



**SHINING STARS**  
**MONTESSORI ACADEMY**  
— PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL —

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
Meeting Minutes  
**February 26, 2022 (Rescheduled)**  
**9:03 a.m. – 10:40 a.m.**

A virtual meeting of the Board of Trustees (hereafter the “**Board**”) of Shining Stars Montessori Academy Public Charter School (hereafter “**Shining Stars**” or “**School**”) was held on Saturday, February 26, 2022, at 9:03 a.m. to 10:40 a.m.

**Call to Order**

Mr. Anthony King (Board Chair), called the meeting to order. R. Rodriguez recorded the minutes.

**Agenda**

1. Introduction
  - a. Welcome to the public
    - i. The meeting was held virtually via Google Meet.
  - b. Roll Call/Attendance
    - i. Anthony King, Esq. (Chair)
    - ii. Aldel Brown
    - iii. Willa Golden
    - iv. Tatiana Laborde (Parent)
    - v. Regina Rodriguez-Garcia (ex-officio)
    - vi. Teicha Harris (Parent)
  - c. Missing Board Members
    - i. Shawn Samuel
    - ii. Kamal Wright-Cunningham
  - d. Establish Quorum
    - i. A quorum of directors was present, and the meeting, having been convened, proceeded with the business.
2. Public Comment
  - a. This time is reserved for citizens, employees, and representatives of school groups to address the Board on items that are not on the agenda. By law, the Board cannot take action upon or discuss items that are not on the approved agenda, but welcomes your comments. Persons addressing the Board are asked to state their names and whether or not they are a resident of the District. The Board Chair reserves the right to limit comments from the public as well as the amount of time spent on any one topic.
    - i. The **February 26, 2022**, meeting of the Board was open to the public.
      1. Grace Ha, SSMA parent

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3. Old Business
  - a. Vote to approve – January 15, 2022, Board of Directors Minutes
    - i. No comments from Board members
    - ii. Chair moved to accept, approve, and publish the Board of Directors meeting minutes
    - iii. Motion to accept made by Tatiana Laborde
    - iv. Second by Willa Golden
    - v. An I from Anthony King, Aldel Brown, Teicha Harris, Tatiana Laborde, and Willa Golden
    - vi. January 15, 2022, Board Meeting Minutes unanimously approved by the Board.
  - b. Vote to approve – December 2021 and January 2022 Financial Statements
    - i. No comments or questions from Board members
    - ii. Chair moved to accept, approve, and publish December 2021 and January 2022 financial statements
    - iii. Motion to accept by Tatiana Laborde
    - iv. Second by Willa Golden
    - v. An I from Anthony King, Willa Golden, Aldel Brown, Tatiana Laborde, and Teicha Harris
    - vi. December 2021 and January 2022 financial statements unanimously approved by the Board.
4. Executive Director's Monthly Summary Report
  - a. Academic
    - i. Open House
      1. Virtual Attendance – 21
      2. In-person attendance – 5 (3 of the 5 went into MySchoolDC and listed Shining Stars as their number one school)
    - ii. Parent Sessions
      1. DLI
        - a. 2/2/2022 – at 6:30pm – 3rd grade (UE) information session
        - b. 2/10/2022 – at 6:30pm – Primary information session with Q&As
        - c. 2/23/2022 – at 6:30pm – LE session with Q&As
    - iii. Monthly Parent Engagement Workshop led by Dr. Willa Jones
      1. “How We Can Help Children with Self-Regulation”
        - a. Thursday, 2/17/2022 – 6:30 – 7:45pm
        - b. We were unable to record this meeting
    - iv. CLASS and PARCC Training
      1. Every Tuesday this month from 3:30 – 4:30pm
      2. CLASS observations are scored and have been used historically in calculating the PMF.
    - v. NWEA Testing
      1. Assessment that we give 3 times a year to our K through 6th graders. This assessment was given even during the pandemic.
      2. 366 tests were administered starting January 31st – February 18th (three weeks).

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- vi. Access Training
  - 1. Access Assessment (ELL)
  - 2. This is for our English learners
  - 3. February 14<sup>th</sup> - March 24, 2022
- vii. Dual Immersion Program
  - 1. Action: We purchased Ballard & Tighe test credits at the beginning of the year for leveling language proficiency. That testing was put on pause because the ARC program is able to level the students' language and literacy proficiency in both English and Spanish. That data is currently being collected, despite the fact that OSSE and PCSB do not request it.
  - 2. Our LE Dual Language students range from Read-to-me (Leame a mi) up to 5th grade proficiency in both Spanish and English literacy and comprehension. This is definitely an accomplishment that we share often and celebrate with our families.
  - 3. The Executive Director has instructed the Principal and Coordinator, schedule permitting, to administer this assessment (in June) so that they will have both summative and baseline information for SY2022-2023 planning.
- b. Non- Academic
  - i. Attendance and Absenteeism
    - 1. Attendance
      - a. Withdrawal Rate – 2% (3% below target)
      - b. In-Seat Attendance – 92% (3% below target)
        - 1. The attendance goal for each year has been at least 92% every year, which we have met for at least 9 years.
      - c. OSSE Monthly Summary Report January 2022
        - 1. The In-Seat Attendance (ISA) has dropped from 89.4% to 89.1%. The school target goal is 93%, so we are below target in this area. There are a number of data errors that might raise that 89.0% for March, however, the Executive Director is pushing the Attendance Team, School Counselor and Guides to work more closely with those families experiencing attendance difficulties.
        - 2. Year-to-Data Submission Data – 99.87%
        - 3. Monthly Submission Rate – 99.95%
    - 2. Absenteeism
      - a. Chronic Absenteeism – 32% (31% above target)
      - b. 7% of the student population are in the chronic range
      - c. 48.5% are in the moderate to at-risk category and only 110 or 44.8% are okay
      - d. Five out of ten our families are in or at-risk attendance failure.

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- e. We are looking at absenteeism in the classrooms, guides working with parents.
- f. Any family that is at 10 or more absences we do a deep dive, it goes to our attendance team to monitor. The attendance team is comprised of Director of Special Education, Principal, and the Coordinator of ELL, to look at what's going on, reach out to the parents, have a conversation with the guide, and look to see what sort of support this family needs. The Executive Director has instructed the Principal and the Attendance Team to move these cases immediately to SST for action and resolution.
- g. There is a high correlation to academic outcomes. We are also looking at to what degree the absenteeism is affecting their learning, which of course it does.
- h. It affects our in-seat attendance.

**Question from Parent Board Member Tatiana Laborde:** Are the families not showing up to school and not showing up to virtual?

**Response from Regina Rodriguez:** It's often a combination of both.

ii. Enrollment

- 1. Students enrolled – 245 (48 students below target)
- 2. MySchoolDC Applications for Grades Pre-K- 6 grade for SY2022-2023 as of 2/22/2022:
  - a. Total Apps Ranking School: 262 (as of this morning this number is now at 310)
  - b. Applicants Ranked Top 3: 90
  - c. Current Students Applied in Lottery: 49 (as of this morning this number is now at 51)
- 3. Current families Playing the Lottery

Grade	Total Students
PK3	12
PK4	8
K	6
1	5
2	4
3	5
4	1
5	6
6	2

- 4. Applicants by Primary Language Spoken in the Home
  - a. Total submitted applications by the language in which the application was completed:
    - 1. English 241
    - 2. Spanish 12
- 5. Applicants by Ward
  - a. Total applications submitted by ward:
    - 1. Ward 1 – 17

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2. Ward 2 – 5
3. Ward 3 – 1
4. Ward 4 – 42
5. Ward 5 – 102
6. Ward 6 – 20
7. Ward 7 – 30
8. Ward 8 – 28
9. Out-of-State – 8
10. Unknown – 0

**Question from SSMA Parent Grace Ha:** For families who do leave, is it common practice for schools to conduct exit interviews to really understand why families are leaving? Because I have a sense that the reasons why families leave is beyond the lack of a middle school or a path to middle school. So, I'm just wondering if something like that has been implemented at Shining Stars, just to understand the range of reasons and maybe there are ways the school could adjust to meet the needs of those families that are leaving. And I will say, out of full transparency, we are one of those families who are playing the lottery. Mainly because we just feel there's so much uncertainty around the DLI program and how it's going to be moving forward, growing and being sustainable for our current families. Do you have data or survey results from families who have left?

**Response from Regina Rodriguez:** Yes, we keep that. Some people will respond. We want to know what schools people are going to, why, what we could have done better, and if there is something that we weren't aware of, to make sure that we factor that into our planning on the spot and going forward. So yes, we have that, and that's something that Ms. T keeps, I look at it, and we discuss it at leadership team meetings. Some of the things that we have seen are totally out of our control. A lot of the families that leave go to their in-bound school.

6. Recruitment

- a. WZoL 107.9FM – Targeted 2022-2023 Spanish recruitment: As part of the campaign to recruit more families, the Executive Director has asked the school's communications person to look specifically at, as a first, the Spanish language families. So, it may let families who are Spanish speakers know that we have a program at Shining Stars where their children can improve their first language fluency, as well as their second language fluency, which would be English for some or the reverse.
  1. 19 new families have applied for 22-23 indicating Spanish spoken at home.
  2. Times: February 21 – March 4, 2022
  3. Drive times: Monday - Friday 6am-10am; Monday - Friday 3pm – 7pm
  4. Total of 40 spots (30 seconds)

iii. Discipline

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Our In-School and Out-of-School Reflections have been fairly low.

1. Suspension Rate (1 + days) – 0% (3% below target)
  2. Ex. Suspension Rate (11 + days) – 0% (1% below target)
- iv. Personnel
1. Intent to Return for SY22-23
    - a. 100% of staff responded to a survey that they wished to return to the school for SY22-23. Completing the forms is not binding. Director evaluations of staff and any personnel actions will be reviewed as the primary metrics for contract continuation.
  - c. COVID and Health and Safety Update
    - i. 95% of staff have received 2 vaccine dosage (4 staff still require boosters)
    - ii. 3 (5.8%) not vaccinated; staff receiving religious exemption
    - iii. 56 (22.8%) K-6<sup>th</sup> grade students vaccinated either with their first dose or both dosages
  - d. Facilities Update
    - i. No facilities update
5. Member Reports
- a. River Smarts
    - i. School was awarded a grant application in 2019, however, COVID-19 stopped all the work.
    - ii. The River Smart program will rework and do a facelift of the school's existing garden
    - iii. All of the work they will do will be covered by the grant. There is no cost to Shining Stars or their families.
    - iv. River Smart has come up with a design for the school garden. The idea is to beautify that area and make it useable and create an outdoor classroom space in the garden.
    - v. This grant is not only to address the physical aspects of the garden, but to also instruct the teachers on how to use the space.

**Question from Board Chair Anthony King:** Does any of this design require permitting?

**Response from Parent Board Member Tatiana Laborde:** I don't believe it does because we are not changing any fence.

**Question from Board Chair Anthony King:** Are we utilizing any of the existing parking to provide for the new garden area?

**Response from Parent Board Member Tatiana Laborde:** No.

## 6. Closed Session

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- a. In accordance with the District of Columbia Open Meetings Act<sup>1</sup>, the Board of Trustees will enter executive session for the following reason:
  - i. **Personnel**<sup>2</sup>: To discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, performance evaluation, compensation, discipline, demotion, removal, or resignation of government appointees, employees, or officials, or of public charter school personnel, where the public body is the board of trustees of a public charter school.
  - ii. **Trade Secrets, Commercial or Financial Information**<sup>3</sup>: To discuss trade secrets and commercial or financial information obtained from outside the government or public body, to the extent that disclosure would result in substantial harm to the competitive position of the person from whom the information was obtained.

7. Closing Items

- a. Adjourn Meeting (Vote)

- i. There being no further business to come before the members, the meeting was adjourned by the Chair.

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<sup>1</sup> See D.C. Official Code § 2-575(b).

<sup>2</sup> See D.C. Official Code § 2-575(b)(10).

<sup>3</sup> See D.C. Official Code § 2-575(b)(11).

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