

Montessori Academy
Governing Board Committee

Draft Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 19, 2017, 5:30 PM

6050 N Invergordon Rd, Paradise Valley, AZ 85253 Room 11

1. Call to order
 - a. 5:40pm
2. Record Member Attendance (roll-call or observed)
 - a. Voting Members: Dr. George Wood, Nicholas Toronto, Maegan Dixon, Debra Berkey, Jennifer Dunn, Kara Tustin, Dr. Jeffery Trent, Henri Cournand: quorum present 8/8.
 - b. Absent: none
 - c. Non-Voting Member(s) present: Juli Newman, Krista Cross (Executive Board Representatives)
3. Initial Call for Public Comment on Agendized and Non-Agendized Items (two-minute limit per speaker/topic)
 - a. None
4. Acknowledgments/Introductions – Nick Toronto initiated introduction of all members and public. All public was welcomed. George Wood acknowledged Juli Newman for conducting a happy and productive meeting with the staff previous to this meeting. Juli Newman acknowledged Jennifer Dunn and Kara Tustin for their work on POMA and being very professional with the Facebook site content (out of order acknowledgement). Nick Toronto wished the Senior and Middle School students and chaperones safe travels for next week’s trips! (out of order acknowledgement).
5. Old Business (actual visitation order to be determined by the Chair)
 - a. Review/Approval of March 22, 2017 meeting minutes – Jeffery Trent moved to accept the minutes as corrected, Maegan Dixon seconded. Approved 8-0.
 - b. Advisory Council Involvement- Nick Toronto explained that he will work with the administration to collect the wants and needs of next year’s teachers – classroom specific and program projects. Once the information has been gathered, he would like the AC members to support the teachers in seeing that all their needs are met. All agreed.

- c. Events- Meagan Dixon reviewed upcoming events: Green Day is this Friday – volunteers are still needed. It is from 8:30-11:30 for K-8 students. There are 9 stations. Ms. Kaila is chairperson and is doing a great job. May 5th is Fine Arts day. There are live performances from several levels, including ballet, drumming, and Middle School poetry. A parent is bringing their Hot Dog food truck and will donate 20% to the school. Teacher Appreciation week is the first week in May and is being work on by parents. Middle School will host a World’s Fair on May 10th. The first Parent Group meeting is also on the 10th. The Book Fair is the week of the 15th. Middle School is hosting a 6th-8th grade dance on campus on May 18th. Senior Elementary speech finals will also be on the 18th. The last week of school is Activities week, which includes a water day and a decade day. Graduation is on the 24th and the last day of school is a half day for all students on the 25th. Yearbooks are on pre-sale now and should arrive the last week of school. The dates/activities will be posted on Facebook. The important dates for next year will also be posted.
6. New Business (actual visitation order to be determined by the Chair)
- a. Juli Newman reviewed the hierarchy of the school. The Executive Board is at the top and is accountable for such items as policies, legal issues, and financial issues. The Advisory Board, also known as the School Governing Board is a committee appointed by the Executive Board. It recommends policy changes, recommends new policies, works on the strategic plan for the school, reviews and approves financials of the school, and establishes subcommittees as needed.
 - b. Jennifer Dunn and Kara Tustin, explained the purpose of the new parent group. There are three components: community building, volunteerism, and fundraising. They presented their first agenda. Education on school policies – specifically, “bullying” was discussed. They will present information of the definition of bullying and bad behavior. They will review school policies on discipline and procedures. They will support the administration and faculty actions in following said policies. Discussion was had on where parent concerns should be handled and pathways for communication/action. All agreed that the parent group is not and will not be a complaint center – it will follow the three components and enhance the school. Discussion was had on setting up a volunteer program that includes classroom and school wide volunteer opportunity lists, tracking/reporting hours, and may include babysitting. The office will provide accurate classroom directories. It was noted that students like to have their parents on campus and visibly volunteering. It was also noted that we need to think out of the box – providing volunteer opportunities that speak to parent skills, ie: pool service, construction, etc. This will also be embedded in the new strategic plan. Members are encouraged to start brainstorming on ways to improve the school – strategic planning will start soon. Stakeholders (parents, community members, board members , students) may work on the strategic plan.

(Nick Toronto- excused from meeting- still maintaining a quorum)

c. Juli Newman presented the survey results, which will be incorporated into the strategic plan as appropriate. The administration is already working on some areas that appeared in the results. 80% of respondents believe they are fulfilling their volunteer commitment. Henri Cournand suggested we track the hours more accurately and provide parents with a monthly statement. Those that do not complete their hours state they don't have time due to work hours. They would also like a list of opportunities. 97% feel that the school environment is positive and promotes learning. Specific cases of discipline were mentioned and the administration is addressing. The AC – through the parent group will also help educate parents on policies and laws. Parents would like to see more gardening, animals on campus, more sports, and more programs involving technology. Discussion was had on finding experts in the technology field to enhance our programs (strategic planning). 95% feel that discipline is handled correctly. 100% of respondents feel their child is prepared for the next grade level. It was noted that we just had an 8th grader accepted to Brophy with honors, have had several Valedictorians at Bio-Science, and many more honors in our graduating classes. Discussion was had on promoting and educating our parents on these results. Students working independently was a concern, with 27% reporting that their student is not independent at home. Parents reported that their child was challenged in all core subjects. However, Foreign Language, Physical Education, and the Arts are below the school's expectation and will be addressed. Parents would like to see more emphasis in a variety of areas (not core subjects) The AC, Education Committee, and administration will review each comment/suggestion. Piano, band and vocals also interest parents and will be prioritized. Technology suggestions will also be reviewed. It was noted that some of the suggestions are being done – maybe just not publicized, such as STEM and coding. 100% of respondents are happy with the teaching and administrative staff. However, constructive feedback has been received and is being worked on by administration. Capital improvement information was plentiful and will be incorporated into the strategic plan and facilities plan. The most important areas include gardening and outdoor learning spaces and upgrade to technology. There were many great suggestions for moving our school forward and enhancing our program in all areas. The school and Advisory Council is very appreciative and will work diligently to create a responsive strategic plan.

7. Executive Board Report: Juli Newman – out of order

- a. Juli Newman requested an Executive Session (closed to the public). Maegan Dixon moved to proceed with an Executive Session, Jeffery Trent seconded, approved 7-0.
 - i. Separate, confidential, minutes were taken and are on file.
 - ii. Session lasted from 6:40pm to 7:14pm
- b. Appointments to the Advisory Committee
 - i. None - The Executive Board is accepting resumes at this time for one open position. The Advisory Council also needs to find a Secretary.

8. Final Call for Public Comment on Agendized and Non-Agendized Items (two-minute limit per speaker/topic) – moved out of order – before Executive Session to provide the public the opportunity to speak and not wait for the Executive Session to conclude.
 - a. One member of the public was interested in joining the Advisory Council. Juli Newman stated the process – turn in a resume to the Executive Board, the Executive Board will review and possibly interview at their next meeting.
9. Set date for next School Governing Board Committee meeting. (typically 3rd Weds of a month)
 - a. Regular Meeting has been set for May 17, 2017.
10. Adjournment
 - a. Jeffery Trent moved to adjourn. Debra Berkey seconded. Approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:15pm.

The next Advisory Council meeting will be held May 17, 2017 at 5:30pm at 6050 N Invergordon Rd, Paradise Valley, AZ 85253, in Room 11 or other such accommodations as may be appropriate. If members interested in attending desire telephone call-in information, please submit such request in writing to the Secretary at least 48 hours prior to the meeting time so that we may ensure a quorum, to the extent possible.

Submitted by Juli Newman, Interim Secretary Revision "A": April 20, 2017