



Board of Directors - October 2025 Meeting Minutes

Team Dashboard - 2025-2026

Mission & Vision	Meeting Logistics	Meeting Roles
<p>Mission</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">We are a community of diverse families and educators, working together to offer quality Montessori education in a nurturing environment that enriches, empowers, and inspires children to reach their potential and encourages parents to become responsible for and involved with their children's education. <p>Vision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Changing the world by nurturing children and their families to be informed, lifelong learners who are a force of change, in education, the community, and society.	<p>Meeting Day/Time: 10/14/2025 @ 6:00pm</p> <p>Meeting Location: Lyceum</p> <p>Team Members Present: Lakita Wells, Kia Green, Suave Kyles, Tim Vargo, Brittney Qualls, Rashonda Jones, Ben Correia-Harker, Mikaya Clark, Brenda Simonis, <i>Tracy Williams, Jean Dellemann</i></p> <p>Team Members Absent: derria byrd, Patrick Bader, Ali Kopyt</p>	<p>Facilitator: Mikaya Clark</p> <p>Time Keeper: Tim Vargo</p> <p>Food: Lakita Wells</p>

Most Recent Meeting Action Items / Online Board Activity

- ☐ **E-Vote Results | BoD Vote to Approve Revised Budget:** On Monday, Sept 15, Brenda Simonis, Treasure, posted a motion to approve the [revised 2025-2026 budget](#). Voting concluded on Friday, September 19. The motion was unanimously approved with a 10-0 vote.
- ☐ **Board Discussion | Group Agreements/Guides:** During the September Parent Board meeting, members collaboratively drafted a set of proposed group agreements aimed at fostering more effective and inclusive communication. On Wednesday, Sept. 10, Kantara Souffrant, Vice President/Governance chair, initiated a Basecamp discussion, in which Board members highlighted both support and concerns. Several board members expressed that while the agreements may seem basic, formalizing them could strengthen shared values, improve onboarding, and support governance. Others questioned their necessity, suggesting that professional norms should suffice and raised concerns about tone and enforcement. Specific feedback led to revisions, including replacing “assume positive intent” with “don’t take comments personally” and adding “check your bias.” The updated draft will be reviewed and potentially voted on at the October 14 board meeting, with final revisions due by October 7.

10/14/25		
Time	Item	Discussion
5 min	Welcome and Approval of Agenda	Brittany motions to approve agenda. Brenda seconds. The agenda is approved
7 min	ED Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Director Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Q: On early release days, what happens with staff like Mr. Barry and Ms. Blythe)? A: On Early Release days these staff members work on their lesson plans, update TC, and professional development opportunities. <i>(posted to Basecamp)</i> ○ Q: Will we refill the K3 spot by pulling from the waitlist? Will we refill the 5th grade seat, if a student has Montessori background? A: Administration plans to refill the vacant K3 seat, but will not fill the 5th grade seat since the school year has already begun and accepting a new Upper EI student has challenges. <i>(posted to Basecamp)</i> • Fund Development - Highland Hustle Numbers <i>(posted to Basecamp)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Total Tickets Sold: 401 ○ Total Raised: \$15,005.06 ○ Over 250 Attendees ○ Number of Family Sponsors (\$100.00 Level): 29 ○ Donations Made (Beyond Registration Fees): 72
40 min	Committee Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Results of the 24-25 Finance Audit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The auditor noted that we are in a really good position. ■ There has been great progress on mortgage ■ Defensive interval is a plus and stronger compared to other schools (the school could operate for 9.7 months if all funding was lost). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow up/clarification needed regarding liquid funds ■ Noted investments are performing really well this year ○ July 2025 Financials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Highlights posted to Basecamp: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • July consists of Toddler & Summer programming and gearing up for the school year. Total Program net income is \$25K for the month of July - offset by loss in investments resulting in a small loss overall for the month.

- Revenue categories: In this first month of the year we saw a market dip resulting in a loss of \$31K.
- Balance Sheet: Grants receivable includes first MPS payment (received in August). Accounts Payable includes the last invoice for the window project of \$83K (paid in August).
- Expenses to highlight this month: The window project is completed and depreciation will start in August. The total project cost \$258K (up from the budgeted estimate of \$228K). The \$30K increase was attributed to more brake metal material required than initially bid resulting in an change order mid-project. Other expenses include summer/toddler programming, classroom orders for the upcoming year, and related shipping costs.
- Upcoming expenses to note: We are switching out our copiers to an upgraded model resulting in a renewal of our 5-year lease on the 4 copy machines. The monthly cost is slightly lower with this renewal (starting Sept.).

- **Facilities**

- Updates from Director of Facilities & Maintenance
 - Monthly meeting cadence has been established (third Monday of the month)

- **Academics & SEL**

- First sub-committee meeting held. The cadence will be second Tuesday of the month
- Committee charter has been established
- Academic Update - presented by Jean Dellemann
 - Montessori focus - first six weeks of school have been devoted to getting settled and into the groove
 - Academic Program Updates: Curriculum and Instruction maps have been refined for Upper and Lower EI. This helps to ensure continuity across the classrooms. This year the team will focus on Children House to ensure alignment across the board, along with reading instruction lessons connected to the Science of Reading approach. Teachers are going through additional literacy curriculum training (LETRS)
 - Utilizing Assessment & Progress Monitoring program - iReady in replacement to STAR (a benchmark screening for grades 1-8) designed to provide an idea of how students are doing and to guide intervention planning. The change to iReady is an MPS change. iReady gives a different scale and will require adjustment.
 - Aimsweb+ screener for K4-3rd grade - personal action plans created and

results shared with parents at conferences

- Third grade is the focal point in literacy assessments because research shows that at this point students transition from learning to read to reading to learn. At this point students who struggle are significantly more likely to struggle throughout their schooling leading to higher dropout rates, lower college attendance and limited career opportunities.

- Professional Development - a lot of time and energy committed to learning the new assessment tools. Spent records day analyzing data and building plans; spent Early Release day beginning work to develop a new progress report format and learning aismweb+

- School Improvement Plan - Short Term SMART Goals aligned to the Theory of Action

- Adjusted the focus of attendance to address chronic absenteeism
- Taking a look Nautilus engagement - there will be a reduction in time students spend outside of the classroom
 - Nautilus created to address large rates of black boys being pulled out of classes for behavior issues at a higher rate than others
 - Address the 3 Ds: Dangerous, Destructive and Demeaning
 - Multiple plans and levels of Nautilus from student and one-on-one connection with a Nautilus team member to support for lead teachers
- Goal to garner at least 75% of families will report increased understanding of Montessori methods

- **Governance**

- *Deliberation & Decision-Making* | [Group Agreements](#) Next Steps
 - Group Agreements will be incorporated into the handbook and will continually be linked in the agenda. A physical copy will also be made available during board meetings
- Mid-Year Board Retreat Planning (February 2026)
 - February retreat provides an opportunity to recalibrate on accountability
 - Kantara will create a Doodle Poll for potential dates

15 min	DISCUSSION Board Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish accountability measurements to ensure Board Members are fulfilling duties <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance: Board members expected to attend 9 meetings, 3 of which can be attended virtually Upholding responsibilities on the Board: As a larger Board, we all have a responsibility to check in on each other, ensure accountability and encourage leadership development among Board members Financial Contributions: There is a commitment to contribute financially to HCS, inclusive of the Highland Hustle donations. Pulsing confidence in the BoD President & Executive Committee: Potential measurement tools: a survey sent to Board Members in February. The tool would assess board members' commitment to their agreements and responsibilities, and dive into the effectiveness of the president. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> According to the bylaws there could potentially be a new president each year, which poses challenges with administrative duties. This tool would measure the effectiveness of the president and provide an opportunity to correct issues. During February retreat will need to address bylaws. Establish more clarification on board member representation at school events. Create HCS Board Member Passes to be worn when members are in the building. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How many school events are board members expected to attend? Minimally one school-wide event per quarter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The agenda will be updated to include visibility into school events and Board member engagement
10 min	Round Robin Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kantara advised the board that she connected with WRCCS and has proposed to utilize the available 8 hours to work with Ms. Tracy on succession planning. Tracy is NOT leaving at this time, but the goal is to create a plan for when she does. Kantara also connected with WRCCS to learn about how other charter schools are being affected by the federal changes. Right now there are no changes that are impacting charter schools and should there be any changes, Ms. Tracy will be notified. Ben asked for guidance on financials. Brenda has a cheat sheet that goes line-by-line to clarify each document and will provide that to the larger group via Basecamp. This resource will also be included each month with the board financials.
5 min	Adjourn	Suave motions to adjourn. Rashonda seconds. The meeting is adjourned.