



## **NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING**

### **Board of Directors Meeting**

#### **High Desert Montessori School**

**2590 Orovada Street, Reno, Nevada 89512 775-624-2800**

**Wednesday, June 8, 2022 @ 5:00PM via Zoom**

High Desert Montessori School's Board of Directors will conduct their public meeting either in-person, virtually, or by phone. All Directors shall attend the meeting in person or remotely. Public members wishing to attend the virtual meeting may do so by using the virtual link or phone in information as directed below. Unless otherwise restricted, as noted, the Board may take action on any item. Unless otherwise stated, items may be taken out of order at the discretion of the chairperson. Items may be combined for consideration by the Board. Items may be pulled or removed from the agenda at any time. Reasonable efforts will be made to assist and accommodate physically disabled persons desiring to attend the meeting. Please contact the school at 775-624-2800 in advance so arrangements may be conveniently made. Supporting materials may be obtained from Stephanie Turner; by email at [Stephanie@hdmsreno.com](mailto:Stephanie@hdmsreno.com) at the address or phone number above.

#### **Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88650597128?pwd=ZzBxKzBVNjR3U00ybFg5ODI2WG9CUT09>

**Meeting ID: 886 5059 7128**

**Passcode: 537733**

#### **One tap mobile**

**+13462487799,,88650597128#,,,,\*537733# US (Houston)**

**+16699006833,,88650597128#,,,,\*537733# US (San Jose)**

## **AGENDA**

The Board of Directors will receive public comment virtually, in person, or via email at [publiccomment@hdmsreno.com](mailto:publiccomment@hdmsreno.com) All public comments received before and during the meeting will be provided to the Board of Directors. Such comments shall not be read aloud at the meeting but will be recorded in the public record and in the minutes. In-person public comment will be limited to 3 minutes. No action can be taken on any comments, but public input is welcome.

1. Call to Order and Roll Call (FOR POSSIBLE ACTION)
2. Public Comment
3. Adopt the Agenda (FOR POSSIBLE ACTION)
4. Approval of Board Minutes from 5.25.22 (FOR POSSIBLE ACTION)

5. 2021-2022 Augmented Budget (FOR POSSIBLE ACTION)
6. Construction Budget (DISCUSSION)
7. 22-23 HDMS Board and Finance Meeting Dates (FOR POSSIBLE ACTION)
8. 22-23 Administrative Restructuring (DISCUSSION)
9. World Class Montessori Schools Article (DISCUSSION)
10. Executive Session: Evaluation of Principal Eric Perez and Executive Director Tammie Stockton (FOR POSSIBLE ACTION)
11. Public Comment
12. Adjournment and Future Agenda Items (FOR POSSIBLE ACTION)

**Items not acted on at this meeting may be acted on at future meetings.**

*"High Desert Montessori School provides a safe, nurturing school environment that fosters independence, problem-solving skills and great work in our students. We offer tools to explore the universe through Montessori's Cosmic Education, the purpose of which is to link all areas of human knowledge. We urge all of our students to be participating members of a socially conscious and green community by inspiring them to be critical thinkers capable of reflection, communication and action. We comply with all Nevada State and Common Core State Standards."*

HDMS Board meetings are posted at the following places:

- Washoe County School District
- Sparks Library
- Washoe County Administration
- HDMS 2590 Orovada & 2025 Silverada Campuses
- HDMS Website [www.hdmsreno.com](http://www.hdmsreno.com)



**Board of Directors Meeting  
High Desert Montessori School  
Wednesday, May 25, 2022 @ 5:00PM via Zoom**

**1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Reid Riker  
Linda Aaquist  
Max Haynes  
Nancy Smith  
Nicole Commons (5:24 PM)  
Ashley Allen  
Bonnie Pillaro  
Brigitte Frost  
Jennifer Linn

**2. Public Comment**

None

**3. Adopt the Agenda**

Member Aaquist motions to adopt the agenda as presented, Member Smith seconds the motion and it passes unanimously.

**4. Approval of Board Minutes from 4.27.22**

Member Smith motions to approve the minutes from the April 27th board meeting as Presented, Member Pillaro seconds the motion and it passes unanimously. Chairman Haynes, Member Linn and Member Riker abstain.

**5. Nevada Montessori Week Update**

Administrator Woolstenhulme reviewed the updates on this item (see attached supporting documents.)

**6. Academic Update**

Administrator Perez reviewed his academic update (see attached supporting documents.)

## **7. 22-23 Final Budget**

Member Riker presented the 22-23 Final Budget (see attached supporting documents.)

Member Riker motions to approve the 22-23 Final Budget as presented, Member Aaquist Seconds the motion and it passes unanimously. Member Linn abstains.

## **8. 22-23 Tuition Increases**

Administrator Jordan reviewed the specifics of this item (see attached documents.)

Member Riker motioned to approve the 22-23 \$50 Pre-K Tuition Increase covered by the grant as presented and a \$50 increase for the 23-24 academic year, Member Smith Seconds the motion and it passes unanimously. Member Linn and Pillaro abstain.

## **9. Executive Director Update (Enrollment, Staffing, Expansion, School Meal Program, Outreach)**

Administrator Stockton reviewed her Executive Director update (see attached supporting documents.)

## **10. Attendance, Sick Leave and Absence Reporting Policy Update**

The board continued their discussion and the future voting of this item.

## **11. HDMS Board Bylaw Revisions**

The board reviewed this item for a final time (see attached supporting documents.)

Member Commons motions to approved the HDMS Board Bylaw Revisions as presented, Member Smith seconds the motion and it passes unanimously. Member Linn and Member Pillaro abstain.

## **12. WCSD Board Training**

The board discussed the item and attendance.

## **13. Teacher recruitment and Retainment Committee**

The board began discussing the future of this item.

**14. Appointment of new officers for 22-23 SY**

The board discussed the future appointments of the following officers.

Member Allen motions to accept the new appointments of the following officers as of July the new HDMS Chairperson will be Nicole Commons, The Vice chair- Linda Aaquist, Secretary- Ashley Allen, Treasurer- Reid Riker. Immediate Past Chairperson is Max Haynes. Member Frost seconds the motion and it passes unanimously.

**15. Public comment**

Former Teacher Fagundes- Requests the board look for future members of color.

**15. Adjournment and Future Agenda Items (FOR POSSIBLE ACTION)**

Phase 2

Board finance team

Admin restructuring

Executive session

Executive Director Evaluation

Teacher recruitment and retainment

**Member Riker motions to adjourn the meeting, Member Smith seconds the motion and it passes unanimously.**

**Items not acted on at this meeting may be acted on at future meetings.**



2021-2022 Augmented Budget Summary (Revised)

|                           | FUNDS & REVENUES       | FUNCTION 1000 INSTRUCTION | FUNCTION 2100 SUPPORT STUDENTS | FUNCTION 4400 GENERAL ADMIN | FUNCTION 2500 CLERICAL SERVICES | FUNCTION 2800 OPERATIVE MAINTENANCE | FUNCTION 2800 PAPER PROGRAM | FUNCTION 2800 ENRICHMENT PROGRAM | FUNCTION 2800 CAFETERIA | FUNCTION 1000 SPECIFIED STATE | FUNCTION 2000 FEDERAL | FUNCTION ESSER II GRANT | FUNCTION 2000 ESSER III GRANT | FUNCTION 2100 ESSER II GRANT | FUNCTION 2100 ESSER III GRANT | FUNCTION 2100 DEBT SERVICE | Expense Totals          |
|---------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Investment Income         | \$ 1,910.00            |                           |                                |                             |                                 |                                     |                             |                                  |                         |                               |                       |                         |                               |                              |                               |                            |                         |
| Donations-Unrestricted    | \$ 4,000.00            |                           |                                |                             |                                 |                                     |                             |                                  |                         |                               |                       |                         |                               |                              |                               |                            |                         |
| Donations-Restricted      | \$ 27,260.00           |                           |                                |                             |                                 |                                     |                             |                                  |                         |                               |                       |                         |                               |                              |                               |                            |                         |
| Other Revenue             | \$ 11,250.00           |                           |                                |                             |                                 |                                     |                             |                                  |                         |                               |                       |                         |                               |                              |                               |                            |                         |
| Bond Funding              | \$ 25,818.36           |                           |                                |                             |                                 |                                     |                             |                                  |                         |                               |                       |                         |                               |                              |                               |                            |                         |
| Other Finance Sources     | \$ 1,086,029.54        |                           |                                |                             |                                 |                                     |                             |                                  |                         |                               |                       |                         |                               |                              |                               |                            |                         |
| State Distributive Funds  | \$ 2,582,748.00        |                           |                                |                             |                                 |                                     |                             |                                  |                         |                               |                       |                         |                               |                              |                               |                            |                         |
| Childrens Cabliner ARP    | \$ 681,005.00          |                           |                                |                             |                                 |                                     |                             |                                  |                         |                               |                       |                         |                               |                              |                               |                            |                         |
| NSLP Grant - Dept of Agri | \$ 381,300.27          |                           |                                |                             |                                 |                                     |                             |                                  |                         |                               |                       |                         |                               |                              |                               |                            |                         |
| Pre-K Fees                | \$ 586,650.00          |                           |                                |                             |                                 |                                     |                             |                                  |                         |                               |                       |                         |                               |                              |                               |                            |                         |
| Enrichment Program        | \$ 112,000.00          |                           |                                |                             |                                 |                                     |                             |                                  |                         |                               |                       |                         |                               |                              |                               |                            |                         |
| Special Ed State Funding  | \$ 158,565.51          |                           |                                |                             |                                 |                                     |                             |                                  |                         |                               |                       |                         |                               |                              |                               |                            |                         |
| Special Ed Fed Funding    | \$ 49,582.31           |                           |                                |                             |                                 |                                     |                             |                                  |                         |                               |                       |                         |                               |                              |                               |                            |                         |
| ESSER II                  | \$ 46,328.40           |                           |                                |                             |                                 |                                     |                             |                                  |                         |                               |                       |                         |                               |                              |                               |                            |                         |
| ESSER III                 | \$ 254,066.23          |                           |                                |                             |                                 |                                     |                             |                                  |                         |                               |                       |                         |                               |                              |                               |                            |                         |
| ARP IDEA                  | \$ 10,109.78           |                           |                                |                             |                                 |                                     |                             |                                  |                         |                               |                       |                         |                               |                              |                               |                            |                         |
| ESSER II / OER II         | \$ 69,365.21           |                           |                                |                             |                                 |                                     |                             |                                  |                         |                               |                       |                         |                               |                              |                               |                            |                         |
| Salaries                  |                        | 1,119,344.21              | 28,262.46                      | 178,396.03                  | 150,360.21                      | 23,205.49                           | 422,805.91                  | 46,037.62                        | -                       | 84,087.50                     | 25,379.01             | 29,047.31               | 139,151.40                    | 50,000.00                    | -                             | -                          | \$ 2,296,079.15         |
| Benefits                  |                        | 359,204.31                | 7,851.54                       | 70,198.30                   | 43,624.26                       | 5,846.31                            | 87,572.67                   | 11,161.13                        | -                       | 16,524.71                     | 5,358.35              | 17,281.09               | 48,549.34                     | 19,365.21                    | -                             | -                          | \$ 692,337.22           |
| Purchase Services         |                        | 67,441.23                 | 33,252.00                      | 2,480.08                    | 206,513.30                      | 227,323.13                          | -                           | -                                | 2,175.00                | 57,105.78                     | 18,579.94             | -                       | -                             | 10,109.78                    | -                             | -                          | \$ 624,980.24           |
| Supplies                  |                        | 75,208.50                 | 1,110.00                       | -                           | -                               | 38,000.00                           | 3,085.00                    | 3,120.00                         | 362,639.27              | 847.52                        | 265.01                | -                       | 46,365.49                     | -                            | -                             | -                          | \$ 568,671.79           |
| Property                  |                        | -                         | -                              | -                           | -                               | 7,858,853.73                        | -                           | -                                | -                       | -                             | -                     | -                       | -                             | -                            | -                             | -                          | \$ 7,858,853.73         |
| Other                     |                        | 50,130.36                 | -                              | -                           | 26,336.74                       | -                                   | 874.00                      | -                                | 1,085.00                | -                             | -                     | -                       | -                             | -                            | 717,148.34                    | -                          | \$ 795,574.44           |
| <b>TOTALS:</b>            | <b>\$ 6,007,968.81</b> | <b>\$ 1,671,328.61</b>    | <b>\$ 70,276.00</b>            | <b>\$ 251,076.41</b>        | <b>\$ 464,965.51</b>            | <b>\$ 8,153,228.66</b>              | <b>\$ 514,337.56</b>        | <b>\$ 60,318.75</b>              | <b>\$ 365,699.27</b>    | <b>\$ 158,565.51</b>          | <b>\$ 49,582.31</b>   | <b>\$ 46,328.40</b>     | <b>\$ 234,066.23</b>          | <b>\$ 89,365.21</b>          | <b>\$ 10,109.78</b>           | <b>\$ 717,148.34</b>       | <b>\$ 12,836,496.57</b> |

|   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| Revenues Over/(Under) Expenses            | \$ (6,828,507.96)    |
| Restricted Bond Funds to be expended      | \$ 7,791,424.28      |
| Unrestricted Funds to be expended         | \$ 962,916.32        |
| <b>Net Revenues Over/(Under) Expenses</b> | <b>\$ 962,916.32</b> |







Job Name HDMS - Phase 3  
 Date 6/7/2022

Scope of Work Construction of new +/- 4000 sf Multi Purpose Building, Playground Improvements Including Walking Path, Turf Field, plantings and irrigation including Grading, Storm Water and Utility Upgrades.

Cost Summary by Breakdown per Division

| Div Code                 | Division                       | Multi Purpose Building | Site       | Landscape  | Concrete walkways | Design    | Subtotal of Direct Costs |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|------------|------------|-------------------|-----------|--------------------------|
| 0100                     | GENERAL REQUIREMENTS           | \$ 107,210             | \$ 41,400  | \$ 24,750  | \$ 13,500         |           | \$ 186,860               |
| 0170                     | INTERIM AND FINAL CLEANING     | \$ 3,600               |            |            |                   |           | \$ 3,600                 |
| 0210                     | SURVEY AND TESTING             | \$ 7,500               | \$ 7,500   |            |                   |           | \$ 15,000                |
| 0220                     | DEMOLITION                     | \$ 30,000.00           |            |            |                   |           | \$ 30,000.00             |
| 0230                     | SITE WORK                      | \$ 19,551              | \$ 159,310 |            |                   |           | \$ 178,861               |
| 0280                     | FENCES AND GATES               |                        | \$ 11,265  |            |                   |           | \$ 11,265                |
| 0290                     | LANDSCAPING                    |                        |            | \$ 105,097 |                   |           | \$ 105,097               |
| 0300                     | CONCRETE                       | \$ 71,817              |            |            | \$ 25,695         |           | \$ 97,512                |
| 0600                     | ROUGH CARPENTRY                | \$ 260,764             |            |            |                   |           | \$ 260,764               |
| 0620                     | FINISH CARPENTRY               | \$ 16,595              |            |            |                   |           | \$ 16,595                |
| 0700                     | THERMAL AND MOISTURE PROTECTIO | \$ 15,331              |            |            |                   |           | \$ 15,931                |
| 0730                     | ROOFING                        | \$ 112,095             |            |            |                   |           | \$ 112,095               |
| 0740                     | COMPOSITE (ACM) WALL PANELS    | \$ 25,000.00           |            |            |                   |           | \$ 25,000.00             |
| 0810                     | DOORS, FRAMES AND HARDWARE     | \$ 15,215              |            |            |                   |           | \$ 15,215                |
| 0830                     | OVERHEAD DOORS                 | \$ 15,000              |            |            |                   |           | \$ 15,000                |
| 0840                     | GLASS AND GLAZING              | \$ 25,000              |            |            |                   |           | \$ 25,000                |
| 0920                     | EXTERIOR STUCCO                | \$ 65,000              |            |            |                   |           | \$ 65,000                |
| 0925                     | METAL STUDS AND DRYWALL        | \$ 70,000              |            |            |                   |           | \$ 70,000                |
| 0930                     | TILE                           | \$ 15,200              |            |            |                   |           | \$ 15,200                |
| 0970                     | WALLCOVERINGS                  | \$ -                   |            |            |                   |           | \$ -                     |
| 0990                     | PAINTS AND COATINGS            | \$ 11,000              |            |            |                   |           | \$ 11,000                |
| 1000                     | SPECIALTIES                    | \$ 6,500               |            |            |                   |           | \$ 6,500                 |
| 1510                     | PLUMBING                       | \$ 46,820              |            |            |                   |           | \$ 46,820                |
| 1570                     | HVAC                           | \$ 131,300             |            |            |                   |           | \$ 131,300               |
| 1600                     | ELECTRICAL                     | \$ 103,526             |            |            |                   |           | \$ 103,526               |
| 8000                     | DESIGN SERVICES                |                        |            |            |                   | \$ 47,500 | \$ 47,500                |
| Subtotal of Direct Costs |                                | \$ 1,174,624           | \$ 219,475 | \$ 129,847 | \$ 39,195         | \$ 47,500 | \$ 1,610,641             |
| Use                      | Values                         | Multi Purpose Building | Site       | Landscape  | Concrete walkways | Design    | Grand Total              |
| x                        | Subtotal of Direct Costs       | \$ 1,174,624           | \$ 219,475 | \$ 129,847 | \$ 39,195         | \$ 47,500 | \$ 1,610,641             |
|                          | Permit Allowance               | \$ 23,492              | \$ 4,389   | \$ 2,597   | \$ 784            | \$ 950    | \$ 32,213                |
|                          | GC Overhead (5%)               | \$ 58,731              | \$ 10,974  | \$ 6,492   | \$ 1,960          | \$ 2,375  | \$ 80,532                |
|                          | GC Profit (5%)                 | \$ 61,668              | \$ 11,522  | \$ 6,817   | \$ 2,058          | \$ 2,494  | \$ 84,559                |
| Grand Total              |                                | \$ 1,318,515           | \$ 246,360 | \$ 145,753 | \$ 43,996         | \$ 53,319 | \$ 1,807,944             |

| HDMS PHASE 2 PROJECT PERFORMANCE |              |
|----------------------------------|--------------|
| Forecasted Budget Saving To Date | \$ 1,579,737 |
| Shared Savings Split             | \$ 789,869   |
| Remaining Owners Allowances      | \$ 873,219   |
| Projected Remaining Contingency  | \$ 289,713   |
| Contingency Split                | \$ 144,856   |
| Phase 3 Owner Budget             | \$ 1,807,944 |
| Over/Under Budget                | \$ 0         |

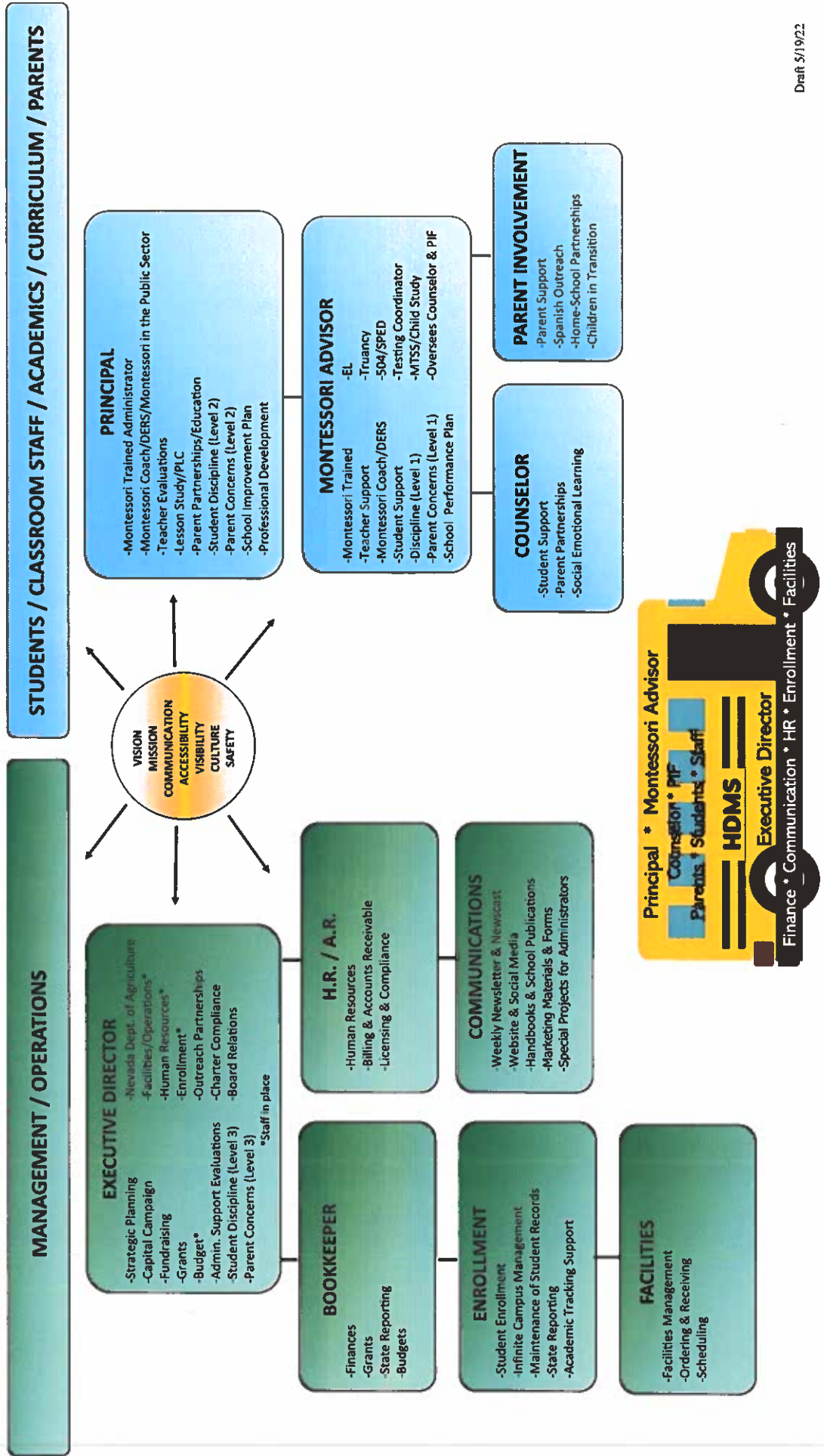


| <b>HDMS 22-23 Board &amp; Finance Meetings</b> |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| <b>Finance Meetings 3:30 via Zoom</b>          | <b>Board Meetings 5:00</b>    |
|  | 8/31/2022                     |
| 9/21/2022- Revised budget 22/23                | 9/28/2022                     |
| 10/19/22- CPA Audit                            | 10/26/2022                    |
|  | 11/30/2022                    |
| 1/18/22- Mid year review                       | 1/25/2023                     |
|  | 2/22/2023                     |
| 3/8/23- Tentative budget 23/24                 | 3/15/2023                     |
|  | 4/26/2023                     |
|  | 5/31/2023 Officer appointment |
|  | 06/14/2023                    |





# HDMS ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE 2022-23







# World-Class Montessori Schools Commitment to Excellence

BY TIM SELDIN

Over the past decades, a constantly growing number of schools have approached the Montessori Foundation ready, willing, and anxious to begin the journey from being simply good Montessori schools to becoming great ones. We have called this process Building a world-class Montessori school.

This can be a daunting task. It normally requires several years of focused hard work, complex and difficult decisions, planning, and a considerable investment of resources. Once begun, the school cannot back off from its commitment to excellence. The school must be prepared to meet raised expectations among parents and staff and follow through on its commitments to the school community. This is not something to be undertaken lightly. It requires an absolute commitment to excellence. We recommend that you have this vision in mind as you begin your process of starting a school and hold it as your goal moving forward.

## Principles Which Underpin Excellence

We have found several principles to be critical in building a Montessori School that is truly world-class.

### PRINCIPLE 1: An uncompromising commitment to excellence.

World-class Montessori schools make an uncompromising commitment to becoming excellent in all areas of their programs, facilities, resources, and operations. They clearly define their identity, mission, and core values. They seek out and turn to examples of true excellence in Montessori practice around the world.

They consciously define what excellence will look like in every aspect of their programs, facilities, and operations. They have plans for how they will create and maintain this excellence in each area of school operation.

They have determined what it will cost to create and sustain excellence in all areas and have developed a plan for funding it.

### PRINCIPLE 2: Institutional memory and integrity.

World-class Montessori schools ensure a strong sense of institutional memory and integrity within the school.

A school lives in the minds and vision of a group of people. No school can be great without a clear sense of its core values and the institution's culture: this is who we are and how we do things here. World-class Montessori schools are not generic Montessori

schools – they have a unique identity.

The character of any school will evolve, but it should evolve slowly and in a logical progression of maturation. Unfortunately, it is all too easy for Montessori schools to make compromises that threaten the integrity of their program because of tight budgets, lack of parent understanding and support, or because Montessori-trained teachers are hard to find. Sometimes schools lose their clear identity because they grow too fast, adapting an initial vision to accommodate market pressures or to capture a growing market in a new area.

What we say our school does, and the principles we believe must be translated into day-to-day reality. A great school stands for something distinct. It cannot possibly please everyone. The school that some deeply respect and admire will not appeal to others.

**PRINCIPLE 3: Clearly stated mission, core values, and educational beliefs.**

World-class schools carefully define and write the school's mission, core values, and educational beliefs. All policies and strategic decisions are based on these core values.

Many people assume that Montessori means the same thing to everyone. This is, however, not true. There is a wide variety in the way Montessori is applied. Unless a school can clearly define its unique character and understanding, parents, staff, and the wider community may become confused about the disparity between their assumptions and what the school is actually offering.

The ideas that define the nature of a school are the very soul of the school as an institution. It is essential to have a clear understanding and agreement about your mission, vision, and core values. Only by going through this process to develop clarity and consistency from class to class and level to level can you discover and define the school's true nature as you want it to be.

**PRINCIPLE 4: Consistency in philosophy and practice throughout the school.**

World-class Montessori schools ensure that the school is consistent in philosophy and practice from class to class, from one level to the next, and from year to year.

Many Montessori schools are made up of individual teachers who do their own thing in their classrooms, without much awareness or concern about coordination with the other classes within the school. As a result, it is not unusual to find Montessori schools made up of several classrooms that bear little resemblance to one another. Parents and teachers often hold very different perspectives of the school's mission, philosophy, and priorities.

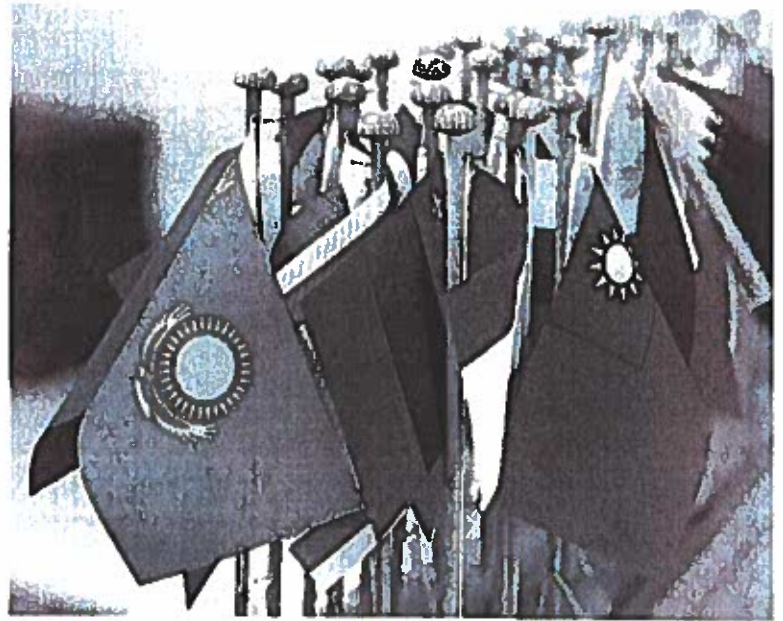
For a school to grow and enjoy respect, parents should be confident that their children's experience in the school will be highly consistent from year to year, from one class to another, and from one level to the next.

**PRINCIPLE 5: Leadership by an inspiring and consensus-building Montessori leader.**

World-class schools have an inspiring and consensus-build-

ing Montessori leader. Montessori schools that wish to remain faithful to their legacy need to be led by a first-rate Montessori educator. Being true to the underlying principles that distinguish them as Montessori programs, world-class schools will be based on a different set of assumptions and beliefs about the nature of learning, the definition of what constitutes a first-rate education, and the relationships among students, educators, families, and school to that on which excellent conventional schools will be based.

Research has consistently shown that the Head of School is the most influential person in any school. In great schools, the Head of School is, above all, a visionary who articulates and represents the school's core values and educational philosophy. They are not simply an administrator or business manager. Such skills are essential, but administrators and managers are not necessarily leaders and can be hired more readily than a great educational leader. A first-rate Montessori Head of School can build a school from the ground up.



It is rare to find someone who is both a sophisticated independent school leader and trained and committed to Montessori education. While many non-Montessori trained educators can glibly espouse a Montessori-like philosophy and values, few understand or pay much more than lip service to it in practice. A Head of School who is not Montessori in both training and philosophical orientation will generally be ineffective as the school's educational leader, may quickly get into conflict with the faculty, or in some cases will lead the school away from Montessori toward a traditional educational program.

Can you imagine asking a Catholic priest to run a Baptist church-affiliated school or a rabbi to head a school run by Quakers? Even with all the goodwill in the world, they are unlikely to share



the school community's culture, traditions and values, and would not be likely to be seen by faculty and parents as appropriate leaders for this school

At their core, authentic Montessori schools are based on an educational philosophy and system of beliefs as distinct as those of any school that promotes a specific religion or a culture quite different from the one held by most people in the local community

All too many fine Montessori schools have suffered through a series of weak or disruptive leaders after the founder retires. In almost every case, these Heads of School were neither Montessori trained nor Montessori oriented in their educational philosophy or leadership style. We can all name non-Montessori-trained people who are highly effective Montessori leaders. However, each is 'Montessori' in everything but a teaching credential, each is genuinely committed to the Montessori vision

We strongly believe that Montessori schools need sound Montessori leadership to thrive. Not doing so endangers the integrity and future of the school.

**PRINCIPLE 6: Clear line of authority and accountability within the school.**

World-class Montessori schools have a clear understanding of accountability and how it is embodied in a line of authority in the school.

Once a Head of School has been hired, she should oversee the entire school. All faculty and staff members should report to the Head of School. The Head of School should have clear day-to-day authority over the school's programs and practice

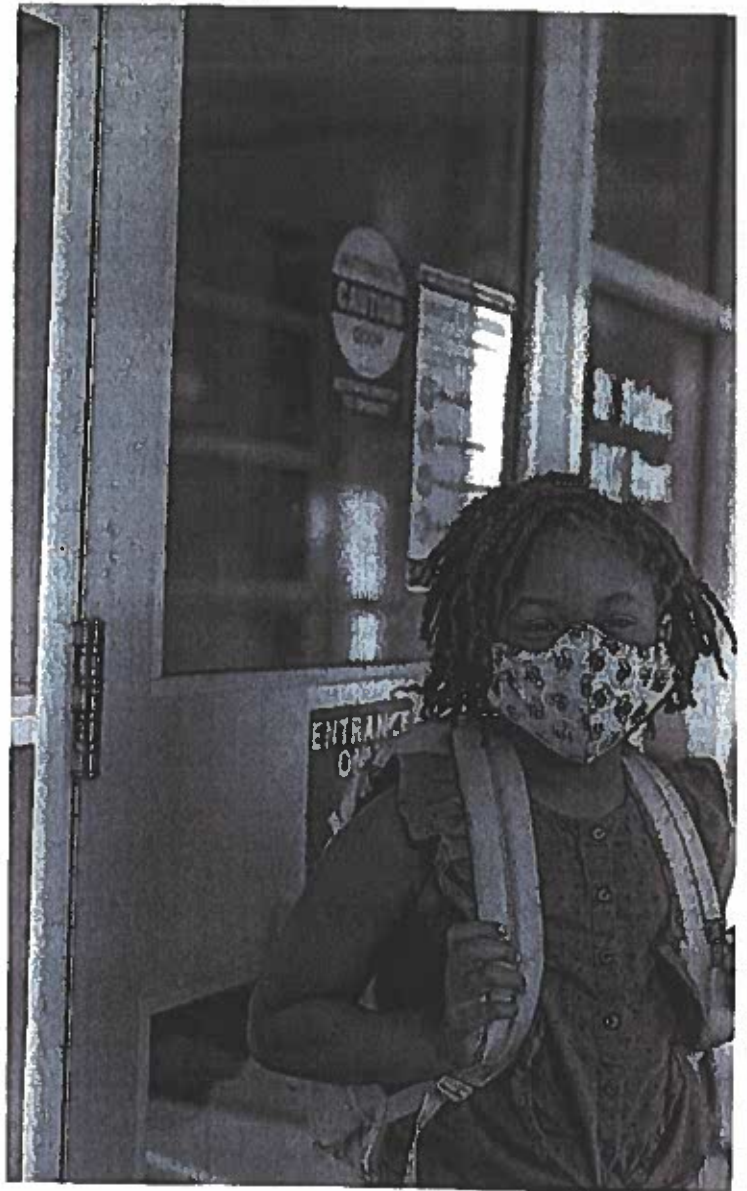
If there is a school Board, it is critical to clearly define the authority of the Head of School in contrast with that of the Board. All too often, confusion results when the roles of the Board and the Head of School are not clearly defined. It is not uncommon to see Board members performing administrative functions or making decisions more appropriately by the Head of School. This can lead to mistrust and conflict among the Head of School, the Board, and the faculty. This has the very real potential to destabilize the school.

Heads of School must be given the authority to manage the school within very broad guidelines established by the Board. For your school to continue along the lines of a caring, supportive, empowering community, it will always be essential to have a Head of School with the right balance of perspective, values, philosophy, skills, and experience. Finding the right person when you need one for your school is no mean feat.

**PRINCIPLE 7: Admissions process - focuses on finding the perfect match.**

World-class Montessori schools prioritize designing admissions processes that find families for whom the school is a perfect match. This contrasts with policies aimed at simply filling openings.

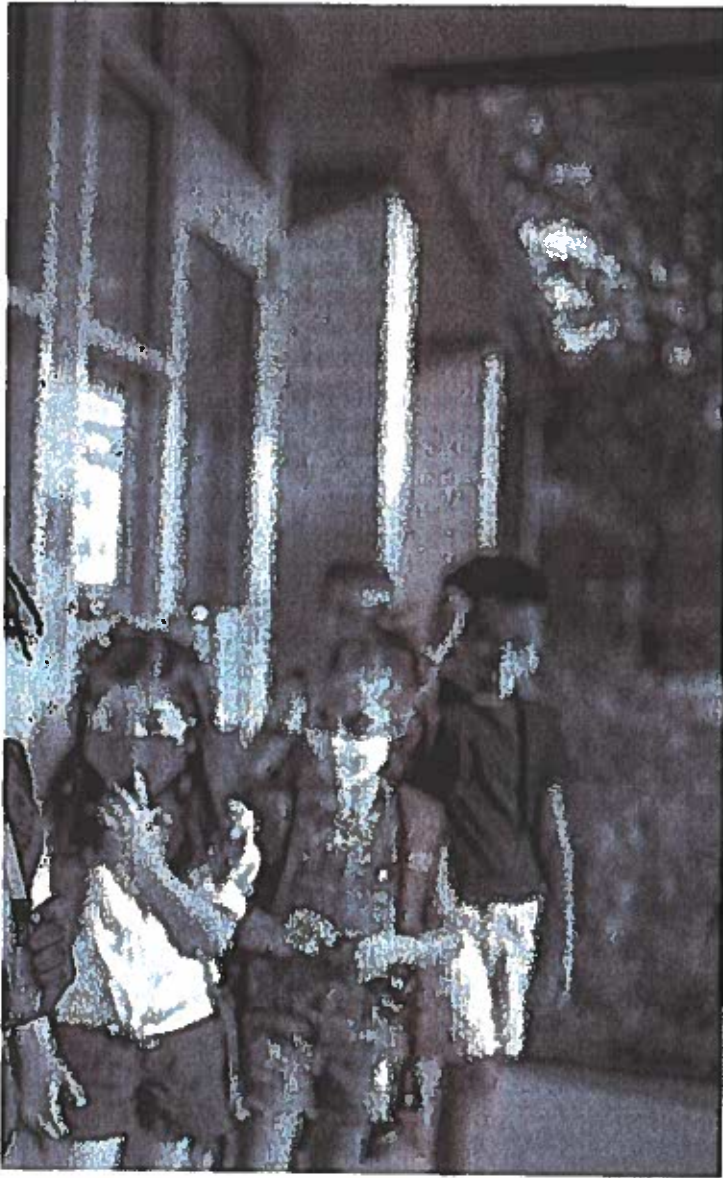
The process of admissions must be a Montessori school's



single biggest priority. The goal should not only be to fill each opening and thus meet our budget, but to gather children who will blossom within a Montessori setting, with families for whom the school is almost a perfect match with their values and long-term goals for their children.

Relatively few parents leave Montessori because of cost per se or are particularly unhappy with what the school has done. More often than not, they leave because they do not understand the benefit of a Montessori experience as opposed to the convenience and relatively lower cost of public schools. Whether they decide to move their children to a more traditional private school or the local public schools, parents leave Montessori because they have not been convinced that our schools offer their children opportunities for intellectual and social growth that are equal to and better in some unique way than the other schools in the community.

Too many families place their children in Montessori with little or no knowledge of what it is and what it offers, and



certainly with no real thought given to any relationship beyond the next year or so. These families are simply looking for the best opportunities for their children, with no special commitment to Montessori education or as a specific school.

Montessori schools, however, need to find people who are willing to work with us as partners. We need families who share core values and goals for their children's education that are compatible with the school's. Ensuring that they stay with the school, it is important to challenge them to think long-term.

weighing out carefully whether Montessori is the right fit for both their children and their family's values before they enroll.

**PRINCIPLE 8: Parents are kept very well informed about their children's progress.**

Parents expect to have many points of tangible and meaningful evidence confirming the wisdom of their decision and the effectiveness of the education that their children are receiving. World-class Montessori schools keep parents very well informed about their children's education and academic progress.

Most parents do not simply look for academic evidence alone. We should not underestimate how vital social opportunities and extracurricular programs are to most children and parents. World-class Montessori schools find multiple ways to communicate with parents on an ongoing basis.

**PRINCIPLE 9: Stable enrollment**

Attrition refers to a reduction in enrollment from children leaving for reasons other than graduation. World-class Montessori schools work to reduce attrition from year to year. This means that the school actively works to retain students once enrolled. To be truly effective, the Montessori program requires that children stay for a full three-year cycle at the very least. Elementary programs depend on their success on children moving through from the 3-6 program. Adolescent programs are designed to meet the needs of children who have had Montessori elementary experience—losing children before the end of a cycle and admitting children without previous Montessori experience at successive cycles impacts a school in several ways.

Firstly, children who leave early may not fully integrate their learning and may reflect poorly in regard to learning outcomes. This could create a negative opinion about the school. Secondly, the class may be left without its leaders when children leave early. Montessori classes need a full age span of at least three years to function properly. While some attrition is inevitable because of parents leaving the area, ideally, schools should aim for attrition of no more than 10%.

**PRINCIPLE 10: Deliberate financial planning ensures that the school is financially sound.**

To be excellent, a school must be financially sound. To become financially sound, a school must have a budget, a good bookkeeping system, and a financial plan that focuses on funding growth.



**Tim Boldin** is the President of the Montessori Foundation and Chair of the International Montessori Council. His more than 50 years of experience in Montessori education, includes 22 years as Head of the Barrie School in Silver Spring, MD. Tim was the co-founder of the Institute for Advanced Montessori Studies and the Center for Guided Montessori Studies. He currently serves as the co-Head of the New Gate School in Sarasota, FL. He earned a B.A. in History and Philosophy from Georgetown University; an M.Ed. in Educational Administration and Supervision from The American University; and his Montessori certification from the American Montessori Society. Tim is the author of several books on Montessori Education, including *How to Raise An Amazing Child, The Montessori Way* with Dr. Paul Epstein; *Building a World-Class Montessori School*; *Finding the Perfect Match - Recruit and Retain Your Ideal Enrollment*; *Master Teachers - Model Programs*; *Starting a New Montessori School*; *Celebrations of Life*; *The World in the Palm of Her Hand* and most recently *Montessori for Every Family* with Lorna McGrath.