



Sankofa Montessori

Minutes

Full Board Meeting

Date and Time

Wednesday August 30, 2023 at 6:30 PM

Location

Please go to zoom.com and join meeting.

ID to join: 601 495 1069

Through a culturally responsive, child and family-centered Montessori education, Sankofa Montessori ensures that all of our students develop the knowledge, skill, and agency to have a life of purpose.

Directors Present

A. Allen-Thames (remote), A. Grant (remote), A. Nash (remote), E. Moore (remote), F. Sheffield (remote), G. Edward (remote), K. Karacalidis (remote)

Directors Absent

K. Williams

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

K. Karacalidis called a meeting of the board of directors of Sankofa Montessori to order on Wednesday Aug 30, 2023 at 6:33 PM.

C. Approve Minutes

E. Moore made a motion to approve the minutes from Full Board Meeting on 07-26-23.

A. Nash seconded the motion.

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

II. Committee Updates

A. Finance Committee

We will not be audited for this finance year.

- \$56K in the negative.
- Due to not knowing all potential expenses in FY23 and CSP funding not coming in when expected
- Opportunity to learn lessons from this year and need to keep an eye on things in anticipation of next year

Budget overview for FY24 v. Forecast

Anticipate \$221,000 increase to the approved budget.

Based on addition of local, state and federal sources and increased expenses.

Operating income of \$221,000

Ending fund balance of 19.1%--goal is 20% but that is difficult to reach the 1st year

Reviewing SCSC Dashboard regarding metrics for financial health of school.

- We are currently at a score of 80, which is comfortable but needs improvement
- Areas that need improvement are 1)unrestricted days cash (looking 15 days cash on hand for January) and 2)efficiency margin (relates to debt and expenses)
- Anticipate these areas improving--some impact from upfront expenses due to the delay in opening the facilities and construction costs

Growing Dashboard--

GEERS II Summary --2 reimbursements were approved by and are forecasted to receive in August

\$20,285 for fencing

\$199K + for playground structure

Enrollment has decreased--some loss through attrition and some because we are in a transient area

Not sustainable to maintain afterschool program--options have been discussed with families including the onsite daycare facility; would need additional staff to maintain program effectively and budget does not support adding staff for that purpose.

Lunch/Breakfast for families--not at 100%; Sankofa wanted to cover this expense but financially not able to do that at this time based on decrease in enrollment and hits to the budget

Did not pay rent in July and August to offset unexpected expenses, will increase payment in October and November to cover costs

Per Kim, budget outlined by Alfie is based on the enrollment at the time. Numbers will shift based on decreased enrollment. Anticipate decreases in enrollment. This means that dashboard will also shift with that decrease.

III. Executive Director's Corner

A. Recruitment and Enrollment

142 kids on roster. At end of week 130

Lost more families after 2nd week due to building not being ready.

Enrollment currently at 107. Consistent everyday at this point.

Count day is Oct 5. State looking at who has been enrolled for 10 days prior to count day.

Would need to get to 132 at least 2 weeks before that date. Not confident that we can meet that goal before count day, but will be there by March 2024.

Will need to close classrooms, because decrease in enrollment will cause \$300K shortfall. Would need to reduce personnel. Would mean closing one classroom on each level. Cutting personnel saves \$200K.

Still enrolling. Now doing prospective family tours to try to increase enrollment. Most charters are under enrolled right now, but we are also currently renting our facilities and working towards ownership of the building.

Previously guaranteed grant from CSP now competitive. Every charter school used to get the funds but no longer guaranteed. Grant previously up to \$1 million.

Is it possible to reach out to families that left due to concern about building not being ready?

- Sarah and team have a exit survey and ask whether families want to be kept in the loop. Some families said they did not want to be contacted, others wanted to know so they are still on the email list and have been contacted.

Meeting with parents on Sept. 29--Errika and Andrea willing to be a part as past and present Montessori families

Errika suggested inviting potential parents at that time.

B. First Month

Sarah thanked Errika, Kim and Andrea for additional support during the first 2 weeks of school.

Team able to pivot really well and be flexible with the situation.

Learning is happening and parents are saying great things about the school.

Anticipate normalization to occur in February.

Testing

- Almost done with Minn. test
- Almost done with Mont.
- Grant money available in September
- Most kids in the 10th percentile for executive (Minn.)
- 60% of the kids are not on grade level for reading

C. New Positions and Hiring Status

Not hiring a special education teacher right now, but a special education paraprofessional is needed. Will help with keep classroom disruption to a minimum and get all students the assistance they need.

Looking at approximately 25% of enrollment having special needs

This is based on the current population and anticipated with both identified and unidentified students who need to be evaluated.

Unidentified students will need to go through MTS evaluation so that Sankofa can get the funds to provide support.

D. Facilities Update

Students are in the building!

Construction team still has some punch items to complete

Phase II--2nd level to have classrooms ready for next Fall

Playground area should be completed by end of next week.

Water bill question--received a recent bill for \$2400 when it is usually \$500. Trying to determine what caused the increase and if we can get a reduction

Sept. 5--State coming to do walkthrough as part of monitoring process

E. Support

Board members should come by the school and visit.

IV. 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 7:45 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
K. Karacalidis