Mountain West Montessori Academy
Annual Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Monday, June 29, 2026

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

MOUNTAIN WEST
Montessori Academy

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

Excused: Sheri Ebert, Andrew Marx,

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

> *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

6:11 PM – INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

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

There was no PUBLIC COMMENT.

6:12 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(1)(a) in the library. Corbin White seconded the motion. The roll call votes were as follows:

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

Motion passed unanimously.

8:17 PM – Steve Barnes made a motion to exit the CLOSED SESSION and RECONVENE the meeting. The votes were as follows:

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

Motion passed unanimously.

REPORTS

- **Administration**
  - *State of the School* – Angie Johnson stated that after the meeting where she and the board discussed the 2026-2027 Board Priorities she took the recommendations with her interpretations and came up with more refined definitions. They are the following:
    - ✓ **Strengthen Mathematics Instruction** – Refine curriculum alignment and implementation of data-driven interventions to improve targeted essential mathematics skills.
    - ✓ **Advance Artificial Intelligence Integration** – Expand AI guidance, professional learning, and implementation practices for educators while establishing developmentally appropriate expectations for student use.

    She asked the board to let her know if they had any additional information that they wanted to include or feedback but there were none. Angie shared a clip of the Maria Montessori Musical which included students from the 2nd grade all the way up to some parents. Angie shared that Colleen attended a conference on RTI (Response to Intervention) best practices and identified the need to focus on essential skills, noting that teaching teams have already worked to identify key standards for each grade level in math and literacy. Angie presented updates on several initiatives including forming a guiding coalition for RCI, standardizing data collection for student assessments, and implementing AI tools in education. She outlined plans to pilot four AI applications including Gemini and ChatGPT for teachers, noting they are free until 2027-2028. Last, Angie highlighted that the staff handbook is being comprehensively revised and made digital, while expressing frustration with conflicting state security guidelines regarding school safety roles.

BOARD TRAINING

- *Annual Open & Public Meetings Act Training* – This will be postponed to the next meeting in August so that we can include our new board members.
- *Review Ethics Policy/Commitment to Ethical Behavior** – Cathie Hurst reviewed the Ethics Policy and explained that all employees, including Angie, are required to sign ethical behavior agreements as part of their contracts. Since the board members don't sign contracts, we have the Annual Commitment to Ethical Behavior sheet that all board members are asked to sign.
- *Annual Fraud Risk Assessment Review** – Cathie Hurst presented the Fraud Risk Assessment review which the board received 275/295 points which shows very low risk. She reviewed the segregation of duties requirements, noting that while the school has good separation for most financial functions, there is a gap regarding petty checks where Angie has both access and signing authority. Cathie emphasized that they have mitigating controls in place to address this issue and confirmed that the school meets most requirements for the assessment. Cathie reviewed the school's compliance with ethical behavior requirements and training protocols, noting that while most requirements were met, they did not receive full points due to lacking a formal internal audit function which is not

required until you have over 10,000 students. This assessment also requires both Angie and Andrew's signature which Dawn will send via Adobe Sign.
Cathie went on to present the budget for approval, explaining that she had made minor adjustments to ensure the school stays within budget limits, particularly for upcoming bond payments from the budget that was noticed and sent out to the Board at the end of May.

- *Annual Policies, Plans, Procedures & Training Review* – Brandon Fairbanks outlined annual policy reviews including the Sex Education Instruction Policy in which the county data was sent to the board in an email, SHINE policy, and Parent and Family Engagement Policy, with no recommended changes needed for most items and will be voted on later in the meeting.

CONSENT ITEMS

- *May 12, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes* – There was no further discussion. **Steve Barnes made a motion to approve the consent items. Corbin White seconded the motion. The votes were as follows:**
  - **Steve Barnes – Aye**
  - **Corbin White – Aye**
  - **Nelson Altamirano – Aye**
  - **Andrew Marx – Aye**
  - **Gimenia Palmer – Aye**
  - **Sheri Ebert – Aye**

  Motion passed unanimously.

VOTING ITEMS

- *Amended & Proposed Budget* – There was no further discussion. See above under Fraud Risk Assessment for discussion.
- *2026-2027 Speech & Language a la Carte [Becky Cushing]* – Angie Johnson stated this is our yearly agreement with our speech pathologist with no increase in her hourly rate. She expressed her gratitude towards Becky for her contributions to the school.
- *Re-Approve Parent & Family Engagement Policy* – Angie Johnson reviewed the Parent and Family Engagement Policy which is recommended to be reviewed by the board every couple of years. There are no suggested changes at this time. It is reviewed annually by the Land Trust Committee.
- *Amend SHiNE Policy* – Angie Johnson reviewed the amended SHiNE Policy with the change of allowing the funds to be prorated if a teacher doesn't complete the year or a teacher comes after school has started.
- *Amend Parent Grievance Policy* – Angie Johnson explained that a recent grievance prompted a review and update of both grievance policies to strengthen them. The Staff Grievance Policy directs all concerns to the Director unless the issue is more serious, while both policies now align in language and procedure. The Parent Grievance Policy is more explicit, emphasizing that the board may choose not to take action and that any decision they make is final. The revisions also clarifies the Board's limited role in resolving operational complaints, establish expectations regarding communication with parents during the complaint process, and explain how complaints governed by other School policies will be handled.

- *Amend Staff Grievance Policy* – There was no further discussion. See above under Amend Parent Grievance Policy for discussion.
- *2026-2027 Sex Education Instruction Committee* – Angie Johnson provided an overview of the sex education instruction committee, noting that we are approving roles rather than individual names, and that no changes have been made to this structure.
- *Insurance Coverage* – Angie Johnson reviewed the whole gamut of liability insurance that the School currently has through Wright Specialty. AW has put together a group insurance plan with Arthur J. Gallagher. There is enough participation with other AW schools that we could save about $10,000 with comparable or better coverage. Angie did ask Gabe that if another school had a catastrophic event would that effect the cost and he said that it would have to be multiple schools having those type of events to affect the cost. Angie is recommending to try this to save $10,000.

  Steve Barnes made a motion to approve the following:
  - **Approve the 2025-2026 Final Amended Budget and approve the proposed 2026-2027 Annual Operating Budget as presented;**
  - **Approve the Speech and Language a la Carte Agreement and allow the Principal to sign the Agreement on behalf of the School;**
  - **Re-approve the Parent & Family Engagement Policy;**
  - **Approve the Amended Salary Supplement for Highly Needed Educators Program Policy;**
  - **Approve the Amended Parent Grievance Policy;**
  - **Approve the Amended Staff Grievance Policy;**
  - **Approve the 2026-2027 Sex Ed Instruction Committee consisting of the following positions: (1) Principal, (1) Health Educator, (1) School Counselor, (1) School Nurse and at least (4) Parents; and**
  - **Approve the participation in the group insurance program through Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.**

  Gimenia Palmer seconded the motion. The votes were as follows:

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

  Motion passed unanimously.

- *Ratify Board Members and Their Terms* – Steve Barnes reviewed the board members and their terms and appointing both Robin and Tabitha as new board members. **Steve Barnes made a motion to appoint both Tabitha Hemperley and Robin Strup Koski for a new 3-year term to expire June 2029 and ratify Corbin White and Steve Barnes with terms to expire June 2028, and Nelson Altamirano and Gimenia Palmer with terms to expire June 2027. Nelson Altamirano seconded the motion. The votes were as follows:**

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

  Motion passed unanimously.

- *Board Officers* – The board discussed the current board officers stating that the financial coordinator position is vacant due to Andrew leaving the board. Cathie explained what the financial coordinator job entails. Corbin has volunteered to be the financial coordinator. **Steve Barnes made a motion to continue with assignments as is with Steve Barnes as the Chair, Gimenia Palmer as the Vice Chair, Nelson Altamirano as the Secretary, with the change of Corbin White as the Financial Coordinator replacing Andrew Marx. Gimenia Palmer seconded the motion. The votes were as follows:**

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

  Motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- *Set 2026-2027 Board Meeting Calendar* – Dawn Kawaguchi presented the board meeting calendar which follows the same schedule as this year with the exception of the Holiday Social. There was discussion on if these dates will interfere with any of the school travel trips or Steve's schedule. We may need to change the October meeting date.
- *Calendaring* – ALL
  - Proposed Next Pre-Board Meeting on August 12th @ 5 p.m.
  - Proposed Next Board Meeting on August 24th @ 6 p.m.
  - NCSC27 June 28-30 in Columbus, OH

9:13 PM – Steve Barnes made a motion to ADJOURN. Nelson Altamirano seconded the motion. The votes were as follows:

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

Motion passed unanimously.

Mountain West Montessori Academy
Board of Directors
Closed Session Statement
Monday, June 29, 2026
Location: 4125 W. Foxview Drive, South Jordan, UT 84009

MOUNTAIN WEST
Montessori Academy

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 29th day of June, 2026.

Stephen D. Barnes
Steve Barnes
Board Chair