

Mountain West Montessori Academy

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Monday, January 26, 2026

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



Others in Attendance: Steve Barnes, Corbin White, Andrew Marx, Gimenia Palmer, Sheri Ebert, Nelson Altamirano (6:04 p.m.),

Others in Attendance: Angie Johnson, Cathie Hurst, Dawn Kawaguchi, Ken Jeppesen, Brandon Fairbanks (6:04p.m.),

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 & Fidelity
Educate Stakeholders and Community about Montessori education
Develop Artificial Intelligence Policies & Procedures

6:02 PM – INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

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

There was no PUBLIC COMMENT. This was the first public comment period for the 2026-2027 School Fee Schedule and the Fee Waiver Policy. Angie reviewed the new fee schedule for next year, which includes adding AP Human Geography test fees and incorporating FBLA club dues and related expenses. She explained that the schedule will be discussed at two board meetings before final approval.

REPORTS

- **Eide Bailly**
 - Present FY25 Financial Statement – Ken Jeppesen reviewed the board letter noting that most of it was routine but highlighted that no uncorrected or corrected misstatements were found, indicating no significant issues. All three audits are unmodified or clean reports with no unusual findings. Ken reviewed the first of three reports which is the financial statement (the numbers). They are shown several different ways but it's all the same numbers. Ken noted that the School's unrestricted balance increased from \$3 million to \$3.5 million, representing a significant safety net for future use. He also discussed the district's financial position, pointing out that despite increased expenses, revenues exceeded expenditures by \$581,000, demonstrating effective budgeting. Ken highlighted the

restricted balance of \$738,000 for bondholders and the successful management of these funds. He noted the School's compliance with debt covenants and the reduction of debt by \$170,000 during the year. Ken also praised the School for maximizing investments in the PTIF and achieving a \$215,000 surplus against the budget, which he considered appropriate for future unforeseen expenses. Ken reviewed the second of the three reports which is the annual government and state reports, highlighting that the organization performed well in internal controls, cash management, and procurement processes. He noted that the only issue identified was the need to update the crime insurance policy for the treasurer, which has since been addressed. The third and final report which tests internal controls over compliance as required by the state in which Ken praised the team's efforts and emphasized the importance of maintaining compliance with state requirements. The discussion ended with Ken expressed his appreciation of the School, AW and the board for all their support during the audit. *Ken Jeppesen was excused at 6:22 p.m.*

➤ **Administration**

- *State of the School* – Angie Johnson gave a brief overview of the board's priorities for the school year, including expanding mathematics pedagogy, educating stakeholders about Montessori education, and developing AI policies. She demonstrated the use of the Binderly app to the board showing how to add the school and join groups like "Learn About Montessori." She explained that while anyone can add the school, joining specific groups requires approval. Angie also mentioned that she would use the app to communicate with parents and shared some of the content available, including posts on grammar symbols and the binary tower. She discussed the podcast's lack of new episodes and highlighted timeless episodes like "Montessori 101" and "Peace Education" with Dr. Lois Bobo. She announced upcoming performances of "Maria Montessori the Musical" at the South Jordan Community Center, which will feature a 90-minute Broadway Junior version. Angie also mentioned the need to review the wellness policy triennial progress report every three years. Angie discussed the school's compliance with the Wellness Policy, noting full compliance except for physical education during winter months. She shared progress on the school's reaccreditation process, highlighting the submission of extensive data analysis and the upcoming site visit on February 11th. Angie presented positive student performance data, including strong growth in literacy and early literacy outcomes, with Sherry and Letitia recognized for their contributions to these achievements. Angie presented a comprehensive report on the school's academic performance and progress, highlighting improvements in various grade levels, particularly in kindergarten and sixth grade. She noted that the COVID cohort has shown significant proficiency gains, while second grade has not seen the same trend, prompting further investigation. She and Coleen have been working diligently on accreditation for data analysis. The School has achieved notable increases in literacy and math scores, exceeding their goals, while emotional regulation remains a challenge across all grade levels. The SLT FY25 Final Report was included in the board packet.

➤ **Board of Directors**

- SLT Training Assurances – Steve Barnes asked if all board members have completed their SLT training that Dawn sent out to the board via email back in November. All board members stated that they have completed the training with Dawn agreeing they all have reported to her that they have completed the required training.

CONSENT ITEMS

- October 13, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes – There was no further discussion. **Nelson Altamirano made a motion to approve the consent items. Steve Barnes seconded the motion. The votes were as follows:**

Steve Barnes – Aye
Gimania Palmer – Aye
Andrew Marx – Aye
Nelson Altamirano – Aye
Corbin White – Aye
Sheri Ebert – Aye

Motion passed unanimously.

VOTING ITEMS

- Sound System for the Gym – Angie Johnson informed the board that the original bid required board approval, but the second bid came in substantially lower and does not require board approval, so this does not require a vote. The board decided to table the discussion on the gym sound system due to a bid being above the approval threshold.
- 2026-2027 School Calendar – Angie Johnson reviewed the 2026-2027 calendar remains very similar to the current year and Jordan School District's 2026-2027 calendar. **Andrew Marx made a motion to approve the 2026-2027 School Calendar. Gimania Palmer seconded the motion. The votes were as follows:**

Steve Barnes – Aye
Gimania Palmer – Aye
Andrew Marx – Aye
Nelson Altamirano – Aye
Corbin White – Aye
Sheri Ebert – Aye

Motion passed unanimously.

- Re-Approve Wellness Policy – Angie Johnson stated that the Wellness Policy needs to be re-approved in conjunction with the Triennial Progress Report. The committee didn't have any recommended changes. She noted that this policy which covers various aspects of student health and nutrition. **Steve Barnes made a motion to re-approve the Wellness Policy. Sheri Ebert seconded the motion. The votes were as follows:**

Steve Barnes – Aye
Gimania Palmer – Aye
Andrew Marx – Aye
Nelson Altamirano – Aye
Corbin White – Aye
Sheri Ebert – Aye

Motion passed unanimously.

- Amend Instructional Materials Policy – Angie Johnson reviewed the amended Instructional Materials Policy which isn't substantive but was updated to reflect current code citations. **Nelson Altamirano made a motion to approve the Amended Instructional Materials Policy. Andrew Marx seconded the motion. The votes were as follows:**

Steve Barnes – Aye
Gimena Palmer – Aye
Andrew Marx – Aye
Nelson Altamirano – Aye
Corbin White – Aye
Sheri Ebert – Aye

Motion passed unanimously.

- Amend Paid Parental & Postpartum Recovery Leave Policy – Angie Johnson more specific on what weeks actually mean changing "calendar weeks" to "contract days" for clarity. **Sheri Ebert made a motion to approve the Amended Paid Parental & Postpartum Recovery Leave Policy. Gimena Palmer seconded the motion. The votes were as follows:**

Steve Barnes – Aye
Gimena Palmer – Aye
Andrew Marx – Aye
Nelson Altamirano – Aye
Corbin White – Aye
Sheri Ebert – Aye

Motion passed unanimously.

- Amend Student Conduct & Discipline Policy – Angie Johnson reviewed the amended Student Conduct & Discipline Policy including new rules and requirements regarding emergency safety intervention. Other updates and clarifications have also been added to the policy to increase its compliance with new and existing laws and updates to USBE rules, including those related to due process for student disciplinary actions, reinstatement of students after suspension, reintegration plans, administrative student conduct and discipline plans (plan requirements have decreased), corporal punishment, and state reporting requirements for suspensions and expulsions. **Steve Barnes made a motion to approve the Amended Student Conduct & Discipline Policy. Corbin White seconded the motion. The votes were as follows:**

Steve Barnes – Aye
Gimena Palmer – Aye
Andrew Marx – Aye
Nelson Altamirano – Aye
Corbin White – Aye
Sheri Ebert – Aye

Motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- Calendaring – ALL
- Next Pre-Board Meeting – March 11th @ 5:00 p.m.
 - Next Board Meeting – Tuesday, March 24th @ 6 p.m.

- Maria Montessori The Musical – April 17-18
- Reschedule Annual Board Meeting (currently June 22nd) to June 29th
- NCSC26 New Orleans, LA June 24-26 (Wed-Fri). After discussion of members schedule, they have decided that next year might be a better year to attend this conference.

7:01 PM – Steve Barnes made a motion to move into a CLOSED SESSION to discuss the character, professional competence, or physical or mental health of an individual and/or to discuss deployment of security personnel, devices, or systems pursuant to Utah Code 52-4-205(1)(a) & (f) in the library. Nelson Altamirano seconded the motion. The roll call votes were as follows:

**Steve Barnes – Aye
Gimena Palmer – Aye
Andrew Marx – Aye
Nelson Altamirano – Aye
Corbin White – Aye
Sheri Ebert – Aye**

Motion passed unanimously.

8:15 PM – Steve Barnes made a motion to exit the CLOSED SESSION and ADJOURN. Nelson Altamirano seconded the motion. The votes were as follows:

**Steve Barnes – Aye
Gimena Palmer – Aye
Andrew Marx – Aye
Nelson Altamirano – Aye
Corbin White – Aye
Sheri Ebert – Aye**

Motion passed unanimously.

**Mountain West Montessori Academy
Board of Directors**

Closed Session Statement

Monday, January 26, 2026

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 and/or to discuss deployment of security personnel, devices, or systems in accordance with Utah Code Ann. 52-4-205(1)(a) & (f).*

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

Signed on the 26th day of January, 2026.


Steve Barnes
Board Chair