

**COASTAL EMPIRE MONTESSORI COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION (CEMCO)**

**Executive Session**

**15 April 2010**

**Members Present:**

Dr. David Lerch – Board President

Mr. George Bowen – Secretary

Mr. Carlos Hernandez

Mrs. Stephanie Wright

Mrs. Tanya Melville

Mr. Michael Graham – Board Attorney

**Executive Session: Called to order at 4:41 PM**

Discussion of legal issues as relates to the CEMCO Charter and potential teacher contract issues.

**Executive Session adjourned at 5:05 PM.**

# COASTAL EMPIRE MONTESSORI COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION (CEMCO)

## General Session

15 April 2010

### Members Present:

Dr. David Lerch – Board President

Mr. George Bowen – Secretary

Mr. Carlos Hernandez

Mrs. Stephanie Wright

Mrs. Tanya Melville

Mr. Michael Graham – Board Attorney

### 1. Call to Order at 5:05 PM.

### 2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On a motion to by Mr. Carlos Hernandez and seconded by Mrs. Stephanie Wright, the agenda was approved unanimously.

### 3. BOARD OF EDUCATION MATTERS.

#### 3.01. Comments by the Public – None.

**3.02. Report by Head of School** – Mrs. Tanya Melville asked the Board to consider her mission/vision statement as an interim product until the Board has completed the work on its product. On a motion by George Bowen and seconded by Mrs. Stephanie Wright, the Board voted to approve unanimously Mrs. Melville's mission/vision statement on an interim basis. See attached report for the remainder of the HOS input.

#### 3.03. Report on Teacher Training – see attached report.

**3.04. Discussion of New Board Members and Slate of Officers for 2010** – Mrs. Wright provided the Board with a list of potential board candidates. She grouped the candidates into three groups that consisted of individuals who were friends of CEMCO, those with Montessori teaching experience, and parents interested in sitting on the Board. Dr. Lerch proposed one additional candidate he thinks will bring value to the Board. He will broach the subject of joining the Board with the individual and bring back feedback to the Board. In the interim, he has asked Mrs. Wright to make telephone contact with several of her proposed candidates to see if they would accept a seat on the Board.

**3.05. Proposed Charter Amendment and Date of Submittal** – Dr. Lerch will meet with Mrs. Melville to work up a proposed charter amendment to submit to the SCCPS Board in May. This amendment will be a critical part of the budget discussions for the 2010–2011 school year.

**3.06. Approval of Additional Facility** – The Board was briefed on negotiated agreement with William Scotsman for the installation of a 10-room portable classroom complex on campus.

Although the new price is much improved over the original proposal, it does not provide for the removal of interior walls requested by Mrs. Melville. Removal of these walls will cost approximately \$1600.00 each. Mr. Brent Pack stated that he could take down all the non-load-bearing walls. He also said that he could put in the foundations needed to install the portables, as well as arrange for electrical and plumbing hook-ups. This work will require approximately \$10 to \$12K to complete. The new portables will be on a single electrical meter. Dr Lerch asked Mr. Pack to see if he can get Georgia Power to connect all portables to a single meter. This could substantially increase the cost of work to prepare the campus for the upcoming school year. Mr. Pack advised that Mr. Baxter Frost could prepare the site plan for the permit. He was made aware that the last time the County required properly-validated site plans for placement of the existing portables. He is still willing to work the project and was authorized to proceed. New portables should be available for use by the teachers by early August if all goes well. Dr. Lerch requested Board authorization to sign a lease with William Scotsman for the 10 portable classrooms. On a motion by Mr. Carlos Hernandez and seconded by Ms. Stephanie Wright, the Board unanimously approved Dr. Lerch's request.

**3.07. Continued Discussion About Before and After School Program** – The before and after school program will be predicated on the ability of the program to support the salaries of two individuals needed to manage the program. The issue is linked to upcoming budget discussions with the SCCPS Board.

**4. CONSENT** – Nothing to Report

## **5. FINANCE**

**5.01. Expected Revenue for 2010-2011 School Year** – Revenue projections for the next school year are contingent upon discussions with the SCCPS Board. Given we achieve our enrollment projections, it is estimated that we will have some \$260K left after deductions for staff salaries and operational expenses. Mrs. Melville pointed out that she did not feel she had sufficient financial details to determine what expenses are each month. She feels she needs to know what amount are owed and to whom. Mr. Hernandez supplied her with a profit and loss statement and indicated he is working on having these available monthly. He stated that after he pays the monthly bills, there is a small amount left over in the account. He specifically pointed out that our financial crisis is directly tied to the loss of students at the start of the year. Meeting enrollment projections is critical to resolving these issues.

**5.02. Approval of Contracts Services for 2010-2011 School Year** – To be completed during the month of May.

**6. ADJOURNMENT** – On a motion by Mr. Carlos Hernandez and seconded by Mrs. Stephanie Wright, the meeting concluded at 6:36 PM. Next Board meeting will take place on May 20 2010.

## ATTACHMENTS

### Head of School Report March/April 2010

#### Enrollment:

Current Enrollment is stable and we added two new three year olds in February/March.

The Lottery was held on March 9<sup>th</sup> Two members of the public were present.

The 2010/2011 Enrollment Results are as follows:

Class	#Enrolled	Available slots	# on Waiting List (confirmed request)
PK3	17	13	
PK4	40	0	21
K	80	0	4
LE	92	(only children with prior Montessori experience are excepted into this program)	
Totals	229	13	

Class rosters are being compiled but there may be changes once ALL DAY MONTESSORI registrations are confirmed.

I have attached Enrollment projections for the Next 5 Years (See Attached)

#### Professional Development:

Lower Elementary Training continues. (See Training Report)

Michele Aspinall provided a wonderful workshop for our current teachers, parents and several guests who attended. This was a very informative workshop highlighting all aspects of the ALL DAY MONTESSORI programming and providing insight into how this can be translated for CEMCS.

Lower Elementary trainees observed at Montessori of Macon. This continues to be a valuable component in the training program and provides mentorship for our teachers as they grow into the Montessori philosophy and method.

Lynn Avery is working with Mr. Harmen the RtI specialist to clarify and establish correct protocol for identifying student needs and acquiring the necessary services. Mr. Harmen will continue to work with us in the spring so that we have processes in place and teachers trained for the next school year.

I have attached an outline of possible professional development for next year. I recognize that this will depend on budget, perhaps outside funding &/or partnering with others in the Montessori community. I am currently researching costs and availability.

Thea Monsion is attending Test Coordinator Training for CRCT Testing.

#### Personnel:

All formal evaluations have been conducted for the current staff. All staff members received satisfactory results. During individual conferences, I was notified that 5 staff members shall not return; One Lead

Teacher Primary will relocate out of state due to her husband being transferred, three assistant teachers are seeking employment elsewhere and in their field, and one assistant is returning to school to participate in a Masters program. I was also informed that a Lead Teacher Primary wishes to explore the Lower Elementary level and to act as an assistant in that classroom during her pregnancy. With all of the above in mind and looking to our future needs I have compiled a summary of our staffing needs for 2010/2011.

2010/ 2011

Faculty:

Primary 1	LEAD TEACHER	Teaching ASSISTANT	
Primary 2	LEAD TEACHER	Teaching ASSISTANT	
Primary 3	LEAD TEACHER	Teaching ASSISTANT	
Primary 4	LEAD TEACHER	Teaching ASSISTANT	
Primary 5	LEAD TEACHER	Teaching ASSISTANT	(Assistant Teacher)
ADM	LEAD TEACHER	Assistant TEACHER	Teaching ASSISTANT
Lower EL 1	LEAD TEACHER	Teaching ASSISTANT	
Lower EL 2	LEAD TEACHER	Teaching ASSISTANT	
Lower EL 3	LEAD TEACHER	Teaching ASSISTANT	(Assistant Teacher)
ALL DAY	LEAD TEACHER	Assistant TEACHER	Teaching ASSISTANT

Totals

Primary	6 LEAD TEACHERS	1 Assistant TEACHER	6 Teaching ASSISTANTS
Lower EL	4 LEAD TEACHERS	1 Assistant TEACHER	4 Teaching ASSISTANTS

Administration:

1 Head of School

1 Office Manager

1 Part time Data Clerk

Auxiliary:

2 Full Time Custodial staff will split hours of service and address added square footage.

I have also attached some preliminary staffing projections for the next 5 years, which will allow us to project what our future training needs may be. Some initial recruitment of trained teachers and informal interviews have been conducted. I propose that formal interviews start in May. (See Attached)

I request that my professional review by the Board be conducted by the end of April so that it is on record when requested by the SCCPSS Executive Director. (All teachers have completed the Evaluation of the Head of School).

Facilities:

A report regarding the expanded space has been submitted (See Attached)

Financial:

A budget meeting is scheduled for Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> April @ 2-3 PM to construct a working budget for the 2010/11 school year. It is imperative that despite some unknowns, the school has a framework from which to work. Also, in light of the outstanding query regarding the Three Year Old Program it is necessary to clarify our current accounting protocol and make any necessary adjustments for the upcoming school year. As I advised and requested earlier in the year I propose that the school acquires an independent accountant to handle all of our monetary protocols so that we are in compliance with what the State and Local offices require. The Board has not furnished a financial report thus far and I feel this is a primary fiduciary responsibility of the CEMCO Board.

Parent Education:

- Two Open Houses were hosted in February prior to the Lottery.
- An ALL DAY MONTESSORI Workshop was conducted on March 8<sup>th</sup>.
- The HOS conducted two Parent Education sessions at both the February & March PTO meetings. The topics were:  
A SHORT HISTORY OF MARIA MONTESSORI / THE CHILD IN NATURE

Parent Education will continue in the spring. All parents will be required to attend 2 of these programs. A schedule will be sent and posted for all parents and interested community members.

Community:

- Thanks go out to Jane Fishman & Janie Brodhead for establishing our first annual SALAD CELEBRATION. All the children harvested the greens from the garden beds, then washed, spun and tossed them into a gigantic and flavorful salad that parents, teachers and children all enjoyed at a sunny picnic.

- Families and teachers will participate in the Earth Day Celebrations at Forsyth Park this Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> April 11-3 PM. Coastal Empire will host a booth that shows the Savannah Chatham community what we do at CEMCS to help our planet. I encourage everyone to attend and enjoy a picnic together at the park.
- Several parents have donated time and talent by constructing picnic tables, building cubbies and funneling much needed supplies to the school.
- An Art Show is planned for Friday 4<sup>th</sup> June @ 6:00 PM at The Sentient Bean.

In order to proceed with marketing opportunities and community education, I ask the CEMCO BOARD to make a motion to approve the Vision, Mission and Core Belief statements that I submitted back in the Fall. (See Attached)

Respectfully submitted,

14<sup>th</sup> April 2010

Tanya Melville, Head of School

## ALL DAY MONTESSORI

Meetings were hosted in January, February & March.

Michele Aspinall from Countryside Montessori Illinois, conducted a workshop on March 8<sup>th</sup>. This workshop highlighted the elements of ALL DAY MONTESSORI programming and the resources needed.

- **A Prepared Environment:** The space must be large enough to accommodate an increased number of students. The classroom should have all of the Montessori materials and equipment for the full curriculum. There must, as in other Montessori environments, be sufficient personal storage and classroom storage. There should also be a place to accommodate cooking and eating. It is advisable to have a separate foyer area for parents to pick up their child without interrupting the classroom. There must be sufficient outdoor space to allow for gardening, play and reflection.
- **Honored Work Cycles:** The time of expanded care incorporates the Morning and Afternoon Work Cycles. This allows for a continual flow of work from beginning to the end of each child's day. It also fosters independence allowing the child to engage with materials, attend lessons and choose activities that are restorative. The longer length of day provides opportunities to extend lessons and engage deeper with the materials. The length of day that is conducive to the needs of the child should not exceed 10 hours. eg. 7:30 AM – 5:30 PM.
- **Staffing:** Three staff members guide the daily learning environment. This consists of a Lead Teacher, an Assistant Teacher and a Teaching Assistant. The three staff members schedule their day so that the classroom is always covered by a trained Montessorian and an assistant. This schedule may fluctuate depending on the needs of the classroom, professional needs and to accommodate any absences or professional leave. This ensures continuity for the children.
- **Enrollment:** The children who register for All Day Montessori remain in the classroom community for the complete three year cycle in order to build a cohesive community of learners. Siblings may be in this same environment. This greater number of students encourages independence yet the ratio of staff can accommodate the individual needs of the child. There is no Drop-In available and space is limited.
- **Financial:** The income from the All Day Montessori Program can be profitable. There are initial expenses for setting up the environment indoor & outdoor. There are also regular costs for supplies and food. The accounting of monies can be done separately or within the overall school-operating budget. It was suggested that it could be kept separate for a few years until it became a stable part of the schools operations.

### CEMCS ALL DAY MONTESSORI Current Status as of April 14, 2010

**A Prepared Environment:** In researching additional space to accommodate our increased enrollment for 2010/11, the need for an All Day Montessori environment was considered. The proposal presented regarding the 7200 square foot modular would house the ALL DAY MONTESSORI for Primary and Lower Elementary and the Third Classroom could house another Lower Elementary or another ALL DAY Primary (dependent on committed numbers). I am currently investigating the cost of furnishing and equipping these environments. Parents have participated in a short design workshop to think of how this environment might look like.

**Honored Work Cycles:** A brief survey was given out during the enrollment process and the results are as follows:

Hours of care needed range from 6:00 AM - 6:00 PM, with the majority of the families indicating 7:00 AM – 5:30 PM.

**Staffing:** I am actively recruiting trained Montessori teachers for The ALL DAY MONTESSORI Program from within our current staff and from informal talks with trained Montessorians in our local community.

**Enrollment:** A brief survey was given out during the enrollment process and the results are as follows:

50 Primary and 24 Lower Elementary children are requesting extended care for 2010/11.

A firm commitment must be established through a registration process & fee. Dependent on these commitments we will be able to ascertain whether indeed we need a second ALL DAY Primary classroom. Our enrollment capacity in the Modular space would be 25-35 students/classroom dependent on developmental level.

Financial: A cost analysis will need to be conducted regarding potential enrollment and the cost of the program. Again I would highlight that our current parents would like this to be as affordable as the current Pryme Tyme costs - Approx: \$40 per week. However, our parents are also aware that if we are to provide a high quality program the costs may be slightly higher. It will be necessary to set a tuition cost and registration fee for the ALL DAY MONTESSORI program.

Leigh Pack is currently researching grants that pertain to after-school programming.

There may also be scholarship programs available to our families.

A preliminary budget will need to be established so that it can be available for construction of the 2010/11 Operating Budget.

In order to proceed with further steps I ask the CEMCO Board to make a motion to approve the establishment of an ALL DAY MONTESSORI PROGRAM for Primary & Lower Elementary.

A full program outline will be available for approval prior to the May Board Meeting

### **Teacher Training Report – April 2010**

The seven trainees in this year's class continue to be present, alert, attentive and participative as we continue the Lower Elementary Training syllabus. They will take their oral examinations on Friday and Saturday, June 4 and 5. Our external examiner is Sandra Branam, a resident of Savannah who trained at the Primary Level with Mother Isobel Eugenie, a collaborator with Dr. Maria Montessori in Philadelphia, and at the Elementary Level with me during my tenure at Charles Ellis. Ms. Branam has taught for many years at both levels. An artist by training, her work is in great demand, and she is instrumental in the preservation of the Gullah folk tales through her artwork, recently displayed at the Hilton Head Fine Arts Center. Ms. Branam has served as external examiner in past courses. Graduation will be held at the Jones home on Saturday evening, June 5 at 6:30 PM. Please come, bring a favorite dish, and celebrate with our graduates.

The presentation by Michele Aspinall, from Northbrook, Illinois, on the All-Day Montessori model for children requiring before- and after-school care, was well-attended by our own staff as well as guests from other Montessori schools in Macon, Savannah and Bluffton. Ms. Aspinall's description of this program will serve us well as we devise our own version of how it can be best implemented at CEMCS.

Next season, we will be offering the Primary Level (ages 3-6) training course. The summer portion of the course will run from June 28 through August 6, and the school year portion will run on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 4:15-6:15. Tanya is in the process of hiring teachers, and this training will be available for any lead teacher who is a CEMCO staff member. In addition, there are at least four individuals not on CEMCS staff who will take the course, and I am contracting directly with them. They will pay their tuition directly to our personal business, Youth Opera International, Inc., thereby reducing the school's responsibility for my total salary associated with CEMCS duties.

Tanya and I met with Charles Wooten, Principal of Charles Ellis Montessori Academy and planned a collaborative event for the two schools on Monday, June 14, one of the post-planning days for teachers. It will consist of a panel presentation, followed by small group discussions and reports, and concluding with lunch. By using in-house panel members, we will avoid using funds for guest presenters' travel, accommodations and honoraria, and still make a start with continued professional growth experiences and the building of community between the two schools.

Respectfully submitted,

Sanford Jones, Director of Training