APPROVED

# Sankofa Montessori

# Minutes

## Full Board Meeting

**Date and Time**
Wednesday October 25, 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), F. Sheffield (remote), G. Edward (remote), K. Karacalidis (remote), K. Williams (remote)

**Directors Absent**
E. Moore

**Ex Officio Members Present**
S. Harvey (remote)

**Guests Present**

Adrian Jones (parent) (remote), Assata Hatch (remote), Ingel Jackson (remote), Michelle Alleyne (remote), Rhushanda Barnes (remote), Ricquel Coggins (remote), Zakiya Bullock (remote)

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## 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 Oct 25, 2023 at 6:34 PM.

### C. Approve Minutes

Correction to Finance Committee report:  48 days cash on hand should be 45 days on hand.
A. Allen-Thames made a motion to approve the minutes from Full Board Meeting on 09-27-23.
G. Edward seconded the motion.
Minutes approved provided that amendment is made to Finance report change 48 days cash on hand to 45 days.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

## II. Committee Updates

### A. Finance Committee

September financial overview:
$646,836 received

$195, 174 in expenses
$85,549 salaries
24,284 employee benefits
26,047 professional services
26, 407 building services
51,978 for supplies
6, 324 in uncategorized expenses

$451, 662 positive cash flow for September

Ending balance was $779,937

On track to end June 2024 with $41, 662 of cash in the operating account.  Decrease of $191, 186 from August's projections due to a cut of $417, 119 from State funding.
Expected to receive $84, 209 from Federal funding

Current projection show lowest balance will be in May at $120, 176

Cash on hand range is 28-90 days between October 2023 and June 2024
Cash on hand will be 80 days in October, but drop to 5 days in June 2024
Ideal cash on hand is 45 days.

We will be graded based on financial viability in the coming months.

Need to be mindful to maintain cash on hand at 45 days or more.

**B. Academic Committee Meeting Update**

MAP Assessment-reading/language arts and math
Completed
50th percentile is national average
Reading/language arts: 86/90 students tested-schoolwide average was 48th percentile
K: 54th percentile
1st: 23rd percentile
2nd: 29th percentile
Math: Schoolwide average 42nd percentile (78/90 students tested)
K: 64th percentile
1st: 29th percentile
2nd: 28th percentile

How have numbers shifted since enrollment shifted after testing? Per Sarah, numbers reflect current enrollment based on timing of testing. Delay in giving MAP Assessment, finished giving in mid-October.

MEFS and MMRP testing (looks at language and math skills)
MEFS-schoolwide average 31st percentile
MMRP-schoolwide average 37th percentile

MAP looks at individual levels so will provide a better picture of student progress over time. Testing again in Spring

6 suspensions: 2-Kindergaten; 4-1st/2nd
Most behavior related

Evaluations for Special Education:
12 identified for academic, and 1 for behavior based on MTSS
Some students need to evaluated to renew IEPs
New special education teacher has been hired

Need for school counselor--not able to do at this time; discussed contracting with a psychologist if needed in the future.
Possibility of non-profits to help bridge the gap to provide counseling
Foundations that currently support educational institutions

School nurse
Contracted with a company to provide services
Previous nurse left, but new nurses coming in
Some students do not have a medical home (or primary care physician)
If student does not have a physician may be difficult to identify needs so discussed using school nurse to help establish medical homes for families in the community

Attendance has been consistent
5 new students enrolling in October
48-Kindergarten
30-1st
16-2nd

Community Events
Garden Day
Fall Festival

Question about growth of Special Education Department
Began with 1 Special Education Director (Rhushanda Barnes)
During enrollment learned that more students were entering with IEPs so needed additional teaching staff
Added new teacher recently
After school began learned that more students enrolled with IEPs than anticipated
Added paraprofessional
Added a 1 on 1 para
Expanded speech services team
School psychologist for evaluations
Occupational therapist
Began with team of 1 to 8 to make sure students get services they need

## C. Governance Committee Meeting Update

A. Nash made a motion to Engage with FRC to serve as FRC to serve as Sankofa's project manager in completing the required phases of the construction project and also assist with re-financing in the future.
F. Sheffield seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Question regarding interest from January-March v. having 2 closings (difference in options)
Closing fees of about $150K and approx. same amount for 2nd closing (option 2)
Option 1: 1 closing $200K

Option 1: Remain with CSDC (current lender) until the architectural drawings are complete and we've chosen a contractor, so we have one closing to buy them out and also have the freedom to choose the companies we'd like to contract without having a 30-day solicit interest.

- no time differential-- will not need to do 30 day posting with the state (added to timeline)
- Eliminates need for 2nd closing

Option 2: Re-finance now and payoff CSDC. We'll be required to solicit interest for companies for 30 days when choosing both the architect and contractor, which will add days to the current schedule. Lastly, once those entities are chosen and we have the permitted contract documents, we'll close for a second time then begin construction once school is out.

- could mean delayed opening again this year; could result in additional expenses (similar to this year) if we need to make arrangements for students while facilities are under construction
- Delayed opening of facilities cost approximately $70,000 this year.

Looking at the interest that we would pay on the current loan January-March, re-financing now will not save us money if we run into a similar situation with delayed opening of facilities

If we move forward with FRC (Option 1), then we will need to have them update the timeline

**D. GEERS II Subgrant Adjustment**

A. Allen-Thames made a motion to for the Board to accept the increase in GEERS II Start Up Grant funding of $11,275.38 and accept the terms discussed.
A. Grant seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
Sarah reminded us of the uses of the GEERs grant and what we have done with the funds in the past.
Federal grant that SCSC received under Gov. Kemp
Schools could apply for up to $300,000--we received $270,000
Used those funds to cover pre-opening costs--paid for Montessori furniture & materials, playground and fencing

New opportunity to apply for additional funds (Grant amendment)
$11, 275.38 granted--will be spent to reimburse for items already purchased (furniture & fencing)

Terms of the GEERS Grant: The Grantee shall complete any other reports as requested by SCSF and cooperate and assist the State in complying with any and all federal tracking and reporting requirements GEER II Start-up Grant of $$ 11,275.38 - the purpose of this grant is to support the opening Sankofa Montessori. This grant is a subgrant award from the State Charter School Foundation of Georgia's federal GEER II grant awarded by the Office of Governor Brian Kemp. The conditions of this grant are as follows: Federal grant requirements apply to this grant: • Paid on an encumbrance/reimbursement basis. All expenses must be budgeted & approved in advance. • Records must be maintained, including quotes, receipts, invoices, purchase orders, proof of payment, evidence, personnel/payroll records, student rosters, etc. • Grant payments & expenditures must be coded properly in accounting system. Inventory of items must be maintained based on inventory policy & procedures (equipment & pilferable items).

## III. Executive Director's Corner

### A. Recruitment and Enrollment

Enrollment covered in Academic Committee summary

Application will go up this next week. Right now a Google doc is up, but the live application will replace that.

Will share the updated policies with Governance at November meeting to get comments and then will be voted on at the November full board meeting.

2 new students began last week per Assata. No new students this week.

### B. Support

Continued support for special education. Will continue to need financial support to meet needs and determine where money can be moved from in the budget and/or finding resources to supplement.
Looking at what non-profits, foundations and grants are available

Financial support in general continues to be needed.

### C. Professional Development

Current needs are for coaching for teachers and assistants.

3 teachers are enrolled in the Libertas training and receiving support through that.

Bringing on a consultant to bridge the gap between Montessori and the charter school format.

Looking to add someone to leadership team who's sole job is dealing with discipline and student behavior.
Currently being split across the team and would be helpful to have one person own that role.

**D. Facilities Update**

FRC provided updated schedule for Phase 2 and master planning with rest of the school

Met with Rebecca from CSDC--has some options for assisting with financing and maybe an option to re-finance with them for a lower interest rate

Looked at punch list items--largest one is heat for building; reaching out to design team and the contractor; was this an item missed on install and what are the options to get heat to the building

Most important thing is to get a master plan in place--needed to know max projected in enrollment
Architect needs to know max enrollment numbers to determine if we will only be in current building or if we need to renovate other structures on campus
Looking at 5-10 year master plan so that plan is in place so there is consistency as members roll off the Board
Numbers provided to team, but need additional information from Sarah about number of classrooms needed for each grade level (classroom mixes)

Will be meeting on a weekly basis.

In a better position than this time last year. Only need 2nd floor renovated to accommodate new students next year.
Will be a replication of 1st floor. 2nd floor renovation will keep us through years 3 and 4.

Sanctuary renovation question
This renovation exceeded our capacity for this opening year
Looking at what needs to be done with this building in the master plan
Could demo and build something new or if more feasible to renovate existing structure

Might be more cost-effective to demo

Daycare- contract signed for 3 years before we purchased. Sarah will have to decide at end of term if contract will be renewed or if we will take over building.

### E. Holiday Party

Holiday Party for staff
20 people on staff--possibility of +1
Preference for off-campus party

Possible date-Dec. 13

Location? Club house, restaurant, other location options (would need sponsorship)
Andrea has a contact for a location in Midtown-she will check into that
Krystal's office might also be an option-she will contact her office's Head of Operations

Catering?
Kim and Andrea will tap into their contacts

Decorations? TBD

Sponsors and/or Board member funded

## 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 7:42 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
K. Karacalidis
K. Williams made a motion to Adjourn.
G. Edward seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

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Kim opened floor for public comment. No comments made.