

APPROVED



Sankofa Montessori

Minutes

Full Board Meeting

Date and Time

Wednesday July 24, 2024 at 6:30 PM

Location

Meeting ID: 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. Grant (remote), A. Nash (remote), E. Moore (remote), F. Sheffield (remote), G. Edward (remote), K. Karacalidis (remote)

Directors Absent

A. Allen-Thames, K. Williams

Ex Officio Members Present

S. Harvey (remote)

Non Voting Members Present

S. Harvey (remote)

Guests Present

A. Sivert (remote), Apryl Forte (remote), Guadalupe (not given full name) (remote), Jasmine See (remote), Jessica McCrary (remote), Julian Williams (remote), Krista Harrell (remote), Natondra Powell (remote), Rhushanda Barnes (remote), Robbie Phillips (remote), Yolanda Galimore (remote)

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 Jul 24, 2024 at 6:32 PM.

C. Approve Minutes

F. Sheffield made a motion to approve the minutes from Full Board Meeting on 06-26-24.

A. Grant seconded the motion.

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

II. Academic Excellence

A. Committee Meeting Highlights

Errika yielded floor to Sarah

Growth scores for Sankofa

- Below academic bar we wanted

- Took summer to assess gaps-leadership team

- Parents also asking for academic rigor

 - Academic Vision-bridge standard based instruction with a Montessori approach

 - Not teaching the standards resulted in not meeting standards

 - Changing approach to make sure that students meet and exceed standards

 - Want to make sure that charter is secure by taking this new approach

Next step is to roll out the new approach to families

- Newsletters will now be coming once a month, instead of weekly

- August Newsletter will provide an overview, and introduce new staff

Gregory: in what areas did we excel? Sarah can follow up after the meeting, and reshare the slide deck

Julianna Williams: Clarifying whether students came in at 40% and the national average was 50%?

Sarah: Percentage of growth national average is 50% but Sankofa set goal of 60%. However, the national average went down to COVID. Adjusting to make sure that Sankofa meets or exceeds percentage of growth

Kim: Does budget meet needs for attaining goals?

Sarah: Will need to assess once we get into school and know what the student body will look like in terms of needs such as special needs. Will come back to the Board with those numbers and address any possible budget shortcomings.

III. Finance

A. Committee Meeting Highlights

New back office provider

Still in conversation with EdTec--need them to complete data for upcoming audit

Leader of EdTec not communicating to the people who actually handle the work

Asked him to loop in his entire staff to assist with the transition

EdTec did not provide financial information for June--they were paid through June but did not provide information

Candace will provide numbers in August

Errika: Was there follow up to make sure there is a record?

Sarah: Followed with an email requesting information

Gregory: Needs to be pointed out as a breach.

Kim: Look at email

IV. Facility Task Force

A. Highlights and Updates

Payment to LS3P--no response back from lender

trying to get architect back--they might decide to go over her head in order to learn what is happening

Curb demolition should occur soon

Fire alarm testing--needs to be completed in August

V. School Leader's Corner

A. Updates

Projected 32 in terms of special education students--however we have 57

That what is known now without meeting all prospective children

5 students who are gifted
3 students who are ESL

Will probably need an additional special education teacher

Also need to increase budget for speech therapy services because more students need service

Apryl Forte: Is taking a special education student with sensory out of traditional classroom into a self-contained classroom a step backwards for that student?

Rhushanda Barnes: Found that having a full inclusion environment meant that some students did thrive, but some regressed. Want to make sure that all students thrived.

Apryl Forte: Concerned that it appears that there is new staff and originally told that child would have the same teacher for 3 years.

Sarah: At last meeting in May did have 85% retention for teachers. However, that changed at the beginning of summer as some teachers changed plans. K students were not going to have the teacher for 3 years, and 3rd grade is a stand alone.

Rhushanda Barnes: Had a lot of staff members who decided they didn't want to continue with a founding school.

Errika: Gave some clarification about the Montessori model. But also reminder that some people make life choice changes that we need to respect so some teachers decided to leave.

Atlanta Public Schools raised their pay scale-paying 20-30% more

Seeing some attrition across the metro area because of that

Sarah looking at not only recruitment in light of those numbers and retention

Calendar

Want to move Spring Break to 2nd week to align with all of the other metro areas schools

Partnered with Yes! for after care this year

F. Sheffield made a motion to Amend calendar to have Spring Break to 2nd week of April to align with metro Atlanta area schools calendar.

A. Grant seconded the motion.

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

Public Comments

Robbie Phillips: Will aftercare fees be prorated for the 1st week since it's a shortened week?

Sarah: That would be directed to the provider.

Apryl Forte: Do students have to

Sarah: Program is self-contained but using the building.

Apryl: When did the start date change?

Sarah: Change has been in effect since February and was posted on the website and in the newsletter. But recognizes that the date change should have been emphasized more clearly to make sure all families were clear

Apryl: Infinite Cam

Yolanda Galimore: Knows a lot of the families had problems with the uniform but had no issues last year. However, the vendor this year is sold out. Want to know how the vendor was chosen because they are more expensive?

Sarah: Interviewed 3 different vendors. Changed vendor because of the complaints from last year. But will need to revisit that choice and would need to get new bids. Will address issues with vendor

Jessica McCrary: Board minutes not on website

Sarah: Should be able to pull up minutes on Board portal

Jessica: Background check provider issue. What is the process for getting background checks this year?

Sarah: In January rolled out new volunteer process. Will share the process again in the August newsletter.

Jessica: Will there be a school nurse?

Sarah: No school nurse. Eliminated based on budget and school nurse can only provide 1st aid. Would need to call an ambulance for something more serious like a seizure. Operations team is the 1st Aid team.

Jessica: What is the average class size?

Sarah: Class size is 30. Lead guide in each class, and 4 floating aides

Apryl Forte: Additional question about purchasing uniforms with vendor.

Sarah: Assata is reaching out to the vendor to address issues.

VI. 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 7:49 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
K. Karacalidis