APPROVED

Sankofa Montessori

Minutes

Full Board Meeting

Date and Time
Wednesday February 25, 2026 at 6:30 PM

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. Chambers (remote), A. Daniel (remote), A. Nash (remote), E. Moore (remote), F. Sheffield (remote), K. Karacalidis (remote), M. Davis (remote)

Directors Absent
None

Ex Officio Members Present
S. Harvey (remote)

Guests Present
LaDonya Buchanan (remote), Marcoah Pursley (remote), Rhushanda Barnes (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 Feb 25, 2026 at 6:33 PM.

C. Previous Meeting Minutes

E. Moore made a motion to approve the minutes from Full Board Meeting on 01-28-26.
A. Daniel seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

II. Academic

A. Highlights

Task Force update

- Met early Feb and reviewed the dashboard
- Progress and goal setting for standardized testing based on student data
- Data reviewed with families and teacher conferences held
- Goals for suspension and for culture and staff set
- Leadership team working on strategies to improve student performance on IXL and LEXIA

Staff updates

- 75% of staff set to return for next school year
- All teachers certified at least at T-4 level
- Offers going out next week (all but 3 returning)
- Hiring Fair this weekend-Sarah will attend
- Absences-stable

SCSC-CCRPI mandatory band score

- Last year's results: academic performance did not meet standards; financial approached standard; operations met standards
- This year: goal to show growth in academic performance

Enrollment

- 118 students currently enrolled
- 24 withdrawals (#1 reason need more restrictive setting; #2 reason moving; #3 reason GADOE requirements; #4 reason dislike school model)

Suspensions

- Both in K
- Related to physical aggression

Special Education

- 15 students
- 4 assessments in progress
- Combination of ESL, gifted, and 504 plans
- 13 in MSE trackway for independence

Student Attendance

- Increase overall for January across all grades
- 3% decrease in absences in 3rd grade
- 2% decrease in absences in 4th grade
- Tardies still a problem, but leadership team working on strategies to help decrease

B. Next Steps

Recruitment status

- 23 applications for K; 4 have turned into registration
- 2 applications each for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade; none turned to registration
- 1 application 4th; none turned to registration
- Goal for next year is 175 enrolled
- Current status at 98 attending (77 short of goal)
- Working on getting applications turned into registrations
- Will also set up touch points over the summer to ensure registered students show up

Strategies for helping families complete the process

- Ex. Having a registration day (weekly) to assist families in completing registration and next steps
- Rhushanda updated group that at least one Registration Day occurred last week
- Jasmine manages overall process; recruiter focused on following up on leads, tracking them and getting applications in
- New recruiter starting on Friday (Sarah outlined onboarding process for recruiter)
- Talking points for Board members to help us push recruitment and enrollment

Needs from Board

- Let Board know if help needed related to incentives proposed for IXL/LEXIA progress

- More visibility from Board at the school/school events

III. Finance Committee Update

A. January Financial Report

January Report

- January closed with a net loss of **($105K)**
- Ending cash of **$670K** (approximately 80 days cash on hand)
- Projected FY year-end balance of approximately **$270K** (33 days cash on hand)
- Full-year forecast remains near breakeven at a projected **($21K)** loss
- While we remain fiscally compliant and within standard, we are closely monitoring cash compression driven primarily by enrollment-related QBE adjustments
- As startup grant funding phases down next year, continued focus on enrollment growth, disciplined spending, and increased private fundraising efforts will be important
- Board encouraged to consider how we may leverage our personal and professional networks to support relationship-building and potential private funding opportunities.

Public Hearings for Budget

- Scheduled to hold public hearings (dates below) for the FY25–26 Budget Amendment and the FY26–27 Annual Budget
- At least one board meeting related to the budget will need to be conducted in person prior to final adoption
- Need to review dates for potential dates for the budget hearings we might be able to attend in person. Al will follow up via email to set date and time.

IV. Governance

A. Facilities Task Force

Updates on Wright Community School

- Daycare actively moving out (last day April 1)
- approached again about WCS moving on site (proposing 2 years in modulars)
- WCS would have grades 6-9
- Anticipated 140 students
- 10 classrooms would meet WCS model
- Proposing 12 classroom modulars on site (2 for Sankofa to use the 1st year)
- Waiting on projections for final cost
- Sankofa proposed having them renovate the daycare building based on cost instead of modulars

- Would need to go to City of Forest Park for variance due to the number of proposed modulars (Sankofa currently approved for 8 on site)-takes months and riskier if they deny adjustment to variance

Fawn will forward plan for modular plan set up from last year

B. Policy Approvals/Upcoming Reviews/Discussions/

M. Davis made a motion to approve the school calendar for SY 26-27.
A. Daniel seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

A. Daniel	Aye
A. Allen-Thames	Aye
M. Davis	Aye
A. Nash	Aye
A. Chambers	Aye
E. Moore	Abstain
K. Karacalidis	Aye
F. Sheffield	Aye

ED Contract

- Up for renewal at the end of this year
- Everyone on Board needs to review it to determine what if any changes need to be made

V. Public Comment

A. Community Talk

No public comments

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 7:27 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
K. Karacalidis