

BOARD OBSERVATION RUBRIC

School Name: Bluffview Montessori School

Meeting Date: October 23, 2025

School: Meeting Type (check one): ☒ Regular ☐ Special ☐ Emergency

VOA-MN Observer: Stephanie Olsen

Meeting Start Time: 6:30 p.m.

Meeting End Time: 8:07 p.m.

Board Member Attendance		
Name (first, last) Insert from board roster	Seat Type	Present (P) Absent (A)
Meghan Booth	Teacher / Chair	P
Anna Aarre	Teacher / VC	A
Shelly Merchlewitz	Teacher/Treasurer	P
Jessica McIlrath	Parent / Secretary	P
Stephanie Schartel Dunn	Parent	P
Kim Bell	Teacher	P
Kevin Mahoney	Community Member	P
Henry Schantzen	Ex Officio / Head of School	P

Others in attendance: None

Board Member Early Departures: None

Codes:

Yes (Y) – Yes, this item was addressed.

Partial (P) – This item was partially addressed.

No (N)–The item was not addressed.

Not Observed (N_Ob) - The item was not observed for this meeting.

AUTHORIZER NOTE: The meeting agenda should be posted on the school website and school entry prior to the meeting entry. The board meeting was very well organized and well-managed by the board chair and Head of School. The board member name tents, seating arrangement, and location (band room) are very professional.

When to Check	Item	Code	Items to Observe	Reference	Comments/Explanation (optional)
Before	1	Y	If a Regular meeting, a schedule of the regular meetings of a public body shall be kept on file at its primary offices (or website).	Governance Standard 6 Statute 13D.04 NOTICE OF MEETINGS. -Subdivision 1.	
Before	2	NA	If a Special meeting or a regular meeting at a time or place different from the time or place stated in its schedule of regular meetings notice was posted and mailed (emailed) or delivered at least three days before the date of the meeting. If an emergency meeting, good faith efforts to provide notice were made.	Governance Standard 6 Statute 13D.04 NOTICE OF MEETINGS. Subdivision 1. -Subdivision 2. Special meetings. -Subdivision 3. Emergency meetings.	NA
Before	3	Y	The school's website includes meeting minutes of the board of directors and of members and committees having board-delegated authority, for at least 365 days from the date of publication, directory information for the board of directors (demonstrating compliance with membership requirements per statute and bylaws), and contact information for VOA-MN.	Governance Standard 1 Governance Standard 16 Statute 124E.07. BOARD OF DIRECTORS -Subdivision 3. Membership criteria. -Subdivision 8. Meetings and information.	Meeting minutes posted through August. There is a board packet posted for September without the minutes. Board roster with contact information is on the website and is consistent with statute.
Before	4	Y	Meeting is not conducted by interactive technology unless it meets MN Stat 13D conditions.	Statute 13D.02 OTHER ENTITY MEETINGS BY INTERACTIVE TECHNOLOGY. -Subdivision 1. Conditions.	All members in person.
Before	5	Y	At least one copy of any printed materials relating to the agenda items of the meeting was available in the meeting room for inspection by the public.	Governance Standard 6 Statute 13D.01 MEETINGS MUST BE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC; EXCEPTIONS. Subdivision 6. Public copy of members' materials.	The meeting location was well articulated. There was a table with guest check-in at the entry of the room, and one full board packet was available in a binder of meeting minutes, bylaws, visiting speaker policy, etc.
During	6	Y	The meeting started on time.	Best Practice	Observed.
During	7	Y	Quorum was established and maintained.	Governance Standard 6 Minnesota Statutes 2023, section 317A.235	Observed.
During	9	Y	An adopted agenda is followed after approval and is adhered to during the meeting.	Best Practice	Observed. <i>Motions and seconds should always be verbally projected</i>

					<i>so all are clear on the topic of the vote, including audience members.</i>
During	10	Y	A consent agenda is used for multiple routine, non-controversial topics as one motion and action.	Best Practice	<i>There should not be discussion on Consent Agenda items. Only items requiring a board vote and expected to generate no discussion belong on the consent agenda. A board consent agenda should be strictly limited to action items that require a formal board vote for approval, provided these items are routine, non-controversial, and unlikely to need further discussion.</i>
During	11	Y	The board provided an opportunity for public input and has a stated procedure for doing so.	Best Practice	Observed. No other guests were present. Guest sign in was at the check in table as was the policy for speaking at the meeting.
During	12	Y	A formal methodology guides the running of the meeting (e.g. Roberts Rules) and action items follow the “motion, second, discussion, vote” pattern. Motions are stated in full by the chair prior to voting.	Best Practice	Observed. The board was well managed. Name tents made it aided in recognizing members present and to follow along with board motions and discussions.
During	13	N	Motions and minutes include or assert the reasons for reaching particular decisions.	Attorney General Opinion 851-C, March 5, 1992 notes that, “including reasons for reaching a particular decision in board meeting minutes could be crucial in defending a challenge to action taken.”	When inspecting previous meeting minutes, the minutes did not include <i>the reasons why the vote was needed, nor did they assert the reason for reaching decisions. This information could also be included in the “discussion” portions of the minutes.</i>
During	14	Y	Votes of the members (as a whole) are recorded in the minutes.	Statute 13d.01 MEETINGS MUST BE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC; EXCEPTIONS. Subdivision 4. Votes to be kept in journal or minutes.	Motions, discussion (if any) and votes are recorded in the minutes; however, <i>motions and seconds were not observed on some items during the meeting.</i>
During	15	Y	The agenda contains an item(s) on finance (board reviews the school's finances). Finance reports include register, balance sheet, rev/exp, and cash flow. Enrollment is part of budget oversight (Pupil Units vs. head count).	Financial Standard 6	Observed. A full finance packet prepared by Creative Planning was provided to each board member and discussed. The budget is based on 211 ADM and the current enrollment is 204 ADM. New students continue

					to enroll. No questions were asked by members. Board members are encouraged to always scrutinize and question finances.
During	16	Y	Votes of each member are recorded on each appropriation of money, except for payments of judgements, claims, and amounts fixed by statute.	Statute 13d.01 MEETINGS MUST BE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC; EXCEPTIONS. Subdivision 4. Votes to be kept in journal or minutes.	There was a vote on the financial packet; however, it is uncertain to the observer if that qualifies as “ <i>votes of each member are recorded on each appropriation of money.</i> ”
During	17	Y	The meeting included a review and discussion of student academic performance (not merely activities).	Governance Standard 13 Statute 124E.07 BOARD OF DIRECTORS. Subdivision 6. Duties.	BMS Fall FastBridge Screening was presented by the Head of School. There was also a discussion of academic performance (FY25 MCA's) during the review/approval of the Annual Report.
During	18	Y	The meeting included policy review. (17)	Governance Standard 17	Policy 721 & Policy 729
During	19	N.Ob	The board references policies in decision making. (11)	Governance Standard 11	The authorizer representative did not observe that “ <i>the board references policies in decision- making.</i> ”
During	20	Y	Board training occurs and/or member training is documented. (4)	Governance Standard 4 Statute 124E.07 BOARD OF DIRECTORS. Subdivision 7. Training.	There was a board “training” on 1) authorizer expectations and 2) Montessori Philosophy: The Work of the Child,” and 3) Fall FastBridge Screening conducted by the Head of School and Board Chair.
During	21	NA	If the meeting is closed or a portion of the meeting is closed, it met MN Stat 13D conditions - a public body shall state on the record the specific grounds permitting the meeting to be closed and describe the subject to be discussed. (6)	Governance Standard 6 Governance Standard 12 Statute 13D.01 CLOSED MEETINGS FOR LABOR NEGOTIATIONS STRATEGY. -Subdivision 1. Procedure. -Subdivision 2. Meeting must be recorded. Statute 13D.05 MEETINGS HAVING DATA CLASSIFIED AS NOT PUBLIC. -Subdivision 1. General principles. -Subdivision 2. When meeting must be closed. -Subdivision 3. What meetings may be closed.	There wasn't a closed session during the meeting observed.

During	22	Y	Board members exhibit diligence, engagement, focus on the school's mission/ vision, and strategic governance (not micromanaging school administration).	Best Practice	The board is observed to be prepared and engaged.
During	23	Y	The Board of Directors is diligent to notice and take any necessary remedies if any member has a perceived or real conflict of interest in any board action.	Best Practice	There was a call for conflict-of-interest disclosures at the beginning of the meeting and none were expressed.
During	24	Y	The board stays on topic with minimal side or off topic talk. (6)	Best Practice	Observed.
ANNUAL BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES <i>Check item if observed during the board meeting attended.</i>				REFERENCE	
	Conducted a formal board self-evaluation.			Governance Standard 5	
	Evaluating the leadership.			Governance Standard 9 Statute 124E.12, MPLOYMENT. Subdivision 2(a) Administrators.	
	Facilitating and monitoring board elections.			Governance Standard 8	
X	Approving the Annual / CACR Report.			Governance Standard 13 Statute 120B.11 SCHOOL DISTRICT PROCESS FOR REVIEWING CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT; STRIVING FOR THE WORLD'S BEST WORKFORCE. Subdivision 1(a). Performance measures. Subdivision 5. Report.	
	Reviewing parent, teacher, or student satisfaction data.			Governance Standard 14 Statute 120B.11 SCHOOL DISTRICT PROCESS FOR REVIEWING CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT; STRIVING FOR THE WORLD'S BEST WORKFORCE . Subdivision 7 Periodic report.	
	Review of bylaws.			Governance Standard 7	
	The board approves a formal board development plan.			Governance Standard 2	
	Pledge of Allegiance - A local school board or a charter school board of directors may <i>annually</i> , by majority vote, waive this requirement. A local school board or a charter school board of directors that waives the requirement to recite the Pledge of Allegiance may adopt a district or school policy regarding the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.			Statute 121.A.11 UNITED STATES FLAG. Subdivision 3. Pledge of Allegiance.	