

Carson Montessori Charter School
Governing Board
Tuesday February 25, 2025 @ 4:00pm

Revised MINUTES

Location of Meeting: Carson Montessori Charter School
2263 Mouton Drive
Carson City, NV 89706

CALL TO ORDER by President Gary Ailes at 4:05pm

1. Roll call

Members Present

Gary Ailes, President
Ben Steel, Vice President
Karin Kreizenbeck, Member
Scott Morrison, Secretary
Mary Kay Kinne, Member
Jessica Daniels, Principal
Kate Ventrice, Finance Manager
Kristie Chagoya, Office Manager
Sarah Lobsinger, Vice Principal
Ali Cooper

Absent

Patricia Carpenter, Member
Mary Ellen Radtke, Member

Public in Attendance

(See Sign in Sheet)

2. Discussion current financial statement-**(Information Only)**

Kate Ventrice presented a positive financial outlook, stating that the organization is in a good position due to careful budgeting. While there might be a perception of overstaffing, the accountant assured the board that this is not a current financial problem and that there are no immediate concerns about job security due to financial difficulties. Kate indicated that more in-depth conversations regarding the budget for the next year (25-26) will be necessary at the next board meeting. Kate clarified that the positive financial outlook applies to the current fiscal year (24-25), and that while there is a small balance carrying over, future budget discussions will depend on developments concerning the school. Kristina Longero then clarified whether the "fine" financial status referred to the current year or the next, to which Kate confirmed it was for the current year (24-25).

Budgetary Status and One-Time Charges Kate Ventrice and Jessica Daniels' discuss the current financial state, expressing confidence in their current position despite the pending governor's budget announcement. Kate clarifies that several highlighted items on the budget are one-time charges, such as audit fees and pre-paid expenses like storage and insurance, which will not recur throughout the year.

Ben Steele requests clarification on these one-time charges for the benefit of those present.

3. Adoption of the Agenda, as submitted **(Action)**

Please Note: The Board reserves the right to (1) take items in a different order, (2) combine two or more Agenda items for consideration, and (3) to remove an item from the Agenda or delay discussion relating to an item on the Agenda at any time, in order to accomplish the business on the Agenda in the most efficient manner.

The meeting began with a discussion regarding the agenda and was moved to adopt the agenda with a shift in order, which was seconded by Scott Morrison- Motion carried unanimously.

4. Discussion and possible action to accept, accept with conditions, to approve Board Meeting Minutes for Dec. 17, 2024– **for possible action**

Motion to Accept minutes by Ben Steele

Second by Allie Cooper- Motion carried unanimously.

5. Update on facilities and staffing for 25/26 school year
(Information Only)

Redwood Industries Expansion and School Relocation Jessica Daniels discusses exciting opportunities and the rapid development impacting school facilities. The proximity of Redwood Industries' planned lithium battery recycling facility (less than 100 feet from the school's fence) raises safety concerns, prompting the search for a new school location. Recent developments include a parent offering a vacant lot adjacent to a potential school site, eliminating the need to lease and providing greater control over building modifications, parking, and traffic flow. The Superintendent highlights the speed of these developments since the initial meeting and mentions spending an hour assessing the offered lot. A collaborative plan with Sarah is underway and will be presented shortly.

Zoning Issues and Site Search for New School Building Jessica explains the school's current location is in an industrial zone, a situation allowed due to a grandfather clause since the building's construction in 1990. The school outgrew its previous building and the zoning changed in Carson City, surrounding the city with an industrial area. Finding a new site has proven difficult, as the school is technically located in the heart of Carson City, near Fairview Drive, which is also zoned industrial. She highlights the city's efforts to help, mentioning support from the planning commission, Hope Sullivan, Mayor Lori Bagwell, and Supervisor Lisa Chowting, who are actively working to find a suitable site. The challenge lies in locating a warehouse large enough to accommodate the school's needs.

Existing properties in industrial areas are being rapidly purchased by Redwood Industries for expansion. A potential offer for a property was considered, but zoning remains uncertain. Another possibility involves a builder leasing a newly constructed school to the district. However, this plan is complicated by federal legislation impacting construction costs and timelines Jessica acknowledges the challenges but remains optimistic, mentioning a potential solution involving an investor willing to purchase St. Theresa's school, although reappraisals and inflation create uncertainty. The district aims to secure a property with appropriate zoning and existing school infrastructure, potentially extending their current lease while searching. The timeline is estimated at two years due to the complexities involved.

An option of leasing a building from an investor committed to Carson Montessori's' ideals. Jessica acknowledges that there are unknown factors outside their control. The discussion shifts to the ongoing facilities update and whether all available properties are still being considered.

5a. Cont. Update on facilities and staffing for 25/26 school year **(Information Only)**

The discussion centers on the difficulties in finding a suitable location for a new school. Board members express frustration with the extensive search for a practical site. Jessica advocates for St. Teresa's location due to its existing zoning, permitting, and overall suitability, despite a two-year gap. There are significant challenges related to building costs. The current price to build has risen significantly, exceeding \$40,000, making the school ineligible for any funding

6. Since 2025 is a Charter renewal year, CMS would like to add to their Charter the option to implement an online middle school learning strain should they choose to do so **(For Action)**

Conditions: Scott Morrison -#6 to be changed to “**approval for the development** of a plan to implement an online middle school learning strain should they choose to do so”

Motioned by Scott Morrison

Seconded by Allie Cooper- Motion carried unanimously.

7. Principal's Report and Legislative Update **(Information Only)**

Charter schools lack access to bond funding available to traditional schools, relying instead on private sponsorship from large corporations with substantial financial resources, unlike the ability of traditional schools to utilize taxpayer dollars. The Superintendent explains that charter school "bonding" is essentially a mortgage, unlike the bond funding available to traditional public schools.

A parent questioned the school's funding, suggesting they might be disadvantaged compared to others. The accountant and superintendent clarified that Carson Montessori Charter School is its own district, independent from the Carson City School District. Therefore, the Carson City School District doesn't directly fund or advocate for them.

Jessica Daniels stated she will be passing the torch to Sarah Lobsinger. Jessica stated that she can not leave with a clear conscious, leaving the school in this situation to someone who has only District experience and has no Charter School experience. Jessica explained that there are so many different laws a Charter school has to abide by.

Sarah stated that she is not sure what will happen. If she will be taking on the roll of Principal or will be leaving next school year. There are a lot of unknowns right now.

Jessical explained there will be new roles and responsibilities. Jessica will be the Executive Director and Sarah will be the principal. (see attached job descriptions)

8. Public Comments **(Discussion only; no action)**

Comments may be made by members of the public on any matter within the authority of this Board. Although members of the Board may respond to questions and discuss issues raised during Public Comment, no action may be taken on such a matter until the matter is placed on an agenda for action at a meeting of the Board. In making Public Comment, speakers are asked to sign in, identify themselves for the record, respect any time limitation of three minutes imposed, and not simply repeat comments made by others.

Kristina Longero

Kristina Longero inquired about the timeline for Redwood Industries' lithium battery project. The Superintendent responded that they are unsure but believe Redwood Industries may be applying for a permit. The Superintendent clarified that Redwood Industries is not on the next planning committee meeting agenda, and that a center similar to the one at the railroad museum is also seeking a special use permit. The Superintendent emphasized that any school, regardless of zoning, requires a special use permit for establishment, stating this is a requirement.

Lauren Lenz

Lauren Lenz questioned the purchasing process, specifically asking why parents and the community haven't been involved if the issue is finding more funding and resources ("deeper pockets").

Lauren Lenz inquired about additional community donations to address funding needs. Mrs. Daniels' explained that while parents have donated generously, the school, as a political subdivision of Nevada, isn't a 501(c)(3) organization, creating a challenge for accepting certain donations. Lauren Lenz emphasized the community's willingness to help, even beyond the school's immediate needs. The conversation then shifted to the search for a new school location and the associated costs.

A board member mentioned engaging realtors specializing in commercial properties to find a suitable location, estimating the potential cost at \$500,000-\$700,000. Lauren Lenz countered that building a new school is currently unfeasible due to high costs, and Mrs. Daniels' confirmed that previous funding applications had been denied.

Lauren Lenz expressed the community's support for the school and offered assistance. A parent echoed this sentiment, highlighting their five-year involvement and love for the school, while also expressing concern about a lack of communication and information regarding school events and PTO activities. The parent noted that despite their long-standing involvement, they had received little information about school matters, including a meeting for fifth and sixth-grade parents that they were unaware of. The parent emphasized the community's strong support for the school and their desire for improved communication.

Jessica Daniels' explains that due to increased construction costs, two previous investors deemed the purchase of St. Teresa's no longer feasible. However, a new investor has stepped forward to purchase the school. Lauren Lenz expresses concern about the lack of community involvement in previous discussions regarding the school, noting her family's six-year involvement without prior consultation. She emphasizes the community's willingness to assist in fundraising and future endeavors. The Superintendent acknowledges their late involvement and welcomes future community participation, expressing gratitude for Lauren's contributions and those of her parents.

Bodie Coates, a parent, continued to express frustration about the lack of communication, citing confusing emails about meetings they were not eligible to attend. They highlighted their confusion about the ongoing discussion, emphasizing that despite being present for 30 minutes, they still lacked clarity on the topic. The parent requested clarification on the matter. The Board Chair acknowledged the concerns and promised to address them later in the meeting.

A parent expresses concern about the lack of communication from the PTO, noting the absence of information about board meetings and PTO membership in Daniel's voicemail. The board chair suggests finding someone with IT experience to help improve communication methods, such as setting up a system for sending out announcements. Board members express agreement that improved communication would solve the problem. Mia Roberts, the newly elected PTO president, introduces herself and acknowledges the communication concerns. She explains that the PTO is

working on improving communication, organizing its efforts, and advertising fundraising opportunities. She mentions working to find a solution for membership sign-up and indicates that further information will be provided regarding contributions (money or time).

Board members discussed the appropriateness of having a PTO representative attend their meetings to share updates on PTO activities. The Superintendent confirmed this was a previous practice, noting that initially the PTO representative attended every meeting. The Board Chair agreed to consider a simpler communication method to ensure information reaches parents with children in the school. A suggestion was made to find a more efficient way to facilitate communication between the board and parents.

9. Requests for Future Agenda Topics

- **6th-8th grade online**
- **Current numbers for each grade level**
- **Estimated Enrollment numbers for 25/26**
- **Discuss selling the Van**
- **20th Anniversary Celebration**
- **Tentative Budget for 2025/2026 in March to Board for April**

10. Future meeting dates (Action)

March 25th, 2025 @ 4:00 pm

11. Adjournment was called at 6:16pm by Gary Alies

This notice and agenda have been posted on or before 9:00 A. M. on the third working day prior to the meeting at the following locations:

1. Carson Montessori School Website
2. Notice.nv.gov
3. Carson Montessori School
4. Carson City Community Center
5. Carson City School District

Copies of supporting material may be requested from Ms. Kristie Chagoya, Office Manager, at 2263 Mouton Drive Carson City, NV 89706; by mail addressed to Ms. Chagoya at Carson Montessori School, 2263 Mouton Drive Carson City, NV 89706; for expediated service by phone to Mrs. Daniels at (775) 750-0139 or by email to kchagoya@CarsonMontessori.com. Copies of supporting material are available via e-mail to kchagoya@carsonmontessori.com, and at the meeting on the date and place listed on the first page of this document.

Carson Montessori School's Board of Directors will conduct a public Board meeting at the above address. Reasonable efforts will be made to assist and accommodate physically disabled persons desiring to attend the meeting may obtain a recorded copy. Please contact the school at 775-887-9500 in advance so arrangements may be conveniently made.



4-8-2025

Scott Morrison, Secretary

Date