



The mission of Fort Collins Montessori School is to provide a high quality, classic Montessori school that will inspire and empower children to fully develop their academic and personal potential through the implementation of the methods and philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori.

FCMS Board Meeting Agenda

Date: Mar 26, 2025

Time: 6:00pm - 7:30pm

Location: VIRTUAL ONLY- Google Meet

Time zone: America/Denver

Google Meet joining info

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/noq-bxjo-rum>

Or dial: (US) +1 530-629-6204 PIN: 333 721 990#

Board Members in Attendance: Rosa Cruz Kauffman, Katie Slota, and Lorie Federman, in addition to Head Of School, Paul Vincent.

Welcome and Actions Items:

Katie Moves that the board approve and adopt the consent agenda for the March 2025 FCMS Board Meeting and the minutes from February 2025 meeting.

Lorie seconds

All are in Favor

- Community Comment: This is an opportunity for parents, teachers, and other community members to let the board know what is on their mind. This can be a complaint, a concern or a comment on something that we are doing well. All types of comments are welcome and appreciated. Please keep the comments to 3 minutes per individual.

Rosa comments that she loves knowing that she can always reach out to an ally at FCMS.

- Head of School Report: Vincent - Operations, Facility, Finances (20 minutes)

- **Operations Update**

- We continue to work within the classrooms. All students are on campus.
- Illness continues to impact several classrooms. No direction from the health department.

- **Compliance**

- Drills continue to improve.
- CMAS starts next month

- **Students:**

- The 24-25 school year is going well.
 - Limited spaces available for this current year. Several primary children joined us this semester.
 - 25-26 Re-enrollment is at 94.57% throughout the school.
 - Nothing new: Currently we have no space in the upper elementary, no space in the lower elementary and limited kindergarten.

- **Parent Education/events:**

- Lots of work continues planning a 10 year celebration.
- Parent engagement event scheduled for April

- **Finances 24-25:**

- Continuing to be aware of challenges and creativity in order to pivot as necessary. UPK is still challenging.
- Engaging financing for our bonds. Our call date is June so we can begin the process.
 - We are working through the diligence process currently and will have more information next month.
 - **Rating meeting on May 16th WE WILL NEED TO HAVE A BOARD REP present for this so they can answer questions regarding governing of the school.** This rating influences the interest rate we will get when we refinance.

-Rosa would like to know more about how this is done.

-Paul says it is all about how risky our investors see the school. We would like to get an Investor Grade Rating, but we are unsure if this is possible because we are under 500 students. But we are lucky to be a preschool-6th grade school as this may help us get a better bond and fix our bond ratio problem.

- CECFA **23 April 12:30** is the meeting date No board presence needed for this. This is basically asking permission to refinance.

- **Facility**

- **Primary Playground:**

- On Monday 3-24-25 the roof for the playground was inspected. We are still waiting for the final inspection through the state.

- **Potential Improvements**

- We are exploring the options with the larger class size in the upper elementary next year. Again with more financing information as well as some study on retention moving forward. Some options include using the conference room, recruiting a trainee teacher to assist the current guides. There will be a potential restructuring of classrooms if upper EL is still full in 2026-2027. Will get lots of staff input on this.

- **Board Notification**

- One of our former employees (7 years ago) who was in charge of writing curriculum for a potential middle school faces 2 sexual battery charges from a Montessori school in North Carolina. This employee was an observer in Montessori classrooms but did not have direct interactions with the students.. Lawyers have been contacted and they both advised that the school notify the Board.
 - Rosa would like to follow up with Paul to make sure that all teachers that may have had contact with this particular employee feel supported

- Financials: Paul (10 minutes)

- Mill levy has been good for the school. We will be in a good spot at the end of the year. We have \$18,000 left that we will probably put towards technology needs.
- The state has informed us that we will not get more money per pupil as we have in years past to keep up with inflation. This is troubling, but refinancing may help our financial situation for the future.
- Currently bonuses are off the table and raises will perhaps be at 3% rather than 5%

- Board Updates: (20 minutes)

-Upcoming/Optional Additional Parent Board Member Process-Katie Slota

-Shannon Pipes introduces herself to the board as one of the candidates up for election in April. She has a law degree from Thomas Jefferson School of Law and is an attorney in education law with an emphasis on higher education. She has one child at FCMS and has worked closely with charter schools in her profession, creating partnerships between charter schools and universities that promote continued education for students. She has board experience and is currently serving on a 501c3 board that provides veterinary services to elderly customers on a sliding scale income. Additionally, she advises on various topics for the Board of Trustees for the University of Kentucky and has over ten years of experience advising boards of various institutions of higher education. She would like to serve on the FCMS Board because she believes in the Montessori mission and feels her unique background in educational law would be an asset to the board.

-Rosa asks to see her CV

-Shannon said she will happily send it to the board

-Lorie asks if she has time to take on projects

-Shanon said she is ready to help!

-Fundraising Committee Update-Katie Slota

-The committee is currently working hard to promote the Gala and the upcoming Big Give. Doing newsletter blasts and have plans to ask for money at the Gala. Will be sending home additional information after the Gala as well as advertise the Big Give at the school. The Gala website is set up to take early donations as well.

- PVC: Lorie Federman (10 minutes)

- There is talk of having a tree planting. Fort Collins Nursery will help get a tree installed for \$500 which is much less than normal. Unsure if there is money in the PVC budget for this.

-Personal ask for the board to chip in some money for snacks for the Gala

- Conclude Meeting

Katie moves to conclude the meeting

Rosa seconds

All are in favor