BLUFFVIEW MONTESSORI SCHOOL
POLICY 202 BOARD ELECTION PROCESS

I. PURPOSE

The Board shall appoint a Board Development Committee that will follow the election procedures described below for the Bluffview Montessori School Board of Directors.

II. POLICY STATEMENT

In accordance with the Bluffview Montessori School Bylaws and Minnesota law, elections for the Board of Directors will held in May of every year.

III. SELECTING POSSIBLE BOARD CANDIDATES

A. The Board Development Committee will actively recruit potential board members by advertising in the school newsletter, through materials sent home in weekly folders, and by making personal invitations.

B. The Board of Directors Nomination Form (see Attachment A) should be completed for each candidate.

C. The Board of Directors must be composed of at least five members who are not related or affiliated with one another, with at least one of each of the following:
   1. Licensed teachers teaching in the classroom;
   2. A parent or legal guardian who is not an employee of Bluffview Montessori School; and
   3. A community member who is not an employee or parent of Bluffview Montessori School.

D. Immediate family members of school employees are not eligible to serve on the Board of Directors.

IV. CONTACTING POSSIBLE BOARD CANDIDATES

A. Upon the deadline for receipt of nominations, the Board Development Committee members will then contact the prospects. The Board Development Committee will use the following materials:
1. A personalized cover letter that informs the prospect of the Board’s interest in him/her, a brief description of the recruitment and nominations process, and an invitation to be considered for the Bluffview Montessori School Board of Directors (see Attachment B).

2. A copy of the position description that details the roles and responsibilities of a Board Director (see Attachment C).

3. Additional material about the Bluffview Montessori School Board and its responsibilities.

4. A response form that the prospect can return indicating he/she would like more information and/or they want to be considered for the Board of Directors (see Attachment D).

5. A completed background check.

B. This mailing will be followed by a personal phone call from designated members of the Board Development Committee. This will give Board Development Committee members a chance to respond to any questions that the prospect might have. During this conversation the Board Development Committee member will be able to determine the prospect’s level of interest in being considered for the Board of Directors, to invite them to a school function if they are unfamiliar with Bluffview Montessori School, and to invite them to talk with administration and other staff.

V. ORIENTATION

A. The Board Development Committee will then schedule an orientation with all prospective Board Directors who responded to the mailing and phone calls.

In this orientation, the agenda will consist of:

1. Welcome and introductions;

2. Overview of the mission, vision and educational goals of the school;

3. Overview of the roles and responsibilities of the Board of Directors;

4. Review of the individual job description detailing specific expectations (for example, committee work, meeting attendance, involvement in community outreach, etc.);

5. Opportunity for Board candidates to ask questions; and

6. Declarations of willingness to serve by the Board candidates.
B. After the orientation session is completed, individuals who wish to continue in the process will be asked to fill out the questionnaire (Attachment E) that provides some background information. This information can be included in their profiles that will be distributed to all individuals who are eligible to vote. A deadline date to return the questionnaire will be given or it will be sent to them prior to the orientation.

VI. FINAL SELECTION OF CANDIDATES

A. Any individual who participated in the orientation, indicated an interest in Board of Directors service and completed the questionnaire will be considered a candidate.

VII. ELECTION

A. After the Board Development Committee has finished the nomination process, it then will create ballots and other election materials. An outside, independent organization (Bluffview PTA) will facilitate the distribution and tabulation of ballots to all eligible voters. Each student’s mother and father or legal guardians have one vote, with a maximum of two voters per family; each school employee has one vote.

B. Bluffview Montessori School must notify eligible voters of the Board of Directors’ election at least 30 days before the election. No elections will be held during holidays or school breaks. Elections must be held during the school year.

C. Once all votes are in and tabulated, the new appointed Board of Directors will be notified, sign the Board Member Profile Agreement (see Attachment F), and take their place on the Board of Directors at the Organizational Meeting in July.

Legal Reference: Minn. Stat. §124D.10 (Charter School Law)
Bluffview Montessori School
BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOMINATION FORM
(Attachment A)

All candidates must be nominated using this form. Nomination forms should be submitted to the school office or electronically to office@bluffviewmontessori.org.

Nominee Information:

_________________________________ _________________________
Name                      Phone Number

______________________________________________________________
Address

______________________________________________________________
Email

Relationship to Bluffview Montessori:

___Parent/Legal Guardian   ___Faculty   ___Community Member

For community member nominees, please briefly describe the nominee’s interest in Bluffview Montessori School:

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

Are you nominating yourself?   ___Yes   ___No

If no, please complete the following 3 lines:

_________________________________ _________________________
Your Name                      Your Phone Number

Your Relationship to Bluffview:

___Parent/Legal Guardian   ___Faculty   ___Community Member*

Your Relationship to the nominee (if any)

___________________________________________________________________

Does the nominee have a family or business relationship to any Bluffview board member?**

___Yes   ___No

(continued on back side)
Is the nominee/immediate family member/partner, an owner/employee/agent of an entity with whom Bluffview contracts, directly or indirectly, for professional services, goods or facilities? *** ___Yes ___No

Is the nominee or spouse employed by Bluffview Montessori School? ___Yes ___No

If yes to any of the preceding 3 questions, please indicate the nature of the relationship:

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

In addition to this Nomination Form, all nominees must also complete a Candidate Questionnaire. The Candidate Questionnaire and Nomination Form do not have to be submitted at the same time. Please contact Stephanie Wehman at swehman@bluffviewmontessori.org or 507-452-2807 if you have any questions about board service or the election process.

*A Community Member is defined as a person: “…who is not employed by the charter school and does not have a child enrolled in the school.
**Minnesota law provides strict conflict of interest rules regarding charter school board members, and further requires that all board members of a charter school be “nonrelated.” If you have a business relationship or have an immediate family relationship with any charter school boarded member, both as further defined in MINN STAT> 124D.10, subd. 23(a), you will be unable to serve on that same charter school board. Please contact any member of the board if you have any questions about conflict of interest or prohibited relationships.
***The 2009 MN Legislature enacted strict Conflict of Interest for charter school boards. See MINN.STAT> 124d.10, Subd. 4a.
In May of this year, new Board Directors will be elected to the Board of Directors of Bluffview Montessori School. You have been recommended to our Board Development Committee as a possible candidate for Board service. We are requesting that you give serious consideration to this nomination for a Board position.

The next several years promise to be exciting ones for Bluffview Montessori School. Bluffview Montessori School will continue to have a positive impact on the children and families we serve. The Board of Directors will play a central role in this important work.

Because of your experience and involvement in Bluffview Montessori School and/or the community, we feel you are well qualified to be nominated for a Board position. As you consider this opportunity, we ask you to review the Board Director Position Description included in this mailing. As you will see, we are expecting the Board to be an active one.

A primary responsibility of Board Directors is to participate in the development of policy and major decision-making at Board meetings held at least 12 times a year. Another key responsibility is to be active on an ongoing basis in a committee of the Board. Board nominees will be asked to make that commitment before they are voted onto the Board.

Since its opening, Bluffview Montessori School has become recognized as an effective educational leader having real impact within the community. We invite you to become a part of this growing tradition.

A member of our Board Development Committee has been asked to contact you by phone to discuss this invitation with you. You may have already received this call. In the meantime, if you wish to be considered as a candidate for the Board of Directors, please send in the enclosed response form. If your answer is "yes," you will be asked to attend a short orientation meeting to review Board responsibilities in more detail and you will receive additional information about Bluffview Montessori School.

If you have any questions, please contact [NAME, PHONE NUMBER AND EMAIL ADDRESS].

Sincerely,

[NAME OF BOARD DIRECTOR]
Bluffview Montessori School Board of Directors
Bluffview Montessori School
BOARD DIRECTOR POSITION DESCRIPTION
(Attachment C)

1. Attend regular meetings of the Bluffview Montessori School Board, which are each approximately 2 hours in duration. The Board of Directors meets monthly. Be accessible for personal contact in-between Board meetings.

2. Provide leadership to Board committees. Each Board Director is expected to serve as an active, ongoing member of at least one committee. This requires a number of meetings per year plus individual committee task completions.

3. Commit time to attend important school related functions.

4. Responsibly review and act upon committee recommendations brought to the Board for action.

5. Prepare in advance for decision-making and policy formation at Board meetings; take responsibility for self-education on the major issues before the Board.

6. Participate in the annual Board Director self-review process.

7. Participate in the annual Board development and planning retreat.

8. In general, utilize personal and professional skills, relationships and knowledge for the advancement Bluffview Montessori School.


10. Meet the duty of care, obedience and loyalty as defined in Minnesota Statutes §317A.


I am aware that this Board Director Position Description is an expression of good faith and provides a common ground from which Board Directors can operate. Additional information on the mission of Bluffview Montessori School, educational program and Board responsibilities is contained in the Board orientation materials and bylaws which I have read.

_____________________________ __________________
Board Director’s Signature Date
Bluffview Montessori School
BOARD NOMINATIONS RESPONSE FORM
(Attachment D)

Please Check One:

____ I am interested in being considered for a Bluffview Montessori School Board position. Contact me with information about the upcoming orientation session.

____ Contact me. I need more information before I can decide if I want to be considered for a Board position.

Name _______________________________________________________

Day Phone __________________ Evening Phone ____________________

Return by Mail to:
1321 Gilmore Avenue, Winona, MN 5987

Or

Return by Fax to: 507-452-6869

Or

Return by email to: office@bluffviewmontessori.org
Bluffview Montessori School
Candidate Questionnaire
(Attachment E)

Complete this form and return to the Bluffview Montessori School Board Development Committee. Your responses will be shared with the greater Bluffview community.

In 2-3 sentences, describe why you are interested in serving as a board member of Bluffview Montessori School.

Have you served on any Bluffview committee(s) in the past? If yes, please provide the committee details and the dates you served.

Have you served in a board role with other organizations? If yes, please provide the name of the organization(s), mission or line of business, your board role and the dates you served.

Please provide all pertinent work or community experience and employment roles you believe make you a qualified candidate to serve on the Bluffview Board of Directors:

Please choose two of the following eight board topic areas and describe how your background will enable you to provide collaborative leadership and make a significant contribution as a board member: 1) educational expertise, 2) finance, 3) fundraising, 4) governance, 5) human resources, 6) legal, 7) marketing/communications, 8) strategic planning.

Is there any other information you would like voters to consider?

__________________________________________
Signature of Nominee

__________________________________________
Date
Bluffview Montessori School
BOARD MEMBER PROFILE AGREEMENT
(Attachment F)

Bluffview Montessori School Board of Directors shall have a firm knowledge of creating an effective charter school governing Board of Directors. Directors shall be fully committed to the charter school concept. The purpose of the Board of Directors is to direct, not manage, the school. Board members should be able carry out the Bluffview Montessori School’s vision, foster relationships with staff and the school community, and oversee the budget.

All Board of Director members should attend at least two school related functions, such as staff meetings, staff workshops, open houses, and parent-teacher conferences per year to show support and encouragement for that vital aspect of our school. Board members may chair and serve on committees.

Prior Board experience is helpful. A high value for professionalism and the success of the school is mandatory. Motivation for serving on the Board shall be to help guarantee the educational success of students.

All Board members are expected to attend a yearly Board retreat where the goals of the Board are defined, a Board self-evaluation critique is conducted, speakers present information on effective Board leadership, and other pertinent topics are discussed. Board members will annually attend a Board Visit Day. During this time, Directors will observe and visit with the staff to become familiar with current school concerns. The Board will annually conduct a self-evaluation. Goals for the next year will also be determined at that time. Directors shall fulfill their responsibilities on the Board, Board committees or subcommittees to their fullest capability. All Board members should be the best public relations representatives the school has.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

Expectations include a professional demeanor at all Board meetings. Issues being discussed shall not be personalized and directed toward any other Board member, staff member, parent or anyone else. Confidentiality, consistent with state and federal law, is expected in all situations. Board members shall respect and listen to ideas being presented by other Board members.

Board members fulfilling their responsibilities to their fullest potential shall be encouraged by each of the Directors. When receiving criticisms from parents or other interested parties about staff, the Board member shall direct the speaker to the Executive Director who shall process the criticism in a manner consistent with Board policies. Board members are expected to present a positive image of staff and Board members to the school community or parties outside the school community.

Board members will commit to resolving conflict directly with each other or with the appropriate staff member and not share the conflict with anyone outside of the conflict, including, but not limited to other parents, other staff members or the media.
Board members shall exemplify integrity, honesty and respect. A dedication and commitment to the vision of Bluffview Montessori School and the charter school movement shall be the top priority for all Board members. Any Board member finding him or herself involved in an irresolvable conflict shall put the vision of the school first and step down from the Board.

Board members shall abide by the Open Meeting Law. The Opening Meeting Law states that anyone discussing Board business, policy, actions, resolutions, etc. with a quorum of the Board, except at regularly scheduled meetings, is illegal. A "meeting" is defined as communication of a quorum through person, telephone, e-mail, or any other means.

Board members missing more than two Board meetings a year may be relieved of their Board involvement.

**GOVERNANCE OF BLUFFVIEW MONTESSORI SCHOOL**

Bluffview Montessori School shall be governed by a Board of Directors. The Head of School shall answer directly to the Board and serve at the pleasure of the Board. The Head of School shall make decisions on a day-to-day basis and fulfill all administrative duties for the school. The Board will maintain the vision and steer the school's direction as it carries out the Mission Statement.

As with all charter schools, Bluffview Montessori School is an entity separate from the school district in the area of governance. This unique characteristic of charters shall be guarded by each Board member.

If a Board Director questions a decision of the Head of School, he or she shall immediately take that concern or disagreement to the administrator in a confidential and diplomatic format. Likewise, the Head of School shall agree to the same commitment. Respect for each other shall remain constant.

While at the school, Board members shall be mindful of the different roles they play: parent, volunteer, Board member, etc. Board members will not use their position of authority while acting in their parent or volunteer roles. Board members shall foster good relationships with the administrator and staff on a personal level. With humility, each Board member will serve the best interests of the school.

Board members shall remember that stepping out of their advisory/Board capacity and attempting to run the school as an administrator will always cause problems.

The vision and mission statement of Bluffview Montessori School will serve to guide and direct the Board of Directors. The goal to continually improve, maintain integrity, serve Bluffview Montessori School families and ensure academic success for our students shall take precedence in all situations.

Signed, this   day of , 20 .

Board Member, Bluffview Montessori School