



Lowcountry Montessori School

Minutes

Board meeting

monthly board meeting

Date and Time

Thursday May 28, 2026 at 4:30 PM

Location

Lowcountry Montessori School

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

Directors Present

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

Directors Absent

A. Chavarria, K. Lyon

Directors who left before the meeting adjourned

M. Thompson

Guests Present

A.Desylva, A.Whittaker, B. Shaffer (remote), B.Lara, C. Hunt, C.Creamer (remote), H.Foster, J.Marlow, K.Ingrahm, L.Powell, M. Watkins, R.Beck, S. Fox, V.Roming, W.Cale

I. Opening Items

A. Call the Meeting to Order

G. Alexander called a meeting of the board of directors of Lowcountry Montessori School to order on Thursday May 28, 2026 at 4:32 PM.

B. Determination of Quorum

C. Reading of the Mission Statement

D. Approval of Agenda

A. Wright made a motion to amend the agenda.

J. Poole seconded the motion.

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

A. Wright made a motion to amend VI. A-vote on approving fundraiser committee minutes to include dates 4-27-26, 5-11-26, and 5-20-26.

L. Lyles seconded the motion.

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

M. Thompson made a motion to add vote for S.Fox to look for a line of credit.

L. Lyles seconded the motion.

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

L. Lyles made a motion to amend IV. D-vote on approving Finance Committee minutes to include dates 4-22-26 and 5-20-26.

A. Wright seconded the motion.

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

A. Wright made a motion to to move IV B 1 swearing in of new board members to I F.

J. Poole seconded the motion.

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

Board Election winners for the 7-1-26 to 6-30-28 term is Omar Hawkins and Abbie Whittaker.

Swearing in of new Board member Abbie Whittaker for term 7-1-26 to 6-30-28.

E. Statement of Compliance with FOIA

II. Consent Agenda

A. Approve minutes prior minutes

A. Wright made a motion to approve the minutes from Special board meeting on 05-18-26.

J. Poole seconded the motion.

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

III. Public Comment

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

Public Comment:

J. Harlow

V. Roming.

IV. Committee Reports

A. Finance Report

Presented by J. Strickland Financial Report Attached

3.2mil Revenue

4.7mil Expense

(450k) without construction

Unreserved Cash 323k

289k in money market account-Restricted- Will be reaching out to USDA to see how much we need as a debt service reserve

22.14 Days Cash On Hand

Revenue Breakdown:

Has been working with the school to get Federal Funds just shy of 9300, either in Cash or accrued based on submission, with more in the pipeline

State Funds 3.7 million with a couple of EIA grants in there as well

Local Revenue at 390k driver of that being pupil fees

Expenses 2.4 million of the 4.7million was instructional spending- Ratio 58.1% which is good, with the district liking higher than 51%

Net Income is improving-April was a positive net income month, so swinging back in the right direction.

Still watching the timing of State and Federal Distributions-State Funding for may will hit tomorrow. Posted online the figure that was projected for the May and June funding was between 4300 and 4350 per weighted pupil. Actual number was 4351.92 so May and June funding was better than anticipated.

Upcoming Focus

FY 26-27 Budget- In Progress

Focus on Federal Claim Submissions

Seeing how school can improve Days Cash On Hand Balance

M. Thompson going back to numbers with and without construction, thought the numbers with construction was 58k, but looks to be 30k

J. Strickland it was there was an amount on the balance sheet 25k had already been accounted for as an expense on the books, so was able to be pulled from the books

G. Alexander what was the 45 day count

J. Strickland 45 day or 135?

G. Alexander Both

J. Strickland 135 ADM 345.17(average daily membership-takes into account students not in desks)

45 ADM 337.95

S. Fox remind us what the per pupil weight was before?

J. Strickland for April the SC Public Charter District found a discrepancy so around 4360. We knew it was going to dip. SC Public Charter District pointed out something that allowed the 45 day funding to be higher, but that has now been caught up.

M. Thompson can we find out what the actual enrollment numbers were all throughout last year, and see what the discrepancy is? Where the enrollment numbers are versus the ADM

J. Strickland what do you mean discrepancy?

M. Thompson for the 135 day count actual enrollment numbers were 357 and ADM 345.17, and that is a pretty big swing.

J. Strickland this is how it has historically been funded not sure it really is a swing, the budget is based on the ADM

M. Thompson would still like to see the numbers

S. Fox also has to do with attendance, which has been an issue, with Sara and Wendy being new, didn't really have a system in place. Working on correcting the issue for next year.

B. Governance

A. Wright made a motion to approve the minutes from Governance Meeting on 05-07-26.

J. Poole seconded the motion.

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

A. Wright made a motion to appoint Angela Wright to the Board for term 7-1-26 to 6-30-28.

M. Thompson seconded the motion.

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

M. Thompson made a motion to appoint Lizzy Lyles to the Board for term 7-1-26 to 6-30-28.

T. Brosnan seconded the motion.

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

L. Lyles made a motion to nominate Tess Brosnan for 7-1-26 to 6-30-27 Board Chair.

A. Wright seconded the motion.

The motion did not carry.

M. Thompson made a motion to appoint Greg Alexander for 7-1-26 to 6-30-27 for Board Chair.

T. Brosnan seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

A. Walker Aye

G. Alexander Abstain

J. Poole No

T. Brosnan Aye

A. Chavarria Absent

L. Lyles Aye

K. Lyon Absent

M. Thompson Aye

A. Wright Aye

A. Wright made a motion to appoint Tess Brosnan for 7-1-26 to 6-30-27 for Board Vice Chair.

L. Lyles seconded the motion.

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

A. Wright made a motion to appoint Matt Thompsan for 7-1-26 to 6-30-27 for Board Treasurer.

J. Poole seconded the motion.

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

A. Wright made a motion to appoint Lizzy Lyles for 7-1-26 to 6-30-27 Board Secretary.

J. Poole seconded the motion.

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

C. Credit Line Approval

L. Lyles made a motion to apply for credit line.

T. Brosnan seconded the motion.

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

D. Vote on Finance Committee report

A. Wright made a motion to approve the minutes from Finance Committee on 04-22-26.

J. Poole seconded the motion.

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

A. Wright made a motion to approve the minutes from Finance Committee on 05-20-26.

J. Poole seconded the motion.

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

V. Director's Report

A. May Update

Presented by S. Fox- Report attached

Student count 402, have lost one student each in 4th, 5th, 7th, 9th, and 12th grades. 19 students will be graduating this week.

Have some state testing results, but they are embargoed and we can not share them yet. Did not have time to get with Baid for the EOC results, but Tobias' Algebra 1 was fantastic and U. S. History went up significantly from the previous semester.

J. Poole how many positions need to be filled?

S. Fox have filled or am in talks to fill all high school and lower elementary positions, still working on middle school

L. Lyles what is Montessori secondary

S. Fox middle school and high school

G. Alexander you said there are issues with delinquency/ truancy?

S. Fox has been an ongoing issue haven't had a great system for dealing with it. When I got the position and asked, was told in the past have been told to refer the families to family court if they are not coming. There is no clear path for us to do that. BCSD has a path, the SCPCD said it is different for everyone, and recommended calling Bridges to see what they do, that they have a really good system. Wendy and I went and met with them; they shared their process and the tools that they use. The guidance we have been giving is that our handbook has to state what our policy will be and we need to stick with the handbook. One of the things that process includes is just being on top of it, at three days we can reach out and start conversations, but if there are notes that come in later, we have to go back and readjust. If they are out 3 days in a row, they are truant, if they are out more than 10 days in a year, they are habitually truant.

J. Poole is that consecutive?

S. Fox the 10 days consecutive we can drop them, but we have some kids out 50 plus days. The other thing we were told we can do and talking to Officer Doug he also recommended calling DCFS, which we have done. But we also have to have a system in place where we can have our own internal hearings to have them removed and go to their zoned schools, if they have provided transportation, they may have more success making it to school.

A. Wright do we need to revise the handbook?

S. Fox we will, that is something we have to look at over summer and then have it approved. That is something we are looking at and the dress code.

G. Alexander do you know on average how many kids last year were truant?

S. Fox I don't know, I don't know that it was accurately kept track of last year, I don't know that some of the information was being properly entered.

G. Alexander I'm sorry when I said last year I meant this year.

S. Fox I had maybe had 10 meetings with people; there are some people that are being retained due to it.

G. Alexander we are not disenrolling the students, so they are counted against our ADM, so that is hurting us and that is some housekeeping that we can do.

G. Alexander are kids required to pay for summer school?

S. Fox yes for summer school. Read to Succeed camps get state funding.

G. Alexander going back to truancy, this is probably one reason that the district wants us to only have students in the county, is because reaching out to do the different police districts might be a problem.

S. Fox Officer Doug has done home visits, but yes, they were not out of our zone.

G. Alexander would like to commend you (S. Fox) and Ms. Rose on the student counts, we know it isn't easy. And would like to thank all the teachers, we appreciate everything that you do.

B. Schafer can only share the test schools next year when the embargo has been lifted, but Bain will send you the IReady scores that can be shared.

B. Maintenance report

Presented by M. Watkins

Report Attached

Gym Floor:

J. Poole are you saying the striping or the black flooring? Do we have any kind of warranty on that?

M. Watkins we have a 1-year warranty. But we were told that because the flooring was not done properly that it will not last. We were supposed to have cushion underneath, but the pricing was not in the budget.

Custodial Staff:

As of now have two staff, they are fantastic and looking forward to being here long term. Do need on more replacement so we have one team member for each building.

Floor and trash crew we are down to one person, no way to move to a Janitorial Company this year or next year. Goal was to bring on Cameron who previously worked here, to help take over some of the things that I am doing and then also to help with and manage the night team.

Decided to not wax the floor this year, to stay in the budget.

G. Alexander what would be the big cost for that?

M. Watkins material and labor, because it is such a big job we usually give a little bonus. My understanding is that we are significantly cutting the maintenance and repairs budget in the next year. With the new building no longer being in warranty and things coming up, we are trying to get creative to stay within the budget.

J. Poole how many do you have on your team and how many would you like on your team?

M. Watkins I have three people, two cleaners who clean the bathrooms, and one guy doing all the floors and trash.

Budget:

Looks like it is over budget but should be under budget with loss of staff. We did not put the added expense for the new buildings into this current budget.

G. Alexander you and Natasha are not custodial?

M. Watkins my job title is Maintenance and Facilities Admin, I manage all the facilities and all that goes into that, the new build, and compliance issues, drills, inspections, the DSS stuff, DHEC. Any facility regulations, ADA Compliance.

G. Alexander that's what Natasha is your assistant, she does that stuff too?

M. Watkins-Natasha got hired on as a custodian, but she was a workhorse, so I trained her from the bottom up. She kind of took over the gardens with Samantha Campbell left. So she manages the outside, while I have the inside. Although there is a lot of overlap. Initially I was training her to take over my job.

J. Poole is there any more responsibilities that we can put on to the classrooms?

A. Wright the do RT, restoring the environment, so they all have their own tasks.

M. Watkins that is a yes and no, they can't really handle the chemicals.

S. Fox we would like for the classrooms to have the RT really clean the classrooms, some are more successful than others.

M. Watkins there are some things that we do not do, they are the class responsibilities. Wiping down the tables, shelves, picking things up off floors. Have been trying to create some kind of accountability, but that takes work too. We have to create forms, take pictures, making a binder, it becomes more work. We have to hold people accountable, record that we are having the conversations, follow up.

Acoustic Panels:

Not doing this year, do not think we can put it into the budget for this year. Maybe next year.

Book Fair:

We did very well at our Bookfair! Our gross sales came in at \$6,671.13. We were additionally awarded \$200 in scholastic dollars and used \$282.68 for books for students and teachers. We received an additional \$200 in scholastic dollars for bonus rewards and were able to purchase books needed for our summer camp reading program. Our total cash profits after all funds spent were \$1,498.

Upcoming Expenses:

Budget for maintenance and repairs went from 60k to 10k for FY 26-27. Because in repairs and maintenance we have only spent maybe 12k, that is not an accurate figure because things were misplaced with where they should have gone. I think that needs to be figured out before we shrink that down.

The new building is no longer under warranty.

Had some plumbing issues in the new building, begged and they did come out and do the repairs for free.

Water heaters, have one that is not functioning correctly and that is still under warranty, so they are supposed to come and repair it. That warranty is a parts only warranty, does not include labor.

The new buildings are more complex than the older buildings, with the commercial equipment, so we have to have someone who can repair the commercial equipment.

So, these are all things that concern me over the upcoming budget.

J. Poole that is a 50k reduction?

M. Watkins my budget is now around 10k

T. Brosnan is it allocated in other areas of the budget?

M. Watkins I think they shifted some of it to other places that they needed it. My understanding after we sat down with the accountant there should be a percentage breakdown for the budget. 65% for instructional, 20% operations and maintenance, 20% for something else that I can't remember right now, and 5% for reserves. My budget has always been way lower than the 20% more like 10% range. Projected budget that I feel comfortable with is 11.something of the budget, but that was before I realized they cut some of the other stuff out. They said because we did so well, that my budget was going to have to absorb the deficit.

My goal for this year is really working on how to allocate the funds and clean that up. Give you a clearer picture of where those dollars are going.

We have a few things that will need to be budgeted for. We will need to implement a maintenance plan for the culinary kitchen (servicing equipment, hoods, etc.). I have met with a

company that does most commercial kitchens in the area including other schools, Beaufort Memorial, and most of the local restaurants. He basically has a monopoly on the area, as there is very few people who do service on commercial equipment. He is very reasonable, and has a great reputation.

Annual expenses - Additional fire sprinklers and inspections, backflow tests, new build maintenance fund, new build cleaning/maintenance and repair expenses, etc.

We had a leak in the ceiling in one of the bathrooms in the high school building. This was out of warranty, but I was able to get the plumbing company who was contracted for that whole new building to come and do the repair along with another sink repair free of charge. They were willing to help us out as a school. There is some drywall damage that needs to be repaired, along with a few other areas that need patching around campus. There is a faucet leaking in the main janitors' sink that has caused drywall damage. That will need to be repaired, as it has begun to mold, and the FRP wall backing will need to be installed to prevent future water damage.

We just found a crack in one of the windows in the new high school . This will not be covered under warranty.

Projected added expenses for 2026-2027 fiscal year:

Hood Cleaning

Termite Bond--waiting on quote

Additional service contract for hvac in new buildings

Additional contract for monitoring fire systems

Sprinklers

Commercial equipment maintenance-we have to be one a plan once a year

Repairs and Maintenance budget

Custodial Budget

12% projected Dominion increase

Breakdown of mechanical equipment of 10 years

Working to create revenue. Have reached out to Kathleen Brady who is over all of the DHEC inspections, she is aware we are going to be renting out the kitchen. Have one guy ready to go, one person who is currently using it. She is currently volunteering for it but will be paying in the fall.

The Hub is more difficult, but we Nicole is interested in renting it out to teach Yoga. Looking into things like that, it opens up extra revenue sources for the teachers, showcases the school, and brings in the rental fees for the school.

J. Poole asked about the sponsorship program, has not seen anything about that yet, and has not seen any mention of that in the budget.

S. Fox that stuff hasn't gone out yet. It is on the budget under Local Income.

J. Poole are you contacting everyone who has a banner out there to see if they want to do it again?

S. Fox yes, that is something that Amy might help me with, it has been something that she has done. We have the design for the new shirt.

M. Watkins something I have thought about in the past, we could create a running document for things that they would like to see donated to their classrooms, broken down by category, that people would be willing to donate/sponsor. The problem would be we do not have storage space, and would not have the space to just do dump donations. Would need to be something that would go out to families, but would need approval before brought in. Looking to start a yearlong campaign, like for the people that are already helping, to be able to come in and see how they are helping. Maybe a dinner during the summer to show how they are helping and show other ways that people can help out with the kids that are not always monetary.

J. Poole sounds like we need to rework the budget.

M. Watkins I think we just need to be mindful of where we cut and stay within it. Be mindful of the fact that we could incur some major expenses. Like we have not replaced any of the fridges in the 10 years, which may be that we just do without it for a time.

M. Thompson left.

VI. New Business

A. Fundraising Committee

J. Poole made a motion to approve the minutes from Fundraising Committee Meeting on 04-27-26.

A. Wright seconded the motion.

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

J. Poole made a motion to approve the minutes from Fundraising Meeting: Spring Fling Final Planning on 05-11-26.

A. Wright seconded the motion.

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

J. Poole made a motion to approve the minutes from Fundraising Committee: Spring Fling Review on 05-20-26.

A. Wright seconded the motion.

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

Presented by A. Wright

We had an amazing Spring Fling, no solid numbers, but believe it was around three thousand. We were very grateful for Martha and Rose, they did a lot of amazing things for us.

B. First reading on the budget

A. Wright made a motion to approve the first reading of the budget with the understanding that we have more due diligence to do.

J. Poole seconded the motion.

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

C. Board Members

A. Wright would like to propose that when the new board members come on that we have a mandatory meeting. To get to know each other better, to go over board structure, appropriate behaviors.

G. Alexander parliamentary rules. Do you have a date for it?

A. Wright I am not sure, when did we do it last year?

T. Brosnan I think it was the end of May.

A. Wright it was May 23 and 24. Maybe sometime before school starts.

G. Alexander there is state law that passed, and they emphasized Charter School Boards, we **MUST** have ethics and board training, believe it is with a year. It is important to attend training, so as board members we know and understand our roles. An example I like to use is we are not the manager, we don't come out and tell people to wash the floors, we Govern, we are the rule makers. It is so important that we understand what we should be doing, and our role in the school.

S. Fox one of the things we are trying to work into the budget is the Public Charter School Alliance, it is so helpful and will help cover the board trainings.

G. Alexander asked J. Poole if she had anything to add or discuss?

J. Poole stated no

G. Alexander asked T. Brosnan if she had anything she would like to add or discuss?

T. Brosnan stated that she is excited

G. Alexander asked if A. Walker had anything to add or discuss?

A. Walker stated no

G. Alexander asked L. Lyles if she had anything to add or discuss?

L. Lyles asked if the ethics and board training are separate classes or the same.

G. Alexander said that was how he read it, and he would let us know.

VII. Executive Session

A. Executive Session

A. Wright made a motion to go into executive session for a personal matter.

J. Poole seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

A. Chavarria Absent

A. Walker Aye

M. Thompson Absent

L. Lyles Aye

A. Wright Aye

T. Brosnan Aye

G. Alexander Aye

K. Lyon Absent

J. Poole Aye

J. Poole made a motion to leave executive session.

A. Wright seconded the motion.

Nothing from executive session needs to be voted on

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

Roll Call

L. Lyles Aye

J. Poole Aye

A. Wright Aye

G. Alexander Aye

K. Lyon Absent

M. Thompson Absent

A. Walker Aye

T. Brosnan Aye

A. Chavarria Absent

VIII. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

A. Wright made a motion to adjourn meeting.

J. Poole seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

A. Wright Aye

A. Walker Aye

Roll Call

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

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:34 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
L. Lyles

Documents used during the meeting

- 2026.04.30 LMS Financial Packet.pdf
- Director's Report to Board March 2026.docx
- FY27 LMS Budget Draft v2.pdf