



Public Board Meeting

This document has been made available to all members of the public attending an Open Meeting of the Montessori Regional Charter School Board of Trustees. The public is encouraged to read this document to understand the roles and responsibilities of the Montessori School Board and to understand the role and participation of the public at a Montessori Board meeting. This document will be read at the opening of every Montessori School Board meeting when there is public present.

Welcome to a Public Board Meeting of the Montessori Regional Charter School Board of Trustees. Copies of this document are on the podium and I would encourage each member of the public to read along as I introduce the public to the process of a public board meeting, the role and responsibility of the Board and the role of you, as the public attending this evening.

The Board of Trustees is a governing body of the Montessori Regional Charter School and is bound to represent the interests of the owners of the school – the taxpayers of the State of Pennsylvania.

It is important to note that there are many *interested parties* or stakeholders in the school, such as parents, employees, students, the community or the interests of any particular group. However, there is only one owner – the taxpayers.

In representing the taxpayers, the Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring that the school is fulfilling its legal responsibilities and, notably, oversees the financial operation to guarantee that the schools finances are sound, efficient and ethical. In doing so, the Board is governed by Pennsylvania law, the Pennsylvania Department of Education and our Charter.

In fulfilling our role, the Board of Trustees is also responsible for establishing long-term goals and objectives that are in line with the stated mission of the Charter and best educational practices.

In accomplishing these objectives, the Board operates as a group. No individual Board member has any authority or power to make decisions alone. In fact, individual Board members are prohibited from discussing Board business with any member of the public or from representing themselves as the Board outside the scope of the Board Meetings.

At all times, the Board of Trustees speaks as one voice and that voice is expressed through voting.

Finally, it is important for the public to know that the Board of Trustees does not manage the day-to-day business of the school: That is the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer and his staff. The Board does not involve itself in the operations of the school, including the specifics of policies and procedures, student discipline, employment issues, program management or implementation. Again, our job is to set parameters and goals and to ensure that the school operates legally, ethically and effectively.

As the public at a Board Meeting, what is your role? Please be aware that you are welcome as an observer and spectator. We have set aside time at the beginning of each meeting for public comment as follows:

- Comments must be confined to three minutes – you will be advised when your time is up and will be asked to return to your seat.
- Public comments represent the individual speaker's viewpoint. The Board will not consider a speaker to be representing anyone's views but their own.
- The meeting room has been organized and arranged to preserve the dignity and integrity of all participants. Please do not rearrange the configuration of the room.
- Please use the podium that has been provided. You should not approach individual Board members or Board staff at any time.
- Address the Board as a whole and not individuals.
- Be respectful, courteous and maintain proper demeanor at all times – the Board will not tolerate foul or abusive language, threatening words, or personal attacks on any individual.
- The public should not comment at any other time during the meeting process for any reason. In addition, it is our expectation that you will exhibit good manners and polite behavior during the meeting. Please refrain from holding separate conversations or commenting to other members of the public during the meeting. Individuals who are unable to conduct themselves in a respectful manner will be asked to leave.
- Be aware that the Public comment portion of the Board meeting is not designed to hear or remedy grievances. The Board will not respond to your comments, either publically or privately. Under the appropriate circumstances, you may receive responses on two issues: redress of grievances and requests for information.
 - **Redress of Grievances** - If you have a grievance, there is a prescribed hierarchy for resolution. (Please see attached flow chart). You must seek resolution at the proper administrative levels prior to filing a grievance with the Board of Trustees. Further, the Board will only address grievances that fall within our purview: i.e. there is a policy that has been violated.
 - **Request for Documents** -The public may ask for documents under the Open Records Act. Open records may be requested using the form that is posted on our website or by contacting the Montessori Regional Charter School office and requesting an Open Records request form. Montessori Regional Charter School follows the Open Records law explicitly and will produce documents as directed by the existing regulations.

Finally, Under the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act, the Board of Trustees is permitted to conduct portions of this meeting in private. Any discussion of personnel, pending litigation or real estate will be held in Executive session, and the public is not invited to observe. No voting takes place in Executive Sessions.

I hope that this has given you a good overview of the process and purpose of the Board of Trustees. If you are planning to speak this evening, please fill out a form and return it to the meeting recorder at this time.