

LHU Board of Directors Regular Meeting

June 23, 2025 12:00 PM
Sterling Montessori Academy and Charter School
202 Treybrooke Drive, Morrisville, NC 27560
Virtual via Google Meet

COMMENCEMENT

Call to Order and Board Attendance w/Determination of Quorum
At 12:02pm

Quorum Present with following Board Members in Attendance:

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Present</u> | | <u>Name</u> | <u>Present</u> | | <u>Name</u> | <u>Present</u> |
|-------------------|----------------|--|-----------------|----------------|--|-------------|----------------|
| Rachel Richardson | M | | Dwayne Jones | x | | | |
| Kevin Hughes | x | | Keisha Pressley | x | | | |
| Jessi Fasola | x | | Susan English | | | | |
| Ryan Hill | x | | Daphne Coulter | | | | |

Reading of Mission Statement:

"The mission of Sterling Montessori is to create a diverse educational community, grounded in the Montessori philosophy and teaching practices, that fosters curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking in its students. We strive to empower each student to become life-long learners who respect themselves, others, and their environment."

Conflict of Interest Statement

"At this time, we ask all board members to make a statement to be recorded in the minutes should they know of any conflict of interest or appearance of conflict with respect to any matters coming before them during this meeting. It is the duty of each board member to abstain from discussion and voting on such matters."



Native Land Acknowledgement

"The LHU Board recognizes that Sterling Montessori sits on the ancestral land of the Tuscarora, Lumbee and Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Tribes. As we strive to become better stewards of the environment, we also strive to provide a more equitable and culturally responsive environment for all students, but especially Black and indigenous students of color."

Agenda Items:

Discussion Items:

- Current Budget Status
- Enrollment implications and strategy
- Outdoor Learning Project, Proposals & Decision
- Preparation for Executive Director Search

Approval of Agenda

At 12:04p, Rachel Richardson moved to approve the agenda. Approved

| Name | Aye | Nay | Abs | | Name | Aye | Nay | Abs | | Name | Aye | Nay | Abs |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|--|-----------------|-----|-----|-----|--|------|-----|-----|-----|
| Rachel Richardson | M | | | | Dwayne Jones | x | | | | | | | |
| Jessi Fasola | x | | | | Keisha Pressley | x | | | | | | | |
| Ryan Hill | x | | | | Susan English | | | | | | | | |
| Kevin Hughes | x | | | | Daphne Coulter | | | | | | | | |

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- Outdoor Learning Project, Proposals & Decision
- Preparation for Executive Director Search
- **Current Budget Status & State Funding (ADM) Scenarios**



- Review of projected ADM funding formulas (best of first 20 days of August/September vs. prior year baseline).
- Clarification that baseline ADM for 2025–26 is 599, with potential growth to 617 based on enrollment strategy and if we are able to enroll more.
- Discussion of state and county funding projections, including a potential 2.5 % county funding increase assumption.
- **Enrollment Implications & Strategy**
 - Discussion of current Pre-K enrollment (79 students) vs. capacity (100–120). Should we consider adding K's
 - Impact of Pre-K/K ratio on classroom balance, lower elementary projections, and specials scheduling.
 - We should be mindful of Wake County track-in dates (July 7) and get ahead of that for offering additional K spots.
 - Historical attrition between K and 1st which shows as usually 8 withdrawals, additional seats in K, would give us protection against to offset summer withdrawals.
- **Staffing & Hiring Freeze**
 - Review of proposed hires versus hold positions:
 - Approval to proceed with one floater position (already funded).
 - ECPA positions: one funded, one on hold pending budget confirmation.
 - Administrative support realignment: moving current staff to Executive Assistant and backfilling with a receptionist— still in the budget and timing to be determined.
 - **Spending Freeze:** All non-essential discretionary and hiring on hold until further budget review, except for the floater role.
- **Discretionary & Instructional Materials Spending**
 - Discussion of classroom budgets (\$250/teacher) and level discretionary budgets (~\$10–20 K). These have already been cut, but may need further evaluation.
 - Identification of one-time vs. recurring expenses (e.g., language software, music equipment) to see if any overlap or nonessential costs can be deferred.
 - Plan to audit purchase orders and subscription services to eliminate non-essential spending.



- There is a plan for Directors to implement tighter approval processes for classroom and discretionary expenditures.
- **Outdoor Learning Project Proposal**
 - Reviewed phase-based engagement with American Engineering.
 - Agreed to cap development spending at **\$80,000** for design and implementation of initial project segment.
 - Emphasis on ensuring any scope undertaken can be completed within this budget, including all fees and construction costs.
- **Executive Director Search Preparation**
 - Board members reminded to respond to Dwayne Jones's email with input on search process and candidate criteria.
 - Aim to solicit full board feedback before the next meeting to streamline Wednesday's discussion.
- **Next Steps & Action Items**
 - Elizabeth to follow up with Betty on discretionary line-item clarifications (Spanish, music, tech budgets).
 - Plan to address section directors budget review and process
 - Ryan to reconnect with American Engineering on next steps for the OLI project
 - Board members to submit executive director search feedback
 - Next board meeting scheduled for Wednesday; agenda to include final budget vote and search process update.

CONSENT ITEM

At 12:51p, Rachel Richardson moved to increase the number of Kindergarten spots by 8, to 88 total. Approved

| Name | Aye | Nay | Abs | | Name | Aye | Nay | Abs | | Name | Aye | Nay | Abs |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|--|--------------|-----|-----|-----|--|------|-----|-----|-----|
| Rachel Richardson | M | | | | Dwayne Jones | x | | | | | | | |
| Jessi Fasola | x | | | | Keisha | x | | | | | | | |



| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------|---|--|--|--|----------------|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | Pressley | | | | | | | | |
| Ryan Hill | x | | | | Susan English | x | | | | | | | |
| Kevin Hughes | x | | | | Daphne Coulter | | | | | | | | |

CONSENT ITEM

At 1:19p, Rachel Richardson moved to approve development spending up to \$80,000 for engagement with American Engineering to begin the facilitation of next phase of the Outdoor Learning Environment Building Project. Approved.

| Name | Aye | Nay | Abs | | Name | Aye | Nay | Abs | | Name | Aye | Nay | Abs |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|--|-----------------|-----|-----|-----|--|------|-----|-----|-----|
| Rachel Richardson | M | | | | Dwayne Jones | x | | | | | | | |
| Jessi Fasola | | | | | Keisha Pressley | x | | | | | | | |
| Ryan Hill | x | | | | Susan English | | | | | | | | |
| Kevin Hughes | x | | | | Daphne Coulter | | | | | | | | |

ADJOURNMENT

At 1:29p, Rachel Richardson moved to adjourn. Approved

| Name | Aye | Nay | Abs | | Name | Aye | Nay | Abs | | Name | Aye | Nay | Abs |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|--|-----------------|-----|-----|-----|--|------|-----|-----|-----|
| Rachel Richardson | M | | | | Dwayne Jones | x | | | | | | | |
| Jessi Fasola | | | | | Keisha Pressley | x | | | | | | | |
| Ryan Hill | x | | | | Susan English | | | | | | | | |



A nonprofit organization

Attendance:

| Name (original name) | Email | Join time | Leave time | Duration (minutes) | Guest | Recording disclaimer response | In waiting room |
|----------------------|--|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|-------|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| Ryan Hill | ryan.hill@lhuf.org | 06/23/2025 11:59:13 AM | 06/23/2025 01:29:28 PM | 91 | No | OK | No |
| Rachel Richardson | | 06/23/2025 11:59:28 AM | 06/23/2025 01:29:27 PM | 90 | Yes | OK | No |
| Dwayne Jones | | 06/23/2025 11:59:50 AM | 06/23/2025 01:29:28 PM | 90 | Yes | OK | No |
| kimelliott | | 06/23/2025 12:00:28 PM | 06/23/2025 01:29:28 PM | 89 | Yes | OK | No |
| Stephanie Deming | | 06/23/2025 12:00:39 PM | 06/23/2025 01:29:28 PM | 89 | Yes | OK | No |
| Kevin Hughes | | 06/23/2025 12:00:44 PM | 06/23/2025 01:22:13 PM | 82 | Yes | OK | No |
| Keisha Pressley | | 06/23/2025 12:00:46 PM | 06/23/2025 01:29:28 PM | 89 | Yes | OK | No |
| elizabethuzzell | | 06/23/2025 12:00:48 PM | 06/23/2025 01:29:27 PM | 89 | Yes | OK | No |
| Jessi Fasola | | 06/23/2025 12:02:01 PM | 06/23/2025 01:00:19 PM | 59 | Yes | OK | No |
| susan | | 06/23/2025 12:23:48 PM | 06/23/2025 01:29:27 PM | 66 | Yes | OK | No |