

Gettysburg Montessori Charter School

Board of Trustees Official Minutes

November 18, 2021

Board Members Present

Tom Hockensmith, Chair
Rose Thornberry, Vice Chair
Traci Elligson, Secretary
Becky Uppercue, Board Treasurer
Diana Williams
Derek Beckenbaugh
Ashley Utermahlen

Missing

None

Others Present

Faye Pleso
Christine Fitzpatrick
Nurse Adrian Kavanaugh
Nicole Wilt

Public

Jason Officer (Parent)
Tiffany (Parent)
Natalie (Parent)

Call to Order

Tom Hockensmith called the meeting to order at 6:12 pm. All information regarding public access to the meeting was advertised in the [Gettysburg Times](#). Introductions were made for attendees.

Public Comment on Agenda

None

Old Business

None

Administrator's Report

- Enrollment: 265
- Education trips
 - State now allows for 3 consecutive days, was previously 5 days
 - Requests must be in 2 weeks prior to trip
 - Approvals based on attendance, grades, educational benefit
 - Cannot occur during the first 2 weeks of school year or during PSSA testing
 - Cannot be more than 10 consecutive days-will lead to unenrollment per law and charter
- School Psychologist:
 - normally supplied through IU 12; required for re-evaluations and new student evaluations
 - None are available this year
 - Contract through E-therapy to offer virtual evaluations, to meet requirements, until we can get a psychologist from IU 12
 - Contracts with IU 13 to cover 26 days which would be enough for re-evaluations
- Montessori walk throughs
 - Checklists/Observations to improve environment, and order
 - Going well, meet with teachers after to review any findings/concerns
- Helping Hands Update: Nicole Wilt
 - Fundraisers
 - Scarecrow Fundraiser
 - brought in \$522 for the SPCA of Adams Co.
 - Classes completed thank-you cards
 - Some businesses inquired about purchasing the scarecrows
 - Popcorn Fundraiser-online
 - Information sent home with children, runs through December 2nd
 - Book Fair
 - First week of December
 - Holiday Shop
 - Information should be coming out soon
 - January-Coffee Fundraiser
 - February- Cookie Fundraiser
 - Pictures
 - Were not sent out until October due to class quarantine
 - Company following school Facebook site to assist in communication
 - Goal to have in the mail by November, they are 3 weeks behind due to understaffing
 - Can email company for link to see pictures

Consent Agenda

Motion to approve made by Becky Uppercue, seconded by Ashley Utermahlen. All agreed; approved.

Chair Report

- Trauma Informed Training to be completed by all Board members by May 2021
- Surveys are being worked on and finalized
- December board meeting will be held on December 16 due to the holiday

Finance: Becky Uppercue

- GMCS retains 3 months cash on hand due to budget based on enrollment of 255 and current enrollment is 265
- Cash has decreased due to construction-related invoices from '21-22Y, should be all in by end of December or early January
- Loan payments still interest only
- ESSER II now reflected but awaiting receipt
- Applied to '21-22 to cover staffing levels despite Covid-related enrollment
- ESSER III
- Will be allocated for '21-22 to offset expenses for technology/computers etc.

Governance committee

No meeting last month, Board is at capacity

New business: For the good of the order

- Mask Mandate
 - Decision to be made by the State and GMCS will follow necessary mandates to keep charter/ESSER funding
 - When it ends GMCS will return to previous parent choice
 - Information will be shared with families
- Health Guideline: Nurse Adrian
 - Covid guidelines discussed
 - "close contacts" and who is placed in quarantine
 - 3 ft distance for close contact
 - 3-6 ft IF everyone is constantly wearing a properly fit face mask
 - Learning cohorts help determine and limit who would be considered close contact
 - Mitigation strategy for schools are recommendations and guidelines centered on disease prevention
 - Quarantine procedure
 - Standard 14 day has not changed

Shortened 10 day allowed with provisions ie, symptoms, masks, distancing
Health and Safety Plan details acceptable face coverings
Dept. of Health emphasis is Stop the Spread
Details "What to do if Positive Case"
Communicate with Faye Pleso
Teachers help identify close contacts
Typical quarantine will include 3 or 4 students so as not to quarantine
the whole class. One occasion required 6 students
Communication
Personal phone contact to parents/guardians

Public Comment

- Natalie (Parent):
- Requests change to policy stating data shows no Covid impact to children
- Tom: Will follow up to confirm that school can legally develop "quarantine" policy and school board cannot vote until it is posted on Board Agenda
- GMCS falls under Gettysburg School District but must comply with State regulations
- Tiffany (Parent, Registered Nurse):
- Guidance/recommendations are not law
- Requests a change to policy, if child tests positive then only that child should be quarantined and close contacts to be monitored by parents and school
- Discussed aspect of emotional stress on child when quarantined as a close contact, food insecurity, and safe haven offered by the school
- Request the school does not mandate covid vaccinations for children
- Jason (Parent)
- Re-iterated food insecurities for close contact quarantines
- Nurse Adrian:
- Virus is contagious and can spread while being asymptomatic. The family at home is also at risk and may be immunocompromised. Other children/teachers in the classroom may be also immunocompromised and would be at risk while close contacts remain in class.
- Tom: We respect and appreciate the input and we will be looking into law allowed options to the school and communicate them with families

Adjourned at 7:21 pm