

# Mountain West Montessori Academy

## Annual Board Meeting Minutes

### Monday, June 23, 2025

**Location:** MWMA Library, 4125 W. Foxview Drive, South Jordan, UT 84009



**In Attendance:** Steve Barnes, Corbin White, Gimenia Palmer, Nelson Altamirano,

**Excused:** Sheri Ebert, Andrew Marx,

**Others in Attendance:** Angie Johnson, Coleen Dolan, Cathie Hurst, Dawn Kawaguchi, Brandon Fairbanks,

*Founded upon Montessori philosophy, the mission of Mountain West Montessori Academy is to facilitate student-centered learning and intellectual curiosity through an individualized and interdisciplinary curriculum, hands-on experience, and community involvement.*

## MINUTES

### 2025-2026 BOARD PRIORITIES

Expand mathematics, pedagogy and fidelity

Build independence and resilience in students

Educate stakeholders and the community about Montessori education

### 5:40 PM – INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

- Call to Order – Steve Barnes
- School Mission – Steve

**There was no PUBLIC COMMENT.**

### REPORTS

#### ➤ Administration

- *State of the School* – Angie Johnson asked Coleen to go over the Physical Fitness winners and this year's attendance term by term which was over 90%. She also highlighted the goals of the statewide attendance campaign: to reduce chronic absenteeism, improve daily attendance rates, and raise awareness among all stakeholders regarding the impact of attendance on academic performance, as well as social and emotional development. Continued focus on addressing chronic absenteeism will remain a priority in the coming school year. Angie introduced next year's theme, "*Let Them Grow! – Building Independence to Build Resilience*," with the launch of a "Play Club." This initiative will provide unstructured, in-person social play opportunities for students of all ages after school, free from adult intervention unless safety concerns arise. Additional topics discussed included student cell phone usage during lunch and potential revisions to current protocols. Angie proposed using a teacher evaluation rubric she developed with Colleen as a framework for director evaluations, suggesting it would provide a more evidence-based approach. It includes five key domains: Student Academic Growth, Student

Social/Emotional/Behavior Growth, Leadership (Ethics & Communication), Operations, and Community Building. Lastly, Angie shared updates to the 2025–2026 board goals and priorities, which now include: enhancing mathematics instruction and fidelity, increasing stakeholder and community understanding of Montessori education, and developing policies to support the responsible integration of Artificial Intelligence into instructional practices and student learning.

- ✓ *Employees Engaging in Private Activities Related to Public Education ADMIN Procedures* – Angie reviewed the Employees Engaging in Private Activities Related to Public Education Administrative Procedures. Angie explained that educators cannot actively market themselves for financial gain using school resources, but there are exceptions for tutoring students who are no longer in their class.

## BOARD TRAINING

- *Review Ethics Policy/Commitment to Ethical Behavior\** – Cathie Hurst reviewed the Ethics Policy which requires all employees and board members to sign an agreement committing to high ethical standards, including not accepting bribes, protecting private information, and avoiding conflicts of interest. The Fraud Risk Assessment offers an opportunity to earn up to 20 points if all employees including board members sign this annually.
- *Annual Fraud Risk Assessment Review\** – Cathie Hurst reviewed the Fraud Risk Assessment which showed an extremely low risk score of 375 out of 395 points, with Cathie noting that the school's strong separation of duties and controls were key factors since the school doesn't require a formal internal audit function because you don't have over 10,000 students.
- *Annual Policies, Plans, Procedures & Training Review* – Brandon Fairbanks discussed annual policy reviews, including the suspension and expulsion data, electronic resources policy, and arrest reporting requirements, explaining that board members are required to report certain arrests and convictions to the school administration. Brandon added that the board will need to re-approve the Electronic Resources Policy later in the meeting.

## CONSENT ITEMS

- *May 19, 2025 Electronic Board Meeting Minutes* – There was no further discussion. **Steve Barnes made a motion to approve the consent items. Nelson Altamirano seconded the motion. The votes were as follows:**
  - Steve Barnes – Aye
  - Corbin White – Aye
  - Nelson Altamirano – Aye
  - Gimania Palmer – Aye**Motion passed unanimously.**

## VOTING ITEMS

- *2024-2025 Final Amended Budget* – Cathie Hurst reminded the board that she sent out the budget notice on May 31<sup>st</sup>. She reviewed the few items that were changed from the noticed budget including purchased professional & tech services. **Steve Barnes made a motion**

to approve the 2024-2025 Final Amended Budget. Corbin White seconded the motion. The votes were as follows:

Steve Barnes – Aye  
Corbin White – Aye  
Nelson Altamirano – Aye  
Gimania Palmer – Aye

**Motion passed unanimously.**

- 2025-2026 Annual School Budget – Cathie Hurst reviewed the 2025-2026 school budget stating that there was an increase to wages due to SHINE funding and a minor decrease to supplies and software. **Gimania Palmer made a motion to approve the proposed annual operating budget for the 2025-2026 school year. Nelson Altamirano seconded the motion. The votes were as follows:**

Steve Barnes – Aye  
Corbin White – Aye  
Nelson Altamirano – Aye  
Gimania Palmer – Aye

**Motion passed unanimously.**

- 2025-2026 Sex Ed Instruction Committee – Angie Johnson stated that the Sex Ed Instruction Committee will have a principal, health educator, school counselor, school nurse and at least four parents but will probably have more since they use their Land Trust Committee for this as well. Angie addressed the need for a health educator to conduct maturation education, as Planned Parenthood could no longer provide this service due to state legislation. She requested help in finding a suitable health educator, suggesting potential candidates might include nurses or firefighters with the appropriate certification. **Nelson Altamirano made a motion to approve the 2025-2026 Sex Ed Instruction Committee consisting of the following positions: (1) Principal, (1) Health Educator, (1) School Counselor, (1) School Nurse and (4) Parents. Steve Barnes seconded the motion. The votes were as follows:**

Steve Barnes – Aye  
Corbin White – Aye  
Nelson Altamirano – Aye  
Gimania Palmer – Aye

**Motion passed unanimously.**

- Speech Language à La Carte – Angie Johnson reported that Becky Cushing serves as our school's Speech-Language Pathologist. She has consistently performed her role with excellence and has been a valued member of our team for many years. Angie recommended renewing Becky's contract and mentioned the \$2-per-hour pay increase for the upcoming year, which she considers reasonable. **Corbin White made a motion to approve the Speech and Language a la Carte Agreement and allow the Principal to sign the Agreement on behalf of the School. Nelson Altamirano seconded the motion. The votes were as follows:**

Steve Barnes – Aye  
Corbin White – Aye  
Nelson Altamirano – Aye  
Gimania Palmer – Aye

**Motion passed unanimously.**

- *Artificial Intelligence Policy* – Angie Johnson presented the AI Policy, which outlines strict prohibitions against its use for bullying, harassment, and plagiarism, while supporting its use as a tool to enhance student learning. She noted that further details will be provided in the administrative procedures and protocols, which will be developed at a later date. **Nelson Altamirano made a motion to approve the Artificial Intelligence Policy. Corbin White seconded the motion. The votes were as follows:**
- Steve Barnes – Aye  
Corbin White – Aye  
Nelson Altamirano – Aye  
Gimania Palmer – Aye
- Motion passed unanimously.**
- *Re-Approve Electronic Resources Policy* – Brandon Fairbanks stated that there are recommended no changes but is required to be reviewed and re-approved every three years. **Steve Barnes made a motion to Re-approve the Electronic Resources Policy. Gimania Palmer seconded the motion. The votes were as follows:**
- Steve Barnes – Aye  
Corbin White – Aye  
Nelson Altamirano – Aye  
Gimania Palmer – Aye
- Motion passed unanimously.**
- *Ratify Board Members & Their Terms* – Steve Barnes reviewed the current terms. Dawn confirmed that they bylaws stated the board has 3-year terms. **Gimania Palmer made a motion to approve Corbin White and Steve Barnes both for a new 3-year to expire June 2028 and ratify Nelson Altamirano and Gimania Palmer with terms to expire June 2027, and Andrew Marx and Sheri Ebert with terms to expire June 2026. Nelson Altamirano seconded the motion. The votes were as follows:**
- Steve Barnes – Aye  
Corbin White – Aye  
Nelson Altamirano – Aye  
Gimania Palmer – Aye
- Motion passed unanimously.**
- *Nominate & Elect Board Officers* – The board reviewed the current board officers with Steve as the President, Corbin as the VP, Andrew as the financial coordinator and Nelson as the secretary. Corbin suggested giving other people the opportunity to serve as the Vice President. There was a discussion on changing positions. **Corbin White made a motion to nominate Gimania Palmer as Vice President and approve the rest the Board Officers as presently constituted. Nelson Altamirano seconded the motion. The votes were as follows:**
- Steve Barnes – Aye  
Corbin White – Aye  
Nelson Altamirano – Aye  
Gimania Palmer – Aye
- Motion passed unanimously.**

## DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 2025-2026 Proposed Board Meeting Schedule – Dawn Kawaguchi reviewed the board meeting schedule. October's meeting was moved to the 13<sup>th</sup> and November's meeting was moved to the 17<sup>th</sup>. The March meeting was also changed to Tuesday, March 24<sup>th</sup> due to Angie and Coleen traveling home from the Montessori Conference on Monday. Dawn noted the changes and will send out calendar invites. She will also change the preboard meeting dates to correspond with the board meeting date changes.
- Calendaring – ALL
  - Next Pre-Board Meeting – August 13<sup>th</sup> @ 5:00 p.m. [PROPOSED]
  - Annual Board Meeting – August 25<sup>th</sup> @ 5:30 p.m. [PROPOSED]
  - Steve requested Dawn to send out a calendar invite to the board for the Back to School Night on August 7<sup>th</sup> 6-8

**6:53 PM – Steve Barnes made a motion to enter a CLOSED SESSION to discuss the character, professional competence, or physical or mental health of an individual pursuant to Utah Code 52-4-205(I)(a) in the library. Corbin White seconded the motion. The roll call votes were as follows:**

**Steve Barnes – Aye  
Corbin White – Aye  
Nelson Altamirano – Aye  
Gimania Palmer – Aye**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**6:57 PM – Corbin White made a motion to exit the CLOSED SESSION and ADJOURN. Nelson Altamirano seconded the motion.**

**Mountain West Montessori Academy**

**Board of Directors**

**Closed Session Statement**

**Monday, June 23, 2025**

**Location:** 4125 W. Foxview Drive, South Jordan, UT 84009



**CLOSED SESSION SWORN STATEMENT:**

*At a duly noticed public meeting held on the date listed above, the board of directors for **MOUNTAIN WEST MONTESSORI ACADEMY** entered into a closed session for the sole purpose of discussing the character, professional competence, or physical or mental health of an individual in accordance with Utah Code Ann. 52-4-2(1)(a).*

I declare under criminal penalty under the law of Utah that the foregoing is true and correct.

Signed on the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of June, 2025.

**Steve Barnes**  
*Board Chair*