

APPROVED



Lowcountry Montessori School

Minutes

Board meeting

monthly board meeting

Date and Time

Wednesday October 22, 2025 at 4:00 PM

Location

Low country Montessori School

The mission of Lowcountry Montessori School is to provide an authentic Montessori education building a foundation for lifelong learning.

Directors Present

A. Chavarria, A. Walker (remote), A. Wright, G. Alexander, J. Poole, K. Lyon, L. Lyles, M. Thompson (remote), T. Brosnan

Directors Absent

None

Directors who left before the meeting adjourned

A. Walker

Guests Present

Bain Vaughn, Kelly Godwin, Kotina Forbes, Kristine Scott (remote), Omar Hawkins, Rose Beck, S. Fox (remote), Valerie Roming

I. Opening Items

A. Determination of Quorum

B. Call the Meeting to Order

G. Alexander called a meeting of the board of directors of Lowcountry Montessori School to order on Wednesday Oct 22, 2025 at 4:02 PM.

C. Reading of the Mission Statement

D. Statement of Compliance with FOIA

II. Consent Agenda

A. Approve minutes prior minutes

A. Wright made a motion to approve the minutes from Board meeting on 09-24-25.

T. Brosnan seconded the motion.

K. Lyon asked for clarification about open seat counts per grade. Counts given were not open seats, but seat counts per class or grade.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

III. Public Comment

A. Public comment period, limited to 3 minutes per person.

No Public Comment

IV. Director's Report

A. October Update

Presented by B. Vaughn- Report Attached

-T. Brosnan asked about the Preschool plan and cleaning staff changes

--B. Vaughn we thought there was state funding for all students-we do not receive funding for PreK 3 or PreK4, so need to figure out going into next year. Current full day students have payment for second half of day.

-M. Thompson this was discussed during Finance Committee, need to figure out what we are bringing in vs spending. Do we have PreK3 and 4 students here half days just as free child care and they do not have intention of continuing through the school.

-K.Lyons asks where do they go if they are not staying here, why are we not charging at all?

-M. Thompson not sure, we may have exit surveys, but not sure how often they are filled out.

-B. Vaughn we were talking about the exit surveys today, not just for Preschool, but also Middle and High School. If we don't know why they are leaving we can not fix it.

-M. Thompson have some of the numbers right now, but still need to gather more data, should have better information next month.

-G.Alexander asked about ABC Voucher Program

-B.Vaughn relay for S. Fox that in order to accept the ABC Voucher we need to be DSS approved

-S.Fox we did not charge for PreK because the program needs 3s and 4s, we weren't having success getting the needed diversity in the PreK 3, PreK4, and Kindergarten classrooms. We will only be able to get funding for the PreK 4 and up, but can not already be charging. It was decided to only charge for the second half of the day. Has spoken to DSS, to update contact information, was told we are still in the application process. Have been in the application process for years.

-K. Lyons mentioned that childcare is expensive and hard to find, so does not think it would be hard to fill the seats if we did charge.

-G.Alexander asked about an accident that happened during a field trip in Charleston

-B.Vaughn Ms. Kimberly was driving, had two students in the car, someone ran a stop sign and t-boned the car with Ms. Kimberly and the students. The students and Ms. Kimberly are fine, the car was able to be driven. Police were notified and report was done, Ms. Sara was immediately notified, parents were notified by Ms. Sara. Ms. Kimberly was able to drive the vehicle and the students back to the school.

-S.Fox on the cleaning staff issue-everyone has pretty much quit-2 new people that only speak Spanish. Possibly need to think about raises to keep people. The floor people are still the same. 15 per hour for first 3 months. 16 per hour after that. 18-20 per hour for management. New people now starting at 16 per hour. Was told by the new people that they were making 20 per hour at previous jobs. Has ads out to try to find new people.

-J. Poole Island News will be doing a press release about new director and S.Fox bio. Amber Hewitt will be contacting S. Fox for pictures.

Director's Report

October 21, 2025

1. Enrollment:

Current count is 395. Added 2 students since the last meeting.

- Primary - 86
- Lower EI - 89
- Upper EI - 86
- Middle School - 44
- High School - 90

2. Personnel:

- No changes at this time

3. Architect/New Building Update:

- AC in High School has been serviced, AC leak in MS
- 4. Conversations with District/Montessori trainers: Met with Superintendent Neely and are planning a meeting with him and some of his team with legislators and other charter school leaders. In conversation with a couple of Montessori trainers to do an on-site Cultural curriculum training for Lower and Upper EI.
- 5. Litigation pertaining to our school.
 - none
- 6. Student injuries:
 - Student hurt an ankle/foot at a volleyball game on 9/30/25.
 - Student sent home 10/1/25 - rolled ankle on the gym
- 7. LMS items pertaining to management
 - None at this time
- 8. Academic results/progress:
 - Bain will give us an update on the state testing in November as the results are still embargoed.
- 9. Highlights:
 - High School Camping Trip, Student displaying art at the State Fair, Outreach at the Lowcountry Pride event, Persimmons are perfect, Got the sponsorship banners up, School Pictures by Kelly, Citizen Science landscaped the Spanish Moss Trail sign area, Whole Kids Garden Grant, Champions of the Environment Grant, Volleyball Season, Cross Country runners beating their PRs, Clubs have begun (Math Club, Chess, ASL, etc.), Harbor Freight Gift Card for \$100
- 10. Management items for executive session
 - Yes
- 11. Fundraising Needs/Upcoming Events:
 - High School is doing a pizza fundraiser for their spring trips,
- 12. Non-recurring matters:
 - Charter Alliance Membership decision - info sent
 - Preschool plan
 - Cleaning Staff
 - Plan for saving for facilities
- 13. Main goals to be working on for the next months:
 1. Preschool planning for 26-27 school year
 2. Reworking our Report Cards due to state requirement
 3. Silent Auction / Harvest Feast

V. Committee Reports

A. Finance Report

Presented by J. Strickland and S. Andrikis

Audit was clean. One finding with the unassigned fund balance--unregistered general funds equity was less than 2 months expenditures, which is not surprising with the construction and the restricted cash use to fund construction.

Current year goals making sure our enrollment goals are met and that cash flow meets the operating expenditure expenses that we need.

Cash on hand a little behind, but expected a little bit of that waiting for Federal funding and grants. As the school year progresses that will catch up.

-S.Fox has submitted for funds, but with government furloughed, will not be able to get anywhere.

Days cash on hand 17.39, recommend 45-60, school goal around 30. Getting closer.

Moving on will be looking to see if there is any leftover grants or funds to tap into from the previous year.

Fiscal 26 grants look like they will be approved in January or February 2026 as long as the government opens back up in a timely manner.

45 day count was 395. Without PreK 3 and 4 342. State funding will be a little less in January than it is now. If there are any students on any wait list, encourage them to enroll.

S. Andrikis- Make sure to check Powerschool has all students in the categories that they belong in, so they get proper student weighting as of the category effective date, not the date we catch it.

Title One Funding in final stages of approval, fund not could be possibly in January.

District likes to see that the school is spending on instruction and we are tracking properly there.

Focus on conservation of cash and monitoring any variations of the budget.

-S.Fox numbers for 45 day count a little higher than the 5 day count, when do we get that funding.

J. Strickland that shift will be in January

Next meeting Nov 12th due to Board Meeting being on Nov 19th

B. Governance

-G. Alexander-do not have minutes due to system issue.

-A.Wright-Matt just as a reminder, you do have to submit minutes for the Finance Committee, all committees need minutes.

-M. Thompson-believe that everything was really just covered.

-A. Wright-but from a compliance standpoint we have to have them.

-L. Lyles-we have to be able to approve and publicly post them.

C. Facilities

No new business to discuss

VI. New Business

A. Vote on Recording Policy

A. Wright made a motion to approve policy on live streaming.

A. Chavarria seconded the motion.

During governance committee meeting we discussed new state recording and live streaming policy. Policy shared with us.

-A.Wright asked when the policy goes into effect.

-G. Alexander November 5th

-A.Wright will have to figure out the executive session

-K. Lyons one of the emails said that we don't have to live stream executive session.

-A. Wright maybe we go into another room for executive session?

-M. Thompson Sara and I have started some brainstorming on that, possibly have a Youtube channel?

-A.Wright maybe ask other people how they do it

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

J. Poole Aye

A. Wright Aye

G. Alexander Aye

A. Chavarria Aye

T. Brosnan Aye

M. Thompson Aye

A. Walker Absent

L. Lyles Aye

K. Lyon Aye

B. Discussion of Board on TRACK

-M.Thompson-Sara and I started about the recording aspect. The initial idea was submitting minutes, and now we are having a hard time submitting minutes and keeping up with that. Paying nearly 9k for a program we barely use. Is there maybe a way to have a Google drive that is accessible to the public instead. Template thing that we draw up that we use, without having the fee. Would like to put it out there on the block is this something we want to keep, maybe make a pro con list to decide as a group?

-K. Lyons is there a less expensive alternative?

-A. Wright I think we need some kind of software from a compliance standpoint, unless there is a dedicated person to make sure we are in compliance. I don't think any of us as volunteers have the time that would take.

-L.Lyles and the training that is on there.

-A. Wright yes there is significant training opportunities through Board on Track

-G. Alexander-disagree with Matt, great program especially with a Board that only sits for one or two years. It's a steady hand, don't need to worry about searching through someones Google drive to find something. A set program, when I post the agenda, if the secretary had her computer here, she could be entering minutes as we go. We probably do not utilize the program as often or as much as we should. Suggested to Matt that we have some training. Had training at the Board Retreat, but a lot of that came from Board on Track. Can do Director's Evaluation through Board on Track.

- A. Wright not opposed if there is something cheaper using that. But a Google drive would not be compliant, it would need to be on our website as well. But also just the keeping everyone honest, will not let us publish minutes unless we have entered a vote.
- G. Alexander they did try to raise the rates, but we pushed back and got the numbers to stay the same.
- A. Wright I was acting as secretary for a little while, would like to know what Lizzy's perspective as secretary is.
- L. Lyles I think it's fantastic, I'm not sure what the issues are with the minutes, but I have not had any issues entering them. The resources also are a reason to keep the program, all of the training I have gotten has been through Board on Track. The books that we were given were Board on Track books. The public charter training is tomorrow.
- J. Poole has everyone done their training?
All around discussion about training.
- G.Alexander we can discuss this at the next Governance Committee

C. Fundraising Committee

- J. Poole made a motion to approve the minutes from Fundraising Committee Meeting on 10-01-25.
- T. Brosnan seconded the motion.
- The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

- L. Lyles Aye
- M. Thompson Aye
- A. Walker Absent
- K. Lyon Aye
- A. Chavarria Aye
- T. Brosnan Aye
- J. Poole Aye
- G. Alexander Aye
- A. Wright Aye

A. Walker left.

A. Wright presented

- Cookbook (T.Brosnan-it is in production) should be end of November or beginning of December
- Movie Night November 6th at the Drive In when it gets Dark. Tell them you are with the school. We will be getting 10% of concessions. Entry will be \$5 per car.
- Holiday Shop 12-8 through 12-12 for kids to buy gifts
- Food Truck Nov 14th, should have 7 trucks with us receiving a portion of proceeds. Will have lawn games. PTO will be hosting a Freeze Tag event at same time.
- K. Lyons asked about bounce houses, A. Wright mentioned expense.
- Holiday Photos-Dec 6th Family and Santa and Mrs. Clause from 11-4
- Summer camp brought up by Valerie will be finalized discussed at next meeting

- M. Thompson Trunk or Treat about 12 cars signed up. Port Royal Library and possibly police or fire. Alonso went in to talk to the high school to get some of them to show up. PTO providing some candy for high school kids, everyone else need to bring their own.
- J. Poole asked about Bikers Against Bullies, they usually show up and there are a lot of them. Jen Marlowe usually brings them in.
- G. Alexander 10-26 Lizzy and I will be at the Port Royal Trunk or Treat 10-28 at 4:15 pm District has signing of the Military Student Bill
- Next meeting Nov 5 at 4pm

VII. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 5:16 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

L. Lyles

K. Lyon made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

A. Wright seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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|--------------|--------|
| T. Brosnan | Aye |
| J. Poole | Aye |
| M. Thompson | Aye |
| A. Walker | Absent |
| G. Alexander | Aye |
| A. Wright | Aye |
| K. Lyon | Aye |
| A. Chavarria | Aye |
| L. Lyles | Aye |

Documents used during the meeting

- 2025.09.30 LMS Financial Packet.pdf
- Livestreaming Board Meetings Policy.docx
- 2025_10_01_fundraising_committee_meeting_minutes.pdf