

**Meeting of the Governing Board of
Atlantic Montessori Charter School, Inc.**

Atlantic Montessori Charter School – 5029
Atlantic Montessori Charter School West Campus K-5 – 5164

Board Meeting:
January 28, 2025
5:30 pm

Meeting began at 5:32 pm

Minutes:

1. Approval of minutes from last Board Meeting
 - a. Voting on minutes of last Board Meeting – **5 Yes, passed.**

Attendance:

Kerry Vales (Board)
Ricardo Carrera (Board)
Lissette Giovia (Board)
Samantha Vivlar (Board)
Deneisha Dinnall (Board)
Monica Duenas Hernandez
Juana Ocejo
Michael Ocejo
Jesus Garcia
35 other public attendees

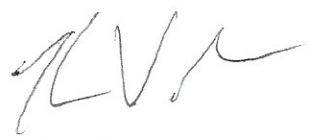
Meeting Action Items:

2. Financial status
 - a. Both schools are dwindling in funds due to under enrollment.
 - b. Juana asked the Guardians to work with them to postpone the payment. The company has a grant that will be able to fund the guards.
 - c. Focus program documents attendance, student schedules, etc. We were unprepared to start the year, so we contracted an advisor for \$600 / month for each campus. We don't need the help as much anymore. Perhaps hire him on an "as need" basis. After 1/31 we won't use his services anymore.
3. Mental Health –
 - a. Roxana Milan. Ty does the automatic payments. Question: Does the fee change monthly? Answer – It depends on use. Roxana is giving AMCS a month to find a new counselor (\$600 every 2 weeks – 25 hours per week for each school = \$1,200 per month.
 - b. Accountant - \$2,500 / month per school (\$5,000 per month. Jesus asks about any other referrals. Financial difficulties, so we're going month to month. Red Book Accounting. Ms. Canetti entered into the contract as the Assistant Principal, not the Board. The



Board should be doing the contracts moving forward. Vote to have the Board maintain contracts – **5 Yes. Passed.**

4. Payroll reduction due to low enrollment at Davie. It's not feasible to combine classes. Cut the P.E. teacher to 2 days / week. Dr. Duenas suggests cutting support staff hours first. Pines campus cut from 15,000 to 12,000. Jesus asks if we can combine 1st and 2nd grade? Dr. Duenas answers that 1st grade has 18 students and 2nd grade has 14 (32 total), so that's not feasible. Dr. Duenas does not agree to that. Ricardo Carrera suggests cutting vendors rather than teachers.
5. School Recognition Funds – the Board has to vote on how these funds are to be spent. Last Board meeting Dr. Duenas and Mrs. Ocejo were asked for proposals on how to spend the money. In the past, Mrs. Ocejo says that the teachers never voted. This year, the teachers committee voted on a proposal to submit to the Board. The teacher committee came up with 3 options for a vote. \$6,500 to the school (25% of total funds) to use for enhancement, the remainder would be split evenly among all staff members. Dr. Duenas would like to re-convene to come up with a better plan to give a little more to the teachers that were here last year. Ms. Vales has a bigger concern with the funds: a vote determines how the funds are to be spent. An email shows that the funds have already been spent. Mrs. Ocejo states that the funds went into the general account, that the accountant decided to spend it as needed. The Broward County School Board deposits the money directly into the account. Mrs. Ocejo says that monitoring funds and budget items are her Achilles heel. Mrs. Vales says Mrs. Ocejo is the Executive Director and that is her job. Dr. Duenas has proof that she will not have access to the funds, and that she was advised by Mrs. Ocejo to "stay in her lane." Dr. Duenas became suspicious of the use of funds. Mrs. Vales has emails showing that Dr. Duenas won't have access to the funds, but to VIEW ONLY. Mrs. Ocejo suggests that the Board can vote. The recognition funds totals are as follows: \$10,300 for the Pines Campus, and \$\$17,500 for the Davie Campus = \$27,800. The funds are NOT AVAILABLE to be distributed. Mrs. Ocejo says that it's Ty's (accountant) job to distribute the funds. Ricardo asks why is Ty having so much responsibility? Dr. Duenas says that Ty is NOT RESPONSIBLE for how the money is distributed. Mrs. Ocejo says that she didn't read the email about the funds, that she simply sent the email about the School Recognition Funds directly to Ty. For 5 years, Mrs. Canetti handled all financials. There is some kind of settlement (\$\$) coming in July. \$7,000 for the school, hold the rest for a new proposal. We can't vote on anything that we spent the money on already. Vote on tabling the School Recognition vote to Thursday, 1/30/15 at 6:00 p.m.
6. There is a resolution to add a 4th and 5th grade to the Pines Campus – we need to have the vote by March 1. Vote to add 4th and 5th grade to 5029 (Pines Campus) if we have the "High Performing Letter." **5 Yes votes – passes.**
7. Personnel changes – Ms. Santori is a certified teacher. Ms. Couzzo is a struggling teacher and is removing herself as teacher (leaving). Ms. Thorpe and Ms. Conde are very good teachers. Ms. Martinez and Ms. Santori need support. Ms. Hosein is the Lead Teacher at Davie. Ms. Sevilla is an excellent resource, also ESE. Dr. Duenas saw concerning things in the 1st grade class during Reading Time – the teacher was teaching grammar. Mrs. Ocejo does not have documentation of teacher walk-throughs (formal). Dr. Duenas says that Mrs. Ocejo gave feedback to Ms. Martinez when she shouldn't have. Ms. Martinez said that Mrs. Ocejo told her that Dr. Duenas did not like



what she saw. Ms. Martinez asked Dr. Duenas about her feedback. Vote on personnel changes (4 items including Ms. Sevilla role as interim administrator) **5 Yes – passed.**

- a. Ms. Couzzo speaks about her struggles; her pay was dropped from \$28 an hour to \$20 an hour.
8. Service Providers at 5029, they need an O.T. to service this child. Can't find a qualified person to come in 30 minutes 2 times per week. The IEP says that he needs it. This is being brought to the attention to the Board. Venture Design provided ESE Services. FAPE is not being followed. Repairs are being worked on at 5029 (Pines Campus), but it's taking too long. Mrs. Ocejo needs a letter from the Board to put pressure on the landlord to make the necessary repairs.
9. Professional Development Efforts – the district is making a visit on 1/30 to look at ESE services.

Old Business –

10. Jesus suggests that this has been a bumpy year, that holes have been left open. He suggests that Mrs. Vales, Mrs. Ocejo, Dr. Duenas and Ty come together to get on the same page.
11. Staff members related to administration needed to be addressed at the last Board meeting.
 - a. Question to Dr. Duenas – Have you been able to have Michael Ocejo's duties identified. She has clarified his duties for him. Mrs. Ocejo cannot be Mr. Ocejo's supervisor. Mr. Ocejo claims he has sent countless emails to the Board with no response from the Board. Dr. Duenas suggests that Mr. Ocejo's job (Web Design) should be terminated. **Vote – 4 Yes, 1 abstain (relative of Mr. Ocejo) – Passed.** Mr. Ocejo is directed to provide email passwords and usernames for all applications (including the website).
12. Mrs. Vales explains that the Executive Director is NOT performing her duties, that there is a lack of transparency, mismanagement of funds, and treatment of teachers (about cutting their hours). **Vote to remove Mrs. Ocejo as Executive Director – 4 Yes, 1 Abstain (relative of Mrs. Ocejo)– Passed.** Mrs. Ocejo is directed to return all items purchased by school funds, including all real and intellectual property, including her phone and watch, as soon as possible.
13. Board member Lissette Giovia stated she was entering her resignation, effective immediately. Resignation was accepted.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:32 pm.

