



Board of Directors - February 2026 Minutes

Team Dashboard - 2025-2026

Mission & Vision

Mission

- 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.

Vision:

- 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.

Board Group Agreements / Guides: Academic Year 2025-2026

- One speaker at a time
- Monitor air time (move up/move back)
- Active listening
- Contribute to the conversation
- Pre-share meeting materials
- Be Present
- Seek to Understand
- Ask clarifying questions
- Practice reeling it in (ie, "Is this the most effective use of our time?")
- Start on time/end on time
- Stick to the agenda
- Consider/check your bias

Meeting Logistics

Meeting Day/Time: 02/10/2026 @ 6:00pm

Meeting Location: Lyceum

Team Members Present: Tim Vargo, Patrick Bader, Suave Kyles, Ali Kopyt, Mikaya Clark, Kia Green, Brittney Qualls, derra byrd, Kantara Souffrant, Rashonda Jones, Lakita Wells, *Jean Dellemann, Annie Prak-Primakow, Tracy Williams*

Team Members Absent: Ben Correia-Harker, Brenda Simonis

Meeting Roles

Facilitator: Mikaya Clark

Time Keeper: Tim Vargo

Food: Patrick Bader

Important Document Links

Most Recent Meeting Action Items / Online Board Activity



02/10/2026

Time	Item	Discussion
5 min	Welcome and Approval of Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Suave motions to approve the agenda. Rashonda seconds. The agenda is approved.
10 min	HCS Fundraising Overview	<p><i>Annie Prak-Primakow, Director of Development to share an HCS development overview</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Mikaya and Annie previously met to discuss fund development and alignment to the BOD, since the Fund Development committee was sunsetted. The hope is for fundraising and development to be a collaborative, two-way partnership<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Fundraising goal for the year is \$154,000; currently 69% of the way<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ \$250,000 is projected asks for grants this year○ Three key areas of fundraising at HCS: annual campaign, events (VIP day, alumni events, etc.) and grants (private and federal)<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 21% gifts made by individual donors■ 9% made by corporate donors■ 46% gifts from granting organizations■ Based on donor make up Annie sees that the percentages make sense. At HCS, currently individual donors consist of 50% parents/20% employees; there is an opportunity for increased donations from the corporate-sponsorship level.<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Majority of the individual contributions are single-one time gifts (that may occur annually). Looking to explore how previous efforts of promoting monthly contributions were successful● Opportunity to tie a campaign to the Road to AC or even HCS 60 year anniversary○ How to help: make an annual gift, help identify sponsors, share ideas and feedback<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ There is a development committee of 4 HCS parents - additional support from the Board by way of feedback and ideas is very helpful
5 min	ED Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Executive Director Report● ICE Scripts<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Outlines how the staff and team would respond should HCS be faced with ICE or Law

		<p>enforcement. Guidance has been shared with the staff on the different warrants and proper protocols for entering the building. The administrative stance is that ICE entrance is not allowed without guidance from the district</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Patrick recommended including additional scripting that advises ICE officials to leave the property if no warrant is presented or there is no active crime under investigation ■ There is a protocol established for when a hold is called versus a secure is called. A hold call enables individuals to enter the building, whereas a secure does not allow anyone to enter or exit ■ There are protocols and scripting in place to notify parents during events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tracy noted she is not aware of any absences from school due to fear of ICE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ There are many efforts to ensure families feel supported. Patrick provided resources on Basecamp of organizations that can provide guidance/assistance to families <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Immigration Resources: MPS Safe Haven Resolution and Know Your Rights
45 min	Committee Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Finance Committee - (5 min - Entire update posted to Basecamp in advance of meeting) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reviewed November financials posted - clarification on front door expenses: Initially I had noted it was \$2K for front door expenses, that was updated to \$3K in November. We had two electrical service calls related to the front door troubleshooting. We finally figured out it was a programming error so the programmers came in to re-program the door unlock settings and reinstall buttons in the office. That was a \$2K bill in December, so the total cost of front door repairs YTD is \$5,300. Good news - it's been working well now for over a month! ○ Facilities updates - nothing new to share. Waiting on quotes/proposed solution ideas from two vendors we met with before winter break. ○ Bathroom Updates - We received a \$50K grant for bathroom upgrades as they relate to our early childhood program. We will be replacing partitions in the 3rd floor bathrooms and the 2nd floor girls bathroom this year during spring break. The partitions will be darker & textured to prevent writing on them and will be longer so that students cannot crawl or reach underneath closed stall doors. We have hopes of getting more funds next year to complete the partitions and work on updating the flush buttons to be easier to use for the littles. ○ Budget: We are working internally on the budget for 26-27. The presentation to this

committee will take place during the March committee meeting - March 25th at 12pm.

- [2025 YTD Financials](#)

- December YTD numbers remain positive. Program profits overall are pretty similar to last year at this time. With the exception of CHECK (considering lower enrollment), all programs are performing as forecasted. Toddlers typically see a loss in December because parent fees are only 3 weeks while we have 4.5 weeks of staff & expenses.
- Investment income totals \$152K (up \$15K from last month).
- **Balance Sheet:** Still working on closing out BMO old accounts - finalized in January 2026 so balances vary.
- **Account #7194:** We were assessed a \$9K payroll tax penalty due to late payroll tax deposits. Last year, we changed the bank account that tax deposits pull from and the fraud filter blocked tax payments without notification. This was discovered during reconciliation and corrected immediately. The penalty has been paid, an appeal was submitted and denied, and I am pursuing further reduction of the penalty. The fraud filter has been corrected to prevent any recurrence. The penalty is calculated based on a % of the total taxes owed.
- Expenses to highlight this month: Staff (\$2K) and student (\$4K) technology; Building software support \$2K; Front door re-programming \$2K
- Upcoming expenses to note: Off-hours plumber call during cold weekend.

- Budget Approval must be completed by April

- Amanda Taddey will present the proposed budget to the Finance Committee on March 25 virtually, and then to the full board at the April board meeting.
- The Board will then need to complete an e-vote in April in order to submit the Board-approved budget to MPS by the end of the month.

- **Facilities Committee (5 mins)**

- Road to AC

- Still awaiting feedback from the two organizations who walked the building to assess the current systems.
- Received feedback from parents who came through and offered a different strategy, that while has viability has different impact on the building
- Additional options to way and we are still on track for Summer 2027
 - There is no indication of a need to do work this summer.
 - Still moving forward with the partitions over spring break on the second and

third floor; currently having conversations on the configurations of those partitions. Exploring ways to save cost and maximize the funds

- **Academics (30 mins)**

- [Family Survey Results](#)

- Survey participation increased 43% from Fall 2024
 - What is the baseline the team would like to hit for the survey results?
- Issues surfaced with communication differences within classes.
 - What is the standard and how is the administration addressing this? There is a standard that includes use of Transparent Classroom, that includes weekly updates. The team is also coaching and reminders.
- Preparation for transitions from Upper EI to AP was also a theme that showed up in the survey
- Given an overall positive results from the survey? Where are the areas of opportunity?
 - By being intentional by surveying and responding to the survey, HCS is moving in the right direction. The day-to-day activities note HCS is on the right track
 - When admin sees comments show up in multiple places we analyze the responses, themes and note areas for improvement - for instance, the billing, assessments and communication. Also working to improve the representation of responses/participation from families of color
 - Is there a possibility for the survey to be sent to families via text in the future?
- Key Takeaways:
 - Highland Community School continues to be viewed as a safe, inclusive, and welcoming learning community.
 - Strong relationships, a clear Montessori foundation, and growing family engagement remain defining strengths.
 - Ongoing focus areas include consistent communication practices and continued clarity around assessment and billing processes.

- [Staff Survey Results](#)

- 63% participation; 88.6% average engagement score; 78% highly engaged
 - Found an 8% decrease in participation from spring 2025; engagement scores

		<p>remain steady; low, but increased participation from program staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The engagement survey measures how people feel about working here, what helps them stay engaged, and where the organization should focus to improve the employee experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engagement levels are categorized as Fully Engaged, Engaged, Not Engaged, or Disengaged, based on score ranges ● Questions focus on common themes like feeling supported, communication, long-term career opportunities, culture and diversity ● Comments show concerns with workload, burnout/compensation; staff support and time; facilities and operational systems; consistency, communication and structure; school culture and adult dynamics, ■ Next steps: communicating survey results; student survey and professional development ● Governance (5 mins) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Succession Planning Meeting Follow Up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Meeting held on 1/29 with WRCCS - Succession Planning meeting notes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● HCS is in a really good place for the short-term and making plans for a 3-year succession plan that would activate when Tracy begins to think about retiring. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recommendation: Form a Board sub-committee focused on succession planning that includes annual and biannual check-ins ○ Board Retreat to be held Tuesday, February 17 at 5:30 PM CT at Highland
10 min	Round Robin Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No topics brought up
5 min	Adjourn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lakita motions to adjourn the meeting. Patrick seconds. The meeting is adjourned.
February 2026 Board Engagement / Representation		2/11 - Black Heritage Potluck: Lakita, Brittiny Kia, Mikaya, Suave
		2/26 - Black Heritage Celebration: Brittiny, Lakita, Suave, Kia, Mikaya, derria