantive texts that needs to be reviewed. Hope to finalize beginning of January. We will have better timelines after meeting with Dr. Yennie. Kathie K. is helping and it is really amazing to see how far our school has come..

C. Committee Reports:

PTO- Parent interested in joining PTO. Josh will forward email.

Accountability (Jana);

Nominating; Grievance;

Policy and Planning (Josh & Jana)- Get grievance policy finalized and posted when charter goes in. May need to meet with M Hayes.

Finance (Megan),

Facilities (Josh),

Resource Development (Jana),

Marketing (Ashlee)

Reach out to donors and entities for contributions. We have a list and it would be good to get those out in the next two weeks.

Organizations to reach out to?

Specific needs? (TSS in the past)

Keep it general. Remind people that this is a big year. We're moving into another chapter into the life of the school which is a big milestone. Reaching out to frequent list.

Josh- good positon that we don't have a specific ask and be adaptable

Jana- work with Jeff to highlight recognizing being a small school, online and in person options, what makes LMCS unique.

Jeff will put it out to others to gather thoughts and ideas.

VII. New Business

A. Review and Board Action to approve charter for ad hoc Preschool Exploration Committee

Follow-up from last month's presentation to bring in PK to LMCS. Unknowns and questions, there was an interest and board decided to develop committee to explore potential, pros, cons, and elements. Josh worked with Carol to develop charter.

Questions, feedback, thoughts?

Jana- one thing in particular – any ad hoc has to have a charter. Any comments on the makeup? School director, 1 mem of BOT, teacher, Montessori Children's House. (SEE CHARTER FOR MEMBER MAKEUP)

Key pieces- they will operate and provide monthly updates to board. They have specific charge. Include statement about when committee would potentially be dissolved. Date it for March ? Can continue with another charter if needed after March. March 2021 make recommendations and dissolve at EOSY (end of school year)

Josh will finalize version and we can approve with edits we have discussed tonight. Send to AK and JHW to include in board docs.

Josh motions to accept with dissolution at EOSY and changing to March 2021 for presentation

Megan seconds

All in favor

VIII. Adjourn

Josh motions

Megan seconds

All in favor

**Consent agenda items- items approved simultaneously with approval of agenda, unless exceptions are noted.*



Laramie Montessori Charter School

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"Imagination does not become great until human beings, given the courage & strength, use it to create."

Maria Montessori

December 2020 Board Report

Enrollment Summary (as of 12/14/2020)

- Kindergarten 13 students (11 in-person / 2 virtual)
- Lower Elementary 28 students (23 in-person / 5 virtual)
 - 1st Grade 12
 - 2nd Grade 9
 - 3rd Grade 7
- Upper Elementary 24 students (18 in-person / 6 virtual)
 - 4th Grade 8
 - 5th Grade 10
 - 6th Grade 6

Total Students 65 students (52 in-person / 13 virtual)

Director Goal & Priority List for the 2020-21 School Year

- A. LMCS Student, Teacher & Staff Safety Plan (working document)...made revisions & updates with staff on hall transitions, recess and use of outside areas during the day.
- B. Build multi-tiered plan with staff & board to ensure smooth transition into a change in the school year due to COVID.....hoping this is not needed, but have made virtual plans and have made revisions after working with some parents on plan best for kids, teachers and parents.
- C. Work to ensure students show at least one years growth over the school year...all students have taken their benchmark tests this month, classroom teachers & Title staff are using this data to target areas each individual student are scoring low in to help the student improve in those areas.
- D. Ensure consistent school & director communication with all stakeholders...I work with Bronwyn to send out a weekly school news update to parents around Thursday or each week. I also send out a Director's Update each month during the first week of the month.
- E. Grow Student Enrollment count up to start of the 2021-22 school year
- F. Fulfill requirements for LMCS to become a Full Title School...application accepted by the state WDE and will now work this year to fulfill all the requirements of the application. If accepted as School wide title, would start the 2021-22 school year.
- G. Retention of & Training for all highly qualified staff...Our Staff Development Day on Monday, November 23rd will include multiple trainings for technology and Montessori teaching methods.
- H. Work with Board to secure permanent space for LMCS in Laramie...A possible first step is an upcoming meeting with the state facilities committee on Friday, January 8th

Laramie Montessori School

Grievance Procedure

Draft for review by the

LMCS Board of Trustees

MONTH DAY, 2020

The Laramie Montessori Charter School (LMCS) Grievance Procedure has been adapted from the Bylaws and Policies of ACSD#1 (as of August 2020) to reflect the governance structure of LMCS.

INTRODUCTION

Laramie Montessori Charter School (LMCS) seeks to promote consensus among its employees, faculty, students, and parents and to encourage equitable solutions to problems arising among them.

LMCS holds that most concerns and differences are best addressed through open and honest communication conducted in an informal, respectful, and civil manner and that effective resolution depends on direct, prompt, and constructive dialogue.

HANDLING COMMUNICATIONS, SUGGESTIONS, AND COMPLAINTS FROM THE PUBLIC AND FROM DISTRICT PERSONNEL

I. Role of the School Director and Staff. The LMCS Board recognizes that effective school governance requires that primary responsibility for issues involving student discipline, curriculum, assessment, and other day-to-day decisions regarding school management lies with the staff and School Director and that these individuals are best suited to resolve conflicts that arise with respect to these issues. While the Board has the authority to appoint, employ, and remove the School Director, primary responsibility and authority over staff and operations of LMCS are vested in the School Director.

II. Citizens' Complaints On Instructional Material

Citizens' complaints on instructional material shall be addressed following the same process established by the ACS#1 Bylaws and Policies of the Board of Education (Section 3, Policy # 3006), but with autonomous oversight from the LMCS School Director and LMCS Board of Trustees.

III. Citizen and Employee Complaints Regarding LMCS Personnel

A. Dispute Resolution Procedure

1. Procedure. When parents, community members, or LMCS staff members have complaints or disagreements with any parties at LMCS, they should follow the following procedure:

a. Disagreements or complaints should be resolved, whenever possible, informally through meeting and discussion among the parties most closely involved, while endeavoring to preserve positive relationships.

b. If the disagreement or concern is not adequately addressed through such informal meeting and discussion, or if the complaint concerns a school-wide policy or procedure, the complainant shall seek to resolve the issue with the School Director.

- c. A complainant may, by written request, seek a formal conference with the School Director to address the disagreement or concern.
- d. The written request shall succinctly describe the specific concern(s) and related details, and shall identify any specific LMCS policy or rule believed to have been violated, and shall provide other relevant information to help the School Director adequately understand the nature of the disagreement or concern.
- e. The request shall be filed within fifteen (15) business days of the most recent incident(s) or last informal attempt to resolve the concern.
- f. Following receipt of the written request, the School Director shall, whenever reasonably possible, conduct a conference with the complainant(s) within ten (10) business days. Within five (5) business days following the conference, the School Director will respond in writing to the complainant(s) the decision or action with regard to the situation. A copy of that decision will also be provided to any other party who is directly involved in the grievance.
- g. Decisions of the School Director are final and not subject to further review.
- h. Disagreements or complaints about the School's Director also should be resolved, whenever possible, informally through meeting and discussion among the parties most closely involved, while endeavoring to preserve positive relationships. Following this meeting, the School Director shall, within seven (7) business days of this meeting, provide a written response that summarizes the meeting results and any agreed on resolutions.
- i. If the disagreement or concern about the School Director is not adequately addressed through such informal meeting and written summary, the complainant may, within seven (7) business days of receiving the School Director's written response, file a written complaint with the LMCS Board Chair. The written complaint must include a copy of the School Director's written response, as set forth in the preceding subparagraph. Following receipt of the complaint and the School Director's written response, the Board shall take the following action:
 - The LMCS Board shall meet and confer about the complaint in Executive Session at its next regularly scheduled Board meeting.
 - Within seven (7) business days of the Board meeting, the Board Chair shall communicate in writing, to the complainant and the School Director, the Board's decision.

IV. Sexual Harassment and Discrimination

LMCS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender, age or disability in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its educational programs or activities. Inquiries or complaints concerning Title VI, Title VII, Title IX and Section 504

may be referred to the School Director, the Wyoming Department of Education, or the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights in Denver, Colorado.

LMCS does not condone or tolerate sexual harassment or discrimination of students or staff by employees, other students, co-employees, or non-employees. Any employee or student who engages in sexual harassment of students or staff will be subject to disciplinary action. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment.