



**Public Board Meeting Minutes  
January 24, 2024**

**Meeting Start Time:** 6:05 pm

**Meeting Adjourned:** 7:09 pm

**In attendance in person:** Kristen Gideon, Rikki Petruccelli, Lindsay Abrahams, AliShah Watson, Annabelle O'Malley, Michael Reilly, Rebecca Phillips, Matthew Petrin, and Courtney Fox (arrived at 6:12 pm).

**In attendance via Zoom:** Meghan Newberry, Shannon Tumolo, Sarah Nagle, Matthew Bender and Emily Burton.

**Regrets:** Loren Holland

**Guests:** Sierra Hawkins (sp)

**Public Comment**

- There was a public comment from a parent who was at the anchor location. She wanted to be present to hear the Board's view on the impact on racial bias in the school building and how student issues are handled, based on the oversight. She was also interested in how often the board is made aware of these issues. She explained that she is a mother a male child that had some issues in his first year, that resulted in him being switched to another classroom. She wanted to learn more about the Board process for these. She also had some incidents with the school secretary and is interested in what training staff participate in regarding to race and bias, as well as what information parents have access to related to staff training on race and bias. The Board Chair thanked her for her comment and indicated she would schedule something to follow up with her and provide additional information.
- There was a written public comment in the FSMA email account. The comment was a parent who provided some feedback on the Happy Hearts Dance and the noise levels of the music in the gymnasium. The Board Chair passed the information along to the Head of School and the relevant team for them to address.

**Approval Public Minutes**

The minutes from the December 13, 2023, public board meeting were reviewed. A motion to approve the December 13, 2023, public board meeting minutes was made by M. Reilly. Second by A. O'Malley. Vote passed. No objections. No abstentions.

**Website Monitoring Checklist from the Department of Education**

- The website monitoring report for December was reviewed. The report indicated that FSMA is compliant in the required areas.
- The website monitoring report for January was reviewed. The report indicated that FSMA is compliant in the required areas.



## Head of School Report

The Head of School discussed the following:

- Enrollment Updates
  - K. Gideon gave her perspective of assisting as a parent on the information sessions for prospective new students/families.
  - The 8<sup>th</sup> grade ambassadors will be at the next board meeting to talk to the board about their perspective as students.
  - The Head of School reviewed the enrollment numbers, covering how many applications were received for kindergarten.
  - The lottery is on February 14<sup>th</sup>. Families will receive notifications after that.
- Upcoming Events
  - Two Parent Education Events were held recently.
    - Montessori Math Event & Montessori at Home.
    - FSMA is continuing its partnership with Howard High School's Future Educator's Program. These are high school Students that volunteer once a week in the classrooms at FSMA.
    - Annual Charter School Conference (Charter Con) – This will be on the February in service day. All teaching staff will be in attendance. This year's focus is on diversity and equity. There will be various workshops at the event. Some FSMA teachers are presenting.
    - Happy Hearts is coming up. The PTO is aware of the volume issue and is currently working to decrease the volume. There is also an issue with the acoustics in the gymnasium that makes the volume issue more challenging.
    - Watch Me Work Day is coming up. Parents get to come in and watch their child in the classroom and see how the teacher is teaching.
    - Parent Teacher Conferences. This will occur the week after Watch Me Work Day.
  - FSMA hosted a team from the Department of Education ("DOE"). The FSMA team was able to give them a general understanding of how Montessori learning works so that they can see how the DOE curriculum requirements apply to FSMA and other Montessori schools. The DOE team also sat in on some classes.

## Committee Reports

### *Executive Committee Report*

M. Newberry reported that the Executive Committee did not have an opportunity to meet this month. M. Newberry reported that this is the time of year she likes to have one-on-one conversations with the board members individually to check in on how things are going with their service on the board and to the school. She will be reaching out to individual board members to schedule time to meet in the next couple of weeks.

### *Development Committee Report*



B. Phillips provided an update on the 10-year Anniversary Celebration. The 10-year Anniversary Celebration is scheduled for April 20, 2024, at The Mill in downtown Wilmington. The committee met on January 11<sup>th</sup> to discuss the sponsorships. The committee plans to have a member at the Happy Hearts event. The next planning committee meeting will be the week of February 12<sup>th</sup>. B. Phillips also mentioned that Do More 24 will be coming up and the committee is looking into incorporating fundraising for the Anniversary Celebration into Do More 24.

### ***Governance Committee Report***

S. Tumolo provided the governance update. The committee didn't have a chance to meet after the holiday. She did formally welcome the new board members. She reminded them about the requirement for board members to serve on a committee and recommended they give it some thought in preparation for their one-on-one conversation with M. Newberry. S. Tumolo advised that she will also send the new board member the new welcome package that consists of a lot of helpful information on class allocations, meeting dates, and committees. S. Tumolo will be reaching out to all board members to ensure that bios and headshots are all updated. She provided additional updates on the following:

- Board members who are leaving after this upcoming annual meeting.
- Moving the annual meeting from a Wednesday evening to an extended Saturday session that also includes compliance training after the annual meeting. Possible dates will be sent via email in a poll format. The plan is to finalize a date at the February board meeting.
- Beginning a structured offboarding process for any board members whose term is ending this June.
- The final version of the annual report will be circulated to the board members.

R. Petrucci provided an update on AV/technology in order to improve our hybrid meetings. She received some preliminary approval from her job about donating some surplus equipment to FSMA. It would allow the board the ability to collaborate better for hybrid meetings.

### ***Finance Committee Report***

M. Petrin provided the finance committee report. The narrative for December was discussed. As of December 31, 2023, 50% of the fiscal year was completed. Approximately \$3.3 million in revenues were collected, which represents about 99% of preliminary budgeted revenues. Year to date, expenses are at \$5.35 million, which puts us at 46% of our budgeted expense allotment and in line with the budget. The reserves are unchanged at \$1.6 million. We are in good standing with our bond covenants. A motion to approve and post the December finance narrative was made by B. Phillips. Second by M. Petrin. Vote passed. No objections. No Abstentions.

M. Petrin also reviewed the proposed final budget for the 2024-2025 school year. The biggest change is an increase in revenues. The preliminary budget had revenues at \$13.5 million and the final proposed budget has revenues at \$13.7 million. The change is a result of the change in the pupil count and two new teachers coming in next year. Expenses are expected to be at \$10.76 million. There is a slight increase in legal expenses, cleaning expenses, and instructional supplies, but the expenses are generally in line with the preliminary budget. The final budget is close to the preliminary budget that was previously circulated. Overall, M. Petrin reported that he



believes the budget is very achievable and there is no real risk. A motion to approve the budget was made by R. Petruccelli. Second by M. Reilly. Vote passed. No objections. No Abstentions.

**Executive Session**

A motion to move into executive session was made by M. Petrin. Second by A. O'Malley. Moved into executive session at 7:02 pm. Returned from executive session at 7:09 pm.

**A motion to adjourn was made by R. Petruccelli. Second by L. Abrahams. Meeting adjourned at 7:09 pm.**