

Gettysburg Montessori Charter School

Board of Trustees Official Minutes

January 27, 2022

Board Members Present

Tom Hockensmith, Chair

Rose Thornberry, Vice Chair

Traci Elligson, Secretary

Becky Uppercue, Board Treasurer

Ashley Utermahlen

Missing

Diana Williams

Others Present

Faye Pleso

Christine Fitzpatrick

Nicole Wilt

Jesse Bean

Public

Jason Officer (Parent)

Meghan (Parent)

Tania (Parent of Muso Nyiwul)

Call to Order

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

Public Comment on Agenda

None

Old Business

None

Administrator's Report

- Enrollment: 260
- New Oxford Chamber of Commerce awarded Katie Sauter Teacher of the Year and a GMCS Student of the Year
- Threat assessment team was established in September with training completed.
 - Team meets monthly
 - Staff to train on February 18, 2022
- Preschool PJ story time to help with students transitioning into Kindergarten
 - Open house in February
- Student recognition to be held at lunch time next week
- Acadience scores
 - Benchmark for mid year
 - Looking at growth
 - Composite scores have risen in both Math and Reading, retelling shows the strongest improvement
 - Improvements most likely due to in person lessons and enhanced reading programs and resources
 - 5th grade Math will be updated next month
 - Scores will be sent to parents for individual students
- Helping Hands update
 - Spirit Week has been pushed back, will start next week
 - Coffee fundraiser due Monday
 - Gertrude Hawke starts today, due March 9th
 - Hershey Park due April 22
 - Teacher Appreciation week planning is in the works
 - Yearbook information will be coming out in the next 2 weeks to parents
 - 2 clubs to begin for 6th graders
 - Pictures and organizing for the yearbook
 - T-shirt sales during Spirit Week

Consent Agenda

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

Chair Report

- Meetings being held by Zoom due to safety concerns regarding Covid-19

February meeting to be held in Zoom

March meeting to be determined

- Regarding the streaming of meetings;
Lawyer states it would be more distracting than beneficial
Parents are encouraged to email any questions/concerns to the board prior to scheduled meetings
- Parent surveys are being reviewed to streamline and shorten for convenience
- Trauma Informed Training to be completed by all Board members by May 2021

Finance: Becky Uppercue, Jesse Bean

- Cash has decreased slightly due to construction-related invoices
- Straban township released lien
Started paying both mortgage and interest
- ESSER II application submitted, funds to be released, small amounts have already been received
- Statement of Financial Interest forms
Board members to complete online
Must be completed by April
- Audit hard copies have been received by Faye Pleso

Governance Committee

No meeting in January, meeting to be held in February

New business: For the good of the order

None

Public Comment

Tania (Parent) /Muso

- Shared information showing how and which masks reduce droplets (science fair)
testing 4 masks
- Which masks protect better (N95)
- Proof of the importance of wearing masks
- Request to review voluntary mask policy
Tom asked Muso to submit her project for board/school to review
- From chat:
Can we speak to students about Covid by bringing in speakers to teach directly to the students
Staff should wear masks to model and encourage students

The school should explain to parents that without masking the school runs the chance of additional closures and request parent cooperation to work in preventing illness and closures by voluntarily masking

Tom responded that we can research. Mandating staff to mask would require policy changes.

Meghan (Parent)

- Lack of explanation to parents about school closure and asking for transparency and DOH guidelines

Faye: DOH threshold is 5% which is 13 students in GMCS, school had 15 persons in the school testing positive

- If closures occur again will children be prepared with packets and/or computers?

Faye: We are constantly re-evaluating

Jason (Parent)

Comment:

- Packets work well, GMCS shouldn't change for closures
- Comment: packets for closures work well
- Ask for exploratory committee to see about expanding to 8th grade
- Inquired about the update on solar options to reduce propane costs

Faye responded that propane system can't be changed over. Still researching options and quotes

- Inquired about board member positions

Tom shared the status of board members

Adjourned at 7:16 pm