

SWAN RIVER MONTESSORI CHARTER SCHOOL
School Board Meeting
Tuesday, November 18, 2025 at 2:15 p.m.

The school board will hold this meeting in person at Swan River Montessori Charter School at 503 Maple St. building.

Meeting Agenda

I. CALL TO ORDER in 503 Kitchen at Swan River Montessori Charter School by _Jana Evink_ @ 2:28 PM

II. ROLL CALL

- a. Board Members Present: Julie Halvorson, Amy Savage, Claire Belknap, Nicole Perez, Amy Jensen, Jana Evink, Rick Freese
- b. Board Members Absent: none
- c. Other Attendees: SRMCS Director Annette Vemuri
- d. Recording Minutes: Amy Jensen

III. REVIEW OF SRMCS MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS

The mission of Swan River Montessori Charter School is to provide a child-centered environment for self-directed and personalized learning in a small, community-based public school with an emphasis on the natural environment.

Swan River Montessori Charter School's vision is to employ an interdisciplinary approach to education by teaching the whole child (heart, mind, and soul). The Montessori learning environment is designed to foster this whole child approach by meeting the child's inherent needs of self-discovery, creativity, independence, and competence. Swan River Montessori Charter School will create a kind, respectful environment where each child has a sense of belonging. Learning at Swan River Montessori Charter School involves the student, the student's family, the teachers, and the larger community. Swan River supports family and community participation in each child's education by utilizing and appreciating community resources and the natural world as a learning environment.

IV. MEETING AGENDA- Motion to approve meeting agenda with addition of Boarding Training agenda item inserted after item IX made by _AJ_, Seconded by __RF_. Board Vote- all aye- motion carries

V. PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES- Motion to approve 10.21.25 Board Meeting Minutes made by __CB_, Seconded by __AJ__. Board Vote- all aye- motion carries

VI. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS- none

VII. FINANCIAL REPORT

The following was discussed during the SRMCS School Board Finance Committee Meeting:

We still look like we are really good. Will consider revisions as time goes on. We will not owe MDE money back so that's good. We will start to feel the pressure of the 10% hold back as time goes on. Lease Aid application is still not approved but hopefully soon. ADM - 164

Revenue - 33% of the way through the year, expenses at 27%

MCC - almost reached an agreement with the community center. Max of \$5,000 with parking lot maintenance. Would be a one year agreement. Hoping by December 1st to know the answers from them.

III. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Check in on timely payment of bills- Everything has been going great. Bills have been paid on time.

b. Pay Scale and Benefits- Very stable budget, we have increased 2%. The bottom line is if we increase wages we have to increase class sizes or cut somewhere. Add one student to each classroom, that would add about \$70,000 - how would we break down that. Compare other schools to ours -World Learner, Bluffview, local schools. Monticello - front loads where they give you a really good salary right away but then they drop off. Look at surrounding charter schools.

Everybody is looking at a 2% increase per student but inflation is much higher than 2%. If we don't add money to the school then we could not increase the salary. Our current pay scale starts at \$38,000 where Monticello is \$44,000.

Teachers from year 10-18 are really struggling because they are getting hit the hardest and not making the money they would at a larger district. Our support staff - goes up 2% every year. Monticello starts at \$17.68 and goes up to \$26.40 with a four year degree.

Revenue is only going up 2% for the general ed (so roughly 80% of our budget). Our expenses are only going up more than 2%. Where are we going to find adjustment in the salary?

Paras are saying around \$21 or \$22 at the three year mark

Bump starting pay to \$41,000 and that gives all lead teachers to \$4,000 each.

If we have enough left over, every person gets a bonus.

Annette- took Monticello's pay scale and tried to compare or input Swan's pay scale into their schedule. We need \$100,000 in our budget to put towards salaries if we want a big pay raise. How would we decrease our budget?

Specials Art and Music would be \$40,000 plus OW \$10,000.

What is cleaning? $\$4,000 \times 8 = \$32,000$

FY25 Enrollment Numbers as of 11.14.25

- i. Charter School (K-6) = 171
- ii. Children's House (EC) = 11
- iii. Pupil Unit Actual/Budget = 171/165

- a. Motion to approve October financials made by _JH_, Seconded by _CB_. Board Vote- all aye, motion carries
- a. Check in on timely payment of bills- no bills have been late during the last reporting period.
- b. Review of Bills- question about Waste Management bill, Kirsten is working on it and we might need to add another pick up day
- c. Donations- none

VIII. ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION REPORT AS RELATED TO CONTRACTED GOALS-

IX. ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE REPORT AS RELATED TO CONTRACTED GOALS – Annette shared the fall FY26 Fastbridge scores with the board.

X. BOARDING TRAINING- Jana Evink shared her notes from an Osprey Wilds board training she attended on data practices and open meeting law.

Data request- recommended that schools look at data request policy. Make sure there is a timeline in the policy for if the individual requesting does not follow up (pick up) requested records and the school can consider the request abandoned.

Open Meeting Law- silent on whether public can comment at the meeting, up to boards to set their own parameters of how they deal with public comments.

Quorum- majority of members present at meeting discussing board activity, watch out for a teacher majority board that has a quorum during meetings (like staff meetings) making board type decisions, SRMCS has agendas and minutes for all staff meetings

Interactive meeting requirements have changed- do NOT have to be in a public place anymore and do NOT have to publish the address from which you are attending the meeting. All members have to be able to see and hear each other- observers have to see and hear as well- do a role call for votes - at least one board member has to be at the school- put on agenda that “members may participate remotely”

XI. DIRECTOR GOALS

XII. STRATEGIC PLANNING & GOAL SETTING

- a. Monticello Community Center Contract Update- draft agreement, school accountants working on whether the agreement will be okay with our lease aid from the state, looking into using a nearby church for indoor gym space, city has not responded by the deadline and wasn't discussed at the city council meeting

XIII. OLD BUSINESS

XIV. NEW BUSINESS

- a. SRMCS School Board Self Evaluation- Board went through the board self evaluation provided by OW. Noted that we need to do academic and ee review 4 times year and made a schedule, work on director goals (see below), make sure we are doing or discussing school board training during meetings
- b. Director Goals and Evaluation- tabled to December meeting, Annette will share the Charlotte Danielson's Framework For Teaching documents with Claire Belknap (director eval committee lead) to start looking at how to modify it to evaluate the director with focus on academic goals for the overall school
- c. OW Sounding Board- “Board Oversight of Academic Outcomes: October 2025”- reviewed and created a schedule for reviewing academic goals:

Oct- mca, new EE goals

Nov- fall fastbridge, EE check in

Feb-winter fastbridge, EE check in

May/June- spring fastbridge, EE goals scores

- d. Set date for Policy Committee- Meeting Tuesday, Dec. 2 at 2:15 PM at the 503 building.

XV. REVIEW OF NEXT MEETING AGENDA

- a. Date, Time & Location of next Finance Committee Meeting: Tuesday, December 9, 2025 at 2:15 PM
 - i. Bringing ideas on how to increase or decrease expenses with the goal to find between \$100,000 and \$125,000
- b. Date, Time & Location of next Board Meeting: Tuesday, December 16, 2025 at 2:15 PM

Upcoming Agenda Items- FY26

Old Business

A board committee will review policies that were looked at by MSBA in December

New Business - all policies tabled to December following the policy review

XVI. MOTION TO ADJOURN at __4:06__ PM by _AS_, Seconded by_RF_. Board Vote- all aye- motion carries