

**CALIFORNIA MONTESSORI PROJECT
MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD
RETREAT MINUTES**

DATE: Monday, October 8th, 2005
TIME: 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
MEETING PLACE: Sacramento Zoo
3930 West Land Park Drive
Sacramento, Ca. 95822-1123
Phone (916) 264-8561

EMERGENCY CONTACT: Gary Bowman at (916) 204-0271

PUBLIC MEETING OPEN SESSION

1. Refreshments/Social- 8:00 AM

2. Welcome, Orientation- 8:43 AM

Gary Bowman

Gary Bowman, Executive Director, welcomed everyone to the Governing Board Retreat and emphasized the opportunity for all present to collectively chart the course for CMP through constructive dialogue. Gary commended and thanked everyone for creating the vision for California Montessori Project, and for the perseverance and focus in the implementation of the vision

Gary facilitated a discussion of goal-setting, and challenged each Board member to consider their perceived area of most importance for CMP, and to encrypt their goal on a “river rock”.

3. Activity: Communication and Community- 9:24 A.M

Kim Aldridge

Kim Aldridge discussed the meaning of “CMP community” and the integral partners in the community including staff, parents, children and classrooms. She cited the formula: “communication = community”.

[Lisa Corr, attorney at Spector, Middleton, Young, and Minney, arrived]

Kim and Gary invited Retreat participants to “partner-up” for an interactive communication activity. Following the activity, Sarah Aikenhead shared that the activity illustrated the importance of not assuming that the listener has the common perspective of the presenter, an oversight which can, and often does, result in miscommunication.

4. Panel Discussion: Charter Authorization- 9:58 AM

Gary Bowman (CMP Executive Director), Lisa Corr (Spector, Middleton, Young & Minney), and Jayna Gaskell (CMP Governing Board) facilitated a panel discussion regarding Charter Authorization for CMP.

Lisa Corr, attorney, presented the steps required for Charter Authorization. She shared that the charter will be written identically for all four campuses, for consistency of operation, as well as for providing consistency should they be appealed to a higher level of authorization. They will be written at the highest standard for each of the policies. Lisa presented a list of items that she needed from various individuals for the Charter Renewal process. A lengthy discussion ensued regarding each campus, the challenges ahead, and various options.

Discussion from the group, at large, included the topic of enrollment policies and procedures. Sarah Aikenhead stressed the importance of establishing a common enrollment policy at each of the campuses.

Jayna Gaskell mentioned that there are 2 significant items that need to be discussed by the Board:

1. Management structure: Jayna presented the option that the CAT staff become employees for a not-for-profit corporation;
2. Governance structure: Recognizing the various options for Charter authorization, Jayna emphasized that CMP would need to consider the possibility of restructuring our Board.

**CALIFORNIA MONTESSORI PROJECT
MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD
RETREAT MINUTES**

5. Lunch Break- 12: 10 PM

6. Special Meeting of the Governing Board-1:11 PM

Roll Call

Val Toppenberg called the meeting to order and a quorum was established with 6 members present as Erin Auernig left after lunch.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sarah Aikenhead	Business Representative
<input type="checkbox"/>	Erin Auernig	Montessori Representative
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Jayna Gaskell	Charter School Representative
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dorothy Hiltz	Teacher Representative
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tami Johnson	Sponsoring School District Representative
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Jenny Savakus	CMP Parent Representative
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Val Toppenberg	Community Representative

Special acknowledgements:

Gary Bowman

This portion of the meeting is set aside to acknowledge outstanding staff and parents for their extraordinary contributions to the campus and/or the school at large.

Gary Bowman acknowledged Board members Sarah Aikenhead, Erin Auernig, Jayna Gaskell, Dorothy Hiltz, Tami Johnson, Jenny Savakus, and Val Toppenberg for their commitment and dedication. He also acknowledged Principal Kim Aldridge (“Our Maria Montessori”) for her dedication to parental education, and to Lisa Corr (of Spector, Middleton, Young and Minney) for her efforts on behalf of the Charter Application.

Action items: 1:20 PM

3.01 Approval of Resolution 2005-2006.1

The Board is requested to approve Resolution 2005-2006.1

Sarah made a motion to approve Resolution 2005-2006.1. Jenny Savakus seconded the motion. Vote was taken: 6 ayes, 0 noes, 1 absent, 0 abstentions. Motion was passed.

3.02 Approval of Increase in Mileage Reimbursement Rate

The Board is requested to approve the increase in the mileage reimbursement rate.

Dorothy made a motion to approve the increase in the mileage reimbursement rate. Jayna Gaskell seconded the motion. Vote taken: 6 ayes, 0 noes, 1 absent, 0 abstentions. Motion was passed.

3.03 Approval of 2005-2006 K-3 Class Size Reduction

The Board is requested to approve the 2005-2006 K-3 Class Size Reduction.

Jayna made a motion to approve 2005-2006 K-3 Class Size Reduction. Sarah Aikenhead seconded the motion. Vote taken: 6 ayes, 0 noes, 1 absent, 0 abstentions. Motion was passed.

7. Adjournment to Retreat Agenda- 1:28 PM

A discussion regarding the following items took place:

- Prop 55 and its effect on the campuses

**CALIFORNIA MONTESSORI PROJECT
MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD
RETREAT MINUTES**

- Functions of the Governing Board
- Gary Bowman facilitated a discussion regarding the roles of Board members and their level of satisfaction with our Board structure, as well as their personal roles of service. Responses from Board members included the following:
 - Tami Johnson shared that once CMP is restructured under the authorization at the local district/county level, she will look forward to serving in an advisory capacity in the business services aspect.
 - Jayna Gaskell shared that CMP is one of the best charter schools in the state. She enjoys her service on the Board and benefits from the culture that has been established and is consistently fulfilled with her work on the Board.
 - Val Toppenberg shared that he likes the concept of specialized roles and believes that the Board has been effective in taking care of the big issues and in solving problems as a result of the specialization of roles. He feels incredibly satisfied in what the Board is doing, and is pleased with the development of the educational program from year one to year five. Gary recognized Val's informal role as an ambassador for the organization.
 - Sarah Aikenhead shared that she enjoys seeing the bigger strategic perspective and likes to help structure the dialogue and to keep things moving forward. She finds it satisfying to contribute to the discussions.
 - Dorothy Hilts shared that she finds being on the Board very satisfying. She likes being the grease that makes the machine work well and enjoys the way the Board is structured because everyone provides so much helpful input. She sees that teachers are the key element; enjoys supporting the teachers.
 - Jenny Savakus acknowledged that feels very passionate about what the Board is doing.

Gary expressed appreciation for the candid responses, and further encouraged Board members to continue exploring the use of their individual and collective gifts, recognizing the correlation between their fulfillment and the success of the organization. He also affirmed the strength and positive nature of CMP's culture.

8. Recognition: Birthdays- 2:44 PM

Retreat participants Shellie, Tami, Sarah and Jenny were honored at this time.

9. Boot Camp Review- 2:57 PM

Gary Bowman

Gary provided an overview of the Summer Boot Camp for new instructional staff and presented a video of the program to the Board.

10. Creating Climate, Building Culture- 3:15 PM

Kim Zawilski

Kim Zawilski discussed the importance of creating climate and building culture at each campus citing the following key components: parent education and participation, recognition of each child's unique gift, and creation of solution-based teams.

Retreat participants shared examples of how they established climate at their campuses including the following:

- weekly newsletters
- empowering the students to help make choices
- be strong, think positively

**CALIFORNIA MONTESSORI PROJECT
MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD
RETREAT MINUTES**

11. Closure- 3:43 PM

Gary Bowman

Gary Bowman provided closure to the retreat with the recognition that “Respect for the child” is the essence of the California Montessori Project.

Gary offered the following six words which were presented as key components of a positive climate and culture for the California Montessori Project Learning community:

- Fun
- Engaging: our children need/want to be engaged; our Board is very engaged
- Respect, which starts at respecting the children.
- Trust-based
- Empowering
- Hope

12. Meeting Adjourned- 4:00 PM

NEXT REGULAR BOARD MEETING: Monday October 24, 2005 (6:30pm) at CMP’s Central Administration office.