



**April 16, 2015, 4:00pm  
Minutes**

## **Fort Collins Montessori School Board Meeting**

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**Present:**

**Board Officers** - Ronnie Estelle, President; Lorie Federman, Vice-President; Kathy Lynch, Secretary; John Sanderson, Treasurer

**Ex Officio Board Members** - Jennifer Schiller, Faculty Representative; Frank Vincent, Head of School

**Community** – Jessica Knight, FCMS Director of Child Care

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**1. Welcome and Reading of Vision and Mission** – Read by Board President Ronnie Estelle

**FCMS Statement of Values:** Board President Ronnie also read from the new FCMS Value Statement, prepared during a recent FCMS Board/Staff Retreat, April 9, 2015:

In order to exemplify these values, we must:

- honor our originality, build trust among ourselves, respect our differences, inspire each other with candor and courage
- nurture relationship and build a community through hard work and a focus on learning

**2. April 8, 2015 Board Meeting Minutes Approval**

*Motion to approve the minutes from April 8, 2015 by Board Treasurer John Sanderson*

*Comments: None*

*Seconded by: Vice-President Lorie Federman*

*VOTE: All in favor, Motion passes*

**3. Public Comment** No public comment

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**4. Board Membership Process – Formalizing Policy Statement**

**Discussion:**

**How important is it that board members are committed to Montessori philosophy and the Mission and Vision of FCMS?** While a future Board cannot choose to enact a different curriculum other than Montessori, the Board does have the prerogative to define Montessori differently and change the wording of the Mission and Vision statements of the school. Thus, perhaps this argues for making sure that new Board member candidates are committed to FCMS's Montessori philosophy, Mission and Vision. We should ask applicants on the application or in an interview in one of the following ways:

- Do you or can you support the Montessori philosophy?
- What do you love about Montessori philosophy?
- Can you sign our value statement?

- Our board is committed to Montessori. What is your understanding and commitment to the Montessori Philosophy? Have you read and do you understand our FCMS Vision and Mission?

**Is 8-10 hours of work a month realistic?** Perhaps we should change the wording to *8-10 hours in addition to attendance at monthly Board meetings....*

Insert **or Designated Board member** to the statement... “The Board President and Board Vice President **or designated Board member** determine whether the candidate's qualifications are such that he or she should be invited to attend a Board meeting to meet the entire Board in person”.

**Parent Council** – How is the Parent Council formed? It makes sense to form the Parent Council as a subcommittee of the School Accountability Committee (SAC). The Parent Council is made up of parents or guardians of children currently attending the school and will nominate and elect parent representatives (of currently enrolled students) to the FCMS Governing Board. The Council should communicate with the Nominating Committee to ensure that parent nominees will best contribute to the success of FCMS. The voting Board Member on the SAC will provide guidance to the Parent Council on the need for and timing of nominees to the Board.

**Nominating Committee** - A subcommittee of the Board? The Nominating Committee (NC) is the Board’s formal subcommittee charged with the task of bringing potential community members to the Board for possible membership. The NC will consist of at least one and no more than two voting board members. The NC may also include one or both non-voting board members, and may include one parent representative from the Parent Council. Board Members, parents, and staff can also recommend Board Member candidates to the NC.

We have two more meetings to vote on new Board members. Currently, we have four candidates.

**Motion:** *FCMS will adopt the Board Membership Process*

The Board will table the Motion until the Board Membership Process policy and statement is complete.

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## 5. Board Officer Changes

a.) **Resignation** from Board President Ronnie Estelle, effective April 17, 2015, and resignation from the Board effective April 30, 2015.

b.) **Discussion** to fill Board President’s seat:

Treasure John Sanderson volunteered to become Board President and left the room to be absent from the discussion. Board President Ronnie Estelle remained in the room, but recused herself from the discussion and vote.

**Comments:**

Board Secretary Kathy Lynch supports and endorses John Sanderson as the new Board President. HOS Frank Vincent has worked well with John and endorses him.

Board Faculty Representative Jennifer Schiller, on behalf of the staff, acknowledges that the staff has a great working relationship with John and endorses him to be the next Board President.

Vice President Lorie Federman says that John is a great team leader, committed to Montessori philosophy, and endorses John.

**Motion:** *FCMS Board members nominates and approves John Sanderson as Board President. Motion by*

*Vice President Lorie Federman*

**Comments:** *None*

**Seconded by:** *Board Secretary Kathy Lynch*

**VOTE:** *All in favor, Motion passes*

John returns to the Board room and accepts his new role as FCMS Board President. Observation by John is that Ronnie Estelle needs to submit her letter of resignation to the Board.

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## **6. CAPS for Grades K-4<sup>th</sup> for 2015-2016**

**Motion:** *For 2015-2016 FCMS will cap the number of K students at 16, the number of 1<sup>st</sup> grade students at 13, the number of 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students at 17, the number of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students at 11, the number of 4<sup>th</sup> grade students at 6. Motion by Board Secretary Kathy Lynch*

**Comments:**

- HOS Frank Vincent offers the reasoning behind the aforementioned caps which are based on the need to keep a balance of ages in the multi-year classrooms.
- Board President John Sanderson notes that the above numbers were submitted to the Poudre School District this week.
- FCMS Guide Rep Jen Schiller believes that keeping the balance of ages and genders is important and often difficult to determine. The above numbers, while not in complete balance, are very good with the age levels we have.

**Seconded by:** *Board Member Ronnie Estelle*

**Additional Comments:** FCMS Guide Rep Jen Schiller...What happens when a family wishes to enroll their 4<sup>th</sup> grade child with Montessori primary-3<sup>rd</sup> grade experience and is put on the wait list? The Board members agree that because we have caps due to limited classroom space, these students with Montessori background must be put on the wait list even though students with no Montessori experience are enrolled. This situation will improve when we get a new facility with greater enrollment capacity. It is critical to continue this discussion in the future and possibly address it through policy development.

**VOTE:** *All in favor, Motion passes*

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## **7. Dr. Doc Wiener's Proposal**

In light of last week's Board and Staff Training, are there changes we would like to suggest in Dr. Wiener's HOS/Board Proposal? Outline steps and assign tasks moving forward on this proposal.

Board President John Sanderson highlighted the two main areas outlined in Dr. Wiener's proposal:

- Defining Roles and Responsibilities of Board and HOS
- Consider and respond to the list of items from the April 9 Board/Staff Retreat regarding what we need to work on as a school.

The upcoming board training on May 16, 2015, 10am-2pm, was planned originally to work only on Board Roles and Responsibilities, but perhaps this training is also a good time to address both of the two items from Dr. Wiener's proposal. Board Member Ronnie Estelle commented that the Board training's focus was changed to Fiduciary training due to CDE requirements. Board President John Sanderson will meet with the Gina Schlemann of the CDE to get clarification on what we should cover during our training.

Board President John commented that following our April 9 Board/Staff Retreat, Board members

and the HOS, discussed working with our retreat facilitator in the future. HOS Frank Vincent commented that in retrospect, he wonders if the facilitator is a good fit for the Charter school requirements. The Board decided to table this discussion for now and will address at a later Board discussion.

The Board discussed immediate needs for training:

- We should merge Doc's Board Roles and Responsibilities and Terry's Fiduciary training for the May 16 Board Training.
- Communication
- Facilities

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**8. Values Statement** – Prepared by Staff and Board at our Board/Staff Retreat, April 9, 2015.

**Board President John Sanderson - Discussion on next steps with Values Statement**

Board President John will send the Values Statement to Board and Staff for review and will ask everyone to share big picture thoughts, asking:

- Does it capture what you intended?
- Is there anything that makes you uncomfortable?
- Is there anything you would change or say differently?

Board Member Ronnie Estelle - We should also obtain buy in from the FCMS community.

- We could share it with SAC. How will we share it...via email, on the website?
- We could do this at two upcoming Parent Picnic events on either May 2 or May 29.

**6:00pm Motion:** Vice President Lorie Federman moves that we adjourn

**Seconded by** Ronnie Estelle

**Closing and Adjourn**