

# Mountain West Montessori Academy Board of Directors Meeting Minutes Tuesday, May 12, 2026

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



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

**Excused:** Andrew Marx,

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

*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

### 5:38 PM – INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

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

**There was no PUBLIC COMMENT.**

### REPORTS

#### ➤ Administration

- *Annual Comprehensive Guidance Data Review* – Marianne Noble presented her annual comprehensive guidance data review where they have been working to increase students seen in the counseling office for academic planning, social-emotional support, and dropout prevention by 10% during the 2025-2026 school year. She reported a 37% increase in student counseling services from the 2024-25 to 2025-26 school year, with 910 students served so far compared to 663 the previous year. Marianne discussed her work on academic planning, social-emotional support, and dropout prevention, noting improved student engagement and the implementation of preventative measures like emotion regulation and coping mechanisms. The discussion also covered available resources for mental health support, including partnerships with the Parent Center and Douglas Center, as well as potential collaboration with the Cook Center for Human Connection.

- State of the School – Angie Johnson provided updates on three key board priorities: Montessori education, mathematics, and AI initiatives. She reported on the successful Maria Montessori musical production, which had good attendance across four performances, and highlighted the positive community engagement it generated. Angie also outlined the school's comprehensive positive behavior plan, which includes PBIS rewards for middle school students, teacher coaching on ASAP plans, and various wellness initiatives including movement breaks and counseling sessions. There was also a brief mention of the successful adoption of a new 6th grade math curriculum. Angie presented academic results showing strong performance in kindergarten and second grade math, with third grade needing improvement in concepts and applications. She discussed their progress on AI implementation, noting that teachers have received training on security, safety, and best practices, though administrative procedures for student AI use remain undetermined. Angie highlighted a strength that 94% of teachers will return next year while data showing low student interest in CTE classes, particularly noting that CTE courses like creative coding and digital literacy had lower engagement compared to math. She suggested that more hands-on approaches and less computer-focused content might improve student interest in these career-focused classes.

➤ **Board of Director**

- Financial Update – Cathie Hurst presented the financials as of April 30, 2026, reporting that we are 83% of the way through the year with revenue at \$673,694 against a budget of \$46,231, and noted that debt service and miscellaneous expenses were at 35% due to only one interest payment having been made.

➤ **Administration (Continued)**

- Set 2026-2027 Board Priorities – Angie shared her thoughts on the board priorities which she feels like there is still momentum with mathematics and AI. Montessori comes naturally and the education went very well this year. If the board felt like they wanted a third priority then she is recommending something in CTE. Angie doesn't feel like there is a big shift in priorities. AI is continually changing and we need more education on it. There was a discussion on prioritizing AI education at the school, emphasizing the need for careful planning and teacher education before implementing student programs. The group discussed having the committee research appropriate AI platforms, conduct parent focus groups to gauge opinions, and develop more specific administrative procedures beyond the current broad policy. Angie noted that while there's growing industry interest in AI education, the school should take a balanced approach to ensure appropriate implementation across different age groups. Angie discussed the math curriculum priorities, focusing on Montessori materials and textbook integration. The group identified two key priorities: reviewing and potentially revising the Montessori math curriculum for kindergarten through third grade to better address gaps, and investigating AI implementation for educational purposes. Angie noted that while the current adaptive math software works well for individualized instruction, there's a need to ensure teachers are using appropriate Montessori materials effectively, particularly given that some teachers may not be naturally inclined toward math instruction. There was also a discussion on the importance of teaching AI skills to

students, comparing it to internet safety education that begins in kindergarten. Angie highlighted how AI can help level the playing field for students with disabilities and English Language Learners, while also noting that some employers now expect candidates to know how to use AI effectively.

## CONSENT ITEMS

- March 24, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes – There was no further discussion.

## VOTING ITEMS

- Eide Bailly Statement of Work Letter – Cathie Hurst presented the statement of work replaced the engagement letter. She is recommending their continued engagement for the upcoming year with a slight price increase of \$650. Due to the increased federal expenditure threshold, the School probably won't qualify for a single audit this year.
- 2026-2027 Teacher Student Success Act Plan – Angie Johnson presented the TSSA Plan where there were no changes from the current year with 40% going toward teacher salaries and bonuses, 40% going to teachers raises and stipends, and 20% for professional learning and supplies. These goals align with our Acadience reading goals.
- USBE School-Based Mental Health Grant Program – Angie Johnson presented details about the Mental Health Qualified Grant Program application, which aims to reduce suicidal ideation and increase proactive behavior support plans over a three-year period.
- Service Animal Policy – Angie Johnson presented the Service Animal Policy, prompted by the recent need to accommodate an employee who requires a service animal. She reviewed the policy, including the definition of a service animal and the guidelines governing their presence within the school.

**Nelson Altamirano made a motion to approve the following:**

- **Approve the Consent Items;**
- **Approve the Statement of Work Letter provided by Eide Bailly for the year ending June 30, 2026, and allow the Board President to sign on behalf of the school;**
- **Approve the 2026-2027 Teacher Student Success Act Plan;**
- **Approve the USBE School-Based Mental Health Qualified Grant Program application as presented; and**
- **Approve the Service Animal Policy.**

**Corbin White seconded the motion. The votes were as follows:**

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

**Motion passed unanimously.**

## REPORTS (Continued)

- **Board of Director (Continued)**
  - Board Vacancies – Steve Barnes informed the Board that both Andrew and Sheri will not be renewing their terms in June. We have posted and advertised the

upcoming vacancy(s) on the School's website and on campus. The applications are due June 12th, with interviews to be scheduled for the June 29th meeting. The Board also discussed maintaining a Board size of five members.

## **BOARD TRAINING**

- Annual Open & Public Meetings Act Training – This training will be moved to the June meeting.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- Calendaring – ALL
  - Next Pre-Board Meeting – June 10<sup>th</sup> @ 5 p.m.
  - Annual Board Meeting on June 29<sup>th</sup>

*Angie Johnson was excused at 6:53 p.m.*

**6:53 PM – Steve Barnes made a motion CLOSED SESSION to discuss the character, professional competence, or physical or mental health of an individual pursuant to Utah Code 52-4-205(1)(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  
Sheri Ebert – Aye  
Gimena Palmer – Aye**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

*Sheri Ebert and Gimena Palmer were excused at 7:10 p.m.*

**7:28 PM – Corbin White made a motion to exit the CLOSED SESSION and ADJOURN. Nelson Altamirano seconded the motion. The votes were as follows:**

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

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**Mountain West Montessori Academy**  
**Board of Directors**  
**Closed Session Statement**  
**Tuesday, May 12, 2026**

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

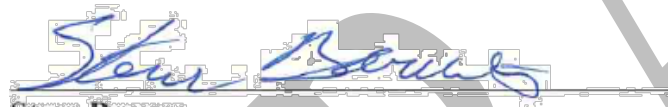


**CLOSED SESSION SWORN STATEMENT:**

*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 12<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2026.

  
**Steve Barnes**  
Board Chair