



April 3, 2021  
Quarterly Board Meeting  
Montessori School of Englewood

Location: WebEx

Present:

Board Members: Mike Sculnick, Joe Motto, Karen Anderson, Ebonie Townsend, Marcus Robinson, Jim Sulzer, Quillen Blackwell, Peter Talmers, Gabrielle Sansonetti

Administration: Rita Nolan, Nyela Wells, Maggie Mikuzis

University of Chicago Booth Fellows: Deanna Wiblitzhouser, Aaras Shah

Roll call and minutes taken by: Joe Motto

I. Call to Order

Anderson called the meeting to order.

II. Finance

Sculnick delivered the report on school finances as of the January 31, 2021. We are running a deficit of ~\$200,000 to budget, up from ~\$130,000 previously. There have been expense increases (e.g., salaries, hardware), and also revenue decreases relating to Preschool for All funding reductions and loss of student headcount. The funding landscape is changing, renewing the need for fundraising.

We have roughly \$400,000 in Paycheck Protection Act loan funds pending forgiveness which if forgiven by June 30 will convert that liability to income for the current school year.

Discussion was had concerning the line of credit application, which remains outstanding.

III. Strategic Plan

Robinson reported on the status of strategic planning. The committee has been organized. The first session is scheduled for April 12. The committee expects to do its work this quarter and report back at the next quarterly meeting.



#### IV. Head Start / COLA

Motto circulated in advance of the meeting and led discussion on the Head Start COLA increase budget. The funds are broken down into a mandatory 1.22% adjustment of salary for one pay period (\$5,042) and \$5,706 worth of educational supplies, totaling approximately \$11,171. Robinson moved to approve the budget. Motto seconded. All voted in favor, none opposed. Head Start COLA budget approved.

#### V. Executive Director, Principal, and Head Start Report

Nolan circulated in advance and led discussion of the Executive Director, principal, and Head Stuart combined written report (*see Ex. A*), including the summer school plan (*see Ex. B*), and various other items of interest. Those include:

- Save the date for our June 24 fundraiser at Christy Webber Landscaping.
- School enrollment this year was not as was expected and budgeted pre-pandemic, which is having a negative financial impact, though still we have grown year over year.
- We have a funding gap created by CPS's decision to move most Preschool for All funds out of "center-based" schools like MSE to CPS local schools. This is a likely permanent decrease in funding that we will have to address.
- Discussions with the Bezos Foundation are ongoing. Spirited discussion was had concerning strategic fit and long-term interests of the school and students.
- The school charter is up for renewal in the fall. We need to engage with the CPS Board of Directors and invite them to visit the school. The three charter schools that were up for renewal this past year were scored on a new rubric as the district does not have two years of reliable Schools Quality Rating data, due to the pandemic.

#### VI. University of Chicago Booth Fellow Report

Wiblitzhouser and Shah reported on the results of their analysis of the school's performance during COVID as assessed through parent surveys, calls and interviews with family, staff, administration, and other data they compiled. In summary, areas of strength in performance included technology, food support/partnerships, academics, and facilities/reentry procedures. Areas for continued improvement include social/emotional support, staff support, and communications. Detailed written analyses will be distributed to board members.



The fellows were thanked and applauded for their excellent and informative work.

VII. Public Participation

Opportunity was given for public comment.

VIII. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

The next quarterly meeting of the board will be on Monday, June 14, 2021, at 6:00 p.m., via videoconference.

# Exhibit A



# THE Montessori School of Englewood | A Chicago Public Charter School

6936 South Hermitage Avenue | Chicago, Illinois 60636

## Executive Director Report April 4th, 2021

### *Executive Director*

#### **Fundraising**

- Board: \$86,714.70
- Corporate: \$19,046.84
- Grants: \$107,500.00
- Individual: \$65,384.29
- Inkind: \$18,000.00
- **Total: \$296,645.83**
- TMSOE's Fundraiser is scheduled for June 24th at Christy Webber Landscaping. Christy Webber donated the location of their Urban Farm.
- TMSOE'S Grant Report for all grant submittals: [TMSOE Grant Report](#)

#### **Budget**

- Projected enrollment was down by 18 students for the charter school, which negatively impacted the budget by \$180,000. Enrollment numbers were projected and submitted to CPS pre-pandemic. TMSOE budgeted for 330 students and currently has 311. Despite the impact of the pandemic, TMSOE enrollment grew year over year.
- As Chicago moves towards a Universal Preschool model, as many large Metropolitan Cities, Preschool For All funding (PFA) became dedicated to many CPS local schools and was not available to many "center-based" programs like TMSOE. The Montessori School of Englewood lost \$250,000 in funding from PFA, although a \$100,000 bridge grant somewhat offset this. TMSOE will need to replace this funding
- The Chicago Department of Family and Support Services has reapplied to the Federal Government to renew its Head Start Grant. However, it is widely

anticipated that they will not retain total autonomy over the entire grant. Many non-profit organizations have applied directly to the Federal Government for funding. Filing now to the federal was not an option for TMSOE; as a small organization, we do not have the backend infrastructure to support the budget's compliance.

- At this time, TMSOE is exploring other options for funding for Early Childhood.
- This time Bezos Foundation is not a strategic partnership fit at this time. We have a third engagement planned for three weeks out.
- TMSOE hired additional assistants for the 9-12 level due to the need to have in-person and remote learning. This expenditure was not a budgeted item as we planned on having one shared assistant because of class size.
- Due to an overwhelming assessment, TMSOE had to hire an additional special education teacher to comply with the state. See the Specialized Support report further down in the document.
- Another unbudgeted expense brought on by the pandemic was the need to hire a technology specialist.
- We also needed an adaptive curriculum for remote learning. These platforms and computer programs were also an unexpected expense. (Cadence, Lexia, Seesaw, Newsela, etc.)

### **Charter Renewal:**

TMSOE is up for Charter Renewal this fall. We need to engage with the CPS Board of Directors and invite them to visit the school. The three charter schools that were up for renewal this past year were scored on a new rubric as the district does not have two years of reliable Schools Quality Rating data.

CPS rolled out a new Operational Scorecard focusing on the following:

- School Governance
- Diverse Learners (IEP Timeliness rate, IEP Completion Rate, All Related Service Providers completing data monthly)
- English Learners
- Students in Temporary Living Situations
- Parent Issue Resolution
- Student Admission and Enrollment
- Teacher Licensure
- Student Transportation
- Student Discipline
- School Safety

TMSOE received the 2019-2020 Operational School Card. The following areas of improvement are:

- Meeting all Diverse Learners Requirements
- Teacher Licensure
- Student Admission(only the lottery policy)

### **Training Center**

- The Chicago Montessori Residency was renamed The Montessori Residency of Chicago, a suggestion from Taproot. The new name more closely aligns with the name of the school.
- TMSOE created a Training Center Committee. The Committee met with Jim Sulzer to discuss the vision, mission, and need for a business plan.
- TMSOE worked with Taproot to develop branding and marketing language.
- TMSOE is in the final stages of accreditation for our preschool training center. However, we need to create a marketing plan and develop a start-up budget specifically for promotional materials.

### **Enrollment and Attendance**

- Preschool-67-- 13 Slots available
- Charter School- 311--19 Slots available
- Total: 389 students---32 Slots available
- MSE's attendance hovers around 89.6%. The data indicates a 3% increase since the option of in-person. The highest enrollment in the school is Middle School, with an average of 94.8% weekly.

### **Partnerships**

- World Central Kitchen continues to donate 300 meals Monday-Friday
- Lawyers Lend a Hand continues to tutor our students on Tuesday evenings.
- St. Andrews Women's Philoptochos donated funds intended to be used for technology.
- TMSOE has met with The Trotter Project to discuss educational programs for the spring/summer semesters.
- TMSOE's Fundraiser is scheduled for June 24th at Christy Webber Landscaping. Christy Webber donated the location of their Urban Farm.

## *Principal*

This month kicked off the Equity Leadership Training with Embracing Equity.

- All staff received an Equity Audit Survey to be completed **by April 16th**.
- Just about all the teachers have completed self-evaluation conversations with me and their "Level Heads."
- We have started the process of looking carefully at the need for a Social Worker to assist with Social-Emotional Learning (SEL).
- Planning for summer enrichment programming is underway.
- Chicago Public School has elected to start school one week early, so the last week of August is the proposed new start date.
- I am working closely with the Director of Data and Assessments to monitor and coordinate state testing dates.
- Our 8th-graders will graduate on Thursday, June 17th.

## *Primary*

### **ERSEA:**

- Our enrollment has increased as of March 19th. We currently have 20 students enrolled in our three in-person classrooms; seven students receive remote learning. We intend to fill our 13 slots that are still available by the end of the school year.

### **Disabilities - Head Start:**

- We have met the 10% disability quota for Head Start with ongoing evaluations for two students in April 2021.
- We have also received parental consent for individual child screenings to be provided for student's social, emotional health.
- Our Mental Health consultant is currently working to give therapy sessions for our children and families enrolled in our head start program.
- Student referrals are ongoing for this school year. We hope to establish a new partnership with Stepping Stones Speech and Language organization to provide services for our students with speech and language requirements only.

### **Family and Community Engagement:**

- We have provided educational and vocational training for parents looking forward to getting their GED and job/career training and assisting with medical needs.

- We have assisted parents with meeting Head Start compliance with updated physicals and dental with Precision Dental Care and Friend Family Health Center.
- Parents can work with and engage their children with virtual home education through Ready Rosie. This branch utilizes Teaching Strategies to help parents follow up with helping their child meet the necessary milestones.
- Parents as Teachers is also another home resource parents can utilize to observe what their child may need more help with accomplishing and assist their child in meeting this milestone.
- We are currently working to build more partnerships with neighboring organizations to provide our families with the resources they need.

#### **Miscellaneous:**

- We are working towards establishing more partnerships with outside agencies.
- We are currently recruiting for the new school year.
- Staff will be taking the Montessori Training over the summer.
- We are applying for CCAP funding.
- We are currently working on the Community Assessment due on 04/02/2021.
- We are also working on the Self-Assessment, which is due on 04/16/2021.
- March attendance 80.08%

#### **Education:**

- We are continuing the monitoring of progress in children's development in literacy and mathematics. Parents of children below developmental expectations in any developmental areas were informed during family conferences and provided learning activities from Teaching Strategies Gold that help reinforce specific skills and concepts in the space needed to families whose children were below level. Teachers will work with children in small and large groups in the classroom to ensure that children progress in the areas below developmental expectations. Teachers will be implementing learning activities using the Intentional Teaching Cards from Teaching Strategies Gold that corresponds with developmental needs. By reviewing preliminary checkpoints, teachers will know if a child is falling below developmental expectations in a specific development area. Parents will also continue to receive homework packets throughout the new checkpoint period as an

extension of classroom instruction to expand and enrich the regular classroom activities and ensure mastery of a particular skill or concept.

### ***Kindergarten***

- Out of 43 kindergarten students, 25 have chosen in-person instruction. In-person classrooms are almost total capacity (we will have two spots left once Quarter 4 begins).
- We continue to have a fully remote option for our families who choose to remain online. Homework packets are being created and families are to pick up and return their child's work every 2 weeks.

### ***Lower Elementary***

- Approximately 50% of students welcomed back into the building, with four teachers teaching in-person.
- Three staff members remain remote to provide consistent instruction for the remaining 50% of 1st-3rd graders. Teachers continue to hand out packets and materials for those choosing an at-home option.
- Staff continuing with Sarah Cotner's remedial phonics program, finding great success. One staff member reports that it was the best professional development that they have had the opportunity to attend at TMSOE.

### ***Special Education***

- All meetings have been scheduled for the year, and we are on track to complete all annual reviews and evaluations. Our overall compliance will still not be perfect, as re-evaluations did not occur during the spring of 2020 due to the pandemic, and therefore were completed late.
- We are thinking ahead to the next school year and are developing a SPED master schedule that favors inclusion and efficient use of SPED and RSP resources. The goals are to keep the most diverse learners in the general education classroom most of the time, increase achievement for all, and stay within the SPED budget.
- We are also planning to focus on early literacy interventions to reduce students' rate of being identified as needing an IEP. Currently, the district average is 14%. The national average is also 14%. MSE is at 18%, and our goal is to reduce that to 14% through early intervention efforts.
- Kristen O'Meara is beginning a three-course program to qualify for the SPED Director endorsement, including SPED finance and SPED law.
- Mekea Williamson is almost done with her student teaching and is scheduled to earn the LBS1 endorsement this spring.

### ***Bilingual/ MTSS***

- EL Program Parent Notification Letters have been sent home.
- ACCESS testing planning has officially begun, and in-person students have already been scheduled
- ACCESS testing letters will be sent home Monday, 4/5/21
- All eligible teachers have been certified in ACCESS testing, completed the required ACCESS policy training, and signed the testing security agreements.
- The Bilingual team is currently working on starting a GoFundMe for the Rosetta Stone English as a Second Language k-12 learners program. This program provides evidence-proven strategies for language acquisition that directly affect ACCESS testing scores.
- MTSS winter testing has been completed, and new students across all grade levels have been added to the interventionists' caseloads.
- There are currently 75 students across K-8th grade receiving Multi-Tiered Systems of support either in the remote or in-person setting.

### ***Operations***

#### **Compliance**

- 70% of compliance has been submitted to CPS for the year, with a 96% accuracy rate.
- All Staff members are in the process of completing state-mandated training, including COVID-19 Training, Title IX Training, Mandated Reporter, and Chronic Conditions.
- As per the new state requirement, MSE is rolling out the Title IX training for students.
- The Regional Safety Manager from CPS visited MSE and spent time with students discussing the following topics: fire and evacuation drill, allergen drill, shelter-in-place, and lockdown drill. All training has been completed for the 2020/2021 school year.

#### **Building**

- CPS will complete a full bathroom modernization for the first floor. MSE conducted the final meeting for the 100% CD Drawings and Specs. The bathroom remodeling will consist of:
  - Replacement of flooring
  - Painting and tiling the whole bathroom
  - Completion of any additional ADA compliance
  - New sinks
  - Exhaust fans (if needed)
  - Any additional plumbing issues that may happen in the process
- Over Spring Break, Engineers completed a third-floor floor renovation.

### **Human Resources**

- Currently, we are in the process of rolling out our benefits package virtually via the Paycor platform. This will help maintain and audit all benefit documents directly.
- HR is gathering staff Letters of Intent to return. Approximately 80% received with 100% positive Intent.
- HR is in the planning stage for implementing a fully automated Onboarding process (i.e., auto W4's...etc.) as part of a general Human Capital Management project.
- The groundwork for a school-wide Compensation Analysis is in progress.

### **Technology**

- Continuing support of Remote Learning modalities in conjunction with the in-school backing has been challenging due to the general scarcity of functioning units.
- Preparations begin to support formal school-wide testing activities.
- Verizon corporate is currently reviewing TMSOE's Digital Literacy Program for potential partnership opportunities.
- Our in-house IT Specialist was instrumental in locally solving a nationally recognized fault in the Google G-Suite Platform that allowed students to hi-jack Remote Learning G-Meet Sessions (...locking out Teachers, booting other students).

# Exhibit B

## Summer School 2021

5 weeks enrichment, 4 weeks remediation

Enrichment - Monday, July 12 - Friday, August 13

Remediation - Monday, July 19 - Friday, August 13

### A. NSSI Enrichment program (5 weeks, July 12 - August 13)

Offered to current 3rd - 6th graders

- 3rd - Raven (\$5,000)
- 4th/5th mixed age class - Maria (year round)
- 6th and 7th mixed age class - Keani (reading), Leo (math) (\$5,000 + \$5,000)

Proposed Daily Schedule:

<b>8:30 - 8:45</b>	morning meeting
<b>8:45 - 9:30</b>	ELA - novel study (group A) Math problem solving (group B)
<b>9:30 - 10:15</b>	ELA - close reading (group A) Math foundations (group B)
<b>break</b>	
<b>10:30 - 11:15</b>	Math - problem solving (group A) ELA novel study (group B)
<b>11:15 - 12:00</b>	Math - foundations (group A) ELA close reading (group B)
<i>students dismiss 12:00</i>	
<b>2:30 - 3:30</b>	Teachers PD (remote) - 2x/week (per subject/grade)

Curriculum:

NSSI curriculum overview

- [math](#)
- [reading](#)

[novel selection overview](#)

Estimated Enrollment - approximately 60 students

Cost:

- 75 students at \$40/student = \$3,000
- texts for ELA novel study:
  - 3rd/4th novel: 30 x \$5.60 = \$168
  - 5th/6th novel: 30 x \$7.99 = \$240
- Student supplies - composition notebooks for two subjects, pencils, sharpeners etc. = \$400

Estimated Total: \$3,808

Salaries: \$5,000 stipend x 3 (Maria is year-round employee) = \$15,000

**Total:** \$18,808 for Enrichment

**B. Elementary Remediation Program (4 weeks, July 19 - August 13)**

Offered to current 1st - 6th graders by teacher recommendation - 15 students/class - 4 weeks

- 1st and 2nd (lower el staff rotation) - (Glenn, Emily, Shenetta, Johori) - \$4,000
- 3rd grade (Sarah + Nour, 2 weeks each) (\$4,000)
- 4th and 5th (Jamie + Felicia)
- 6th and 7th? (Keisha + Daniel) (\$4,000 + \$4,000)

= \$16,000

Proposed Daily Schedule:

**1st - 3rd grades**

<b>8:30 - 8:45</b>	morning meeting
<b>8:45 - 9:30</b>	Interactive Read Aloud sentence writing
<b>9:30 - 10:15</b>	Montessori for All reading pathway
<b>break</b>	
<b>10:30 - 11:15</b>	Math content lesson - <a href="#">Jump math</a>
<b>11:15 - 12:00</b>	math fluency work (math facts and basic operations, mental math)
<i>students dismiss 12:00</i>	

**4th - 6th grades**

<b>8:30 - 8:45</b>	morning meeting
<b>8:45 - 9:30</b>	Interactive Read Aloud paragraph writing
<b>9:30 - 10:15</b>	Orton Gillingham reading remediation **
<b>break</b>	
<b>10:30 - 11:15</b>	Math content lesson - Jump math
<b>11:15 - 12:00</b>	math fluency work (math facts and basic operations, mental math)
<i>students dismiss 12:00</i>	

\*\*when placing students in groups, can we keep children from homerooms together so they can continue with the curriculum where they leave off after summer?

## Math

### Jump Math

- consult with level heads to determine which [teaching topics](#) are most high-priority
- Jamie to create a summer scope and sequence for math; print and organize lesson plans and student materials for teachers

### C. Kindergarten Remediation

- approximately 28 students
- Staffed by Kilmaha, Leah, and Lori (\$12,000)
- Use pre-reading curriculum from Trillium Montessori

### Total Estimated Cost for Summer School

Enrichment	
<i>Staff</i>	\$15,000
<i>Curriculum/Supplies</i>	\$3,800
Remediation	
<i>Staff</i>	\$16,000
Supplies	\$500
<b>Total</b>	= \$35,300

Next Steps:

Office to send out a formal letter about summer school

- Teachers make an initial call to parents of students they've recommended
- Summer programming can be mandatory for 3rd and 6th graders

Jamie to coordinate with Level Heads on remedial math curriculum - pick math units based on NWEA performance areas/classroom observation

Jamie to curate math teaching and student materials, print and sort to have ready for summer start

Jamie and Daniel sign up for Orton Gillingham training (30 hours) to complete before summer school