



Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School

Annual Report

2015-2016

Submitted to:
Volunteers of America
on October 1, 2016

by Liesl Taylor, Head of School
Elizabeth Coenen, Board Chair

Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School (CMES)

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Introduction

"How did I become the person I am today? Well, when I was little I was really shy. I wouldn't talk to anybody, but then I grew out of my shyness by talking to people and coming to Cornerstone. Coming to CMES opened me up. One of my best friends, Feneti, helped me open up. She introduced me to some of her friends who introduced me to their friends. I kind of like this school. It has taught me a lot because at my old school I wasn't really learning anything but now I'm learning a lot because this school has hands-on material. The gifts I take from being at CMES are being able to solve really big math problems and knowing all the factors in my head. Cornerstone has changed me a lot because at my old school I felt like I was really mean to some people, but now I am more compassionate. Before I came here I wasn't really confident about myself but now I am. When I was little, I was really sick. I was in the hospital for a month but after that I just kept getting better and better. Now I am smart and confident about myself! I feel like I'm going to be successful on my journey of growth."

~Saniea S. Bryant, 6th grade

At every turn, what we listen to, read, and experience seems to tell us about the need for education reform. We are urged to consider character curricula and restitution programs. Specialists agree these things are best practice for educating children, as scientists discover more about how to build great minds, and yet grapple with how to do this in our current traditional settings. As Montessorians we feel gratified that we are already working in a time-tested system of education that supports these very components ~ and seeing the results in the young people at Cornerstone.

In 2010, dedicated parents, in connection with the Montessori Center of Minnesota (MCM) wrote an application to create a K-6 charter. In January of 2011, Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School (CMES) was recognized as a Minnesota Charter School authorized by Volunteers of America (VOA) and opened in the fall of 2011 serving children in grades K-2. In the fall of 2012, CMES continued to grow, serving children in grades K-3. The fall of 2013 was especially exciting as we continued to serve a larger and older group of children by opening our first Upper Elementary classroom, housing 4th and 5th grade children! The excitement and hard work continued in 2014, with the addition of our last building and final group of older children.

Embracing our rapid expansion, booming student population and the rewarding work that comes with it, has allowed us to continue to move towards the realization of the mission and vision of Cornerstone as it was written in our founding days. Cornerstone's vision to become the first AMI accredited Montessori public charter school in the Midwest, and to experience in a complete way, the effects of an authentic Montessori environment on our student and family population, continues to be the force driving us forward.

MISSION

Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School's mission is to support children from culturally and economically diverse backgrounds living in or near St. Paul's East Side through a rigorous and high-impact Montessori program that empowers them to make positive decisions, develop self-discipline, and create a true sense of responsibility for themselves and others in their community.

VISION

The vision of Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School is a world-class, cross-cultural elementary learning community featuring the powerful and highly differentiated Montessori curriculum, which comprehensively prepares children to achieve at high levels and to excel as leaders in the 21st century. It will provide the highest quality education to all children, regardless of their socio-economic or cultural backgrounds.

In 2015-2016, CMES served children ages 5-12 in all-day Kindergarten and Elementary Montessori Environments in a 10-month program starting after Labor Day and ending in early June.

To note – CMES is an active 501(c)(3) nonprofit trust institution as noted in the Charities section of Minnesota Attorney General Lori Swanson's website (*See Appendix B.*).



Statement of Purposes

This is the Annual Report for Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School (CMES) and, as part of our first section, as outlined in law [*Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.16 Subd 2 (2015)*] and directed by our authorizer Volunteers of America (VOA), we begin with a statement of purposes.

To wit:

- 1) CMES will improve pupil learning and child achievement:

CMES will do so by implementing an Association Montessori Internationale (AMI)-recognized program that individualizes learning for each child while also helping all children learn to work together respectfully and productively in the learning environment.

- 2) CMES will increase learning opportunities for pupils:

CMES will do so by first and foremost offering a public, AMI-recognized Montessori option on the East Side of St. Paul. Heretofore, Montessori education was available primarily in private schools with a few public schools sprinkled in, severely limiting the option for less affluent families.

Second, though no less important, CMES will provide numerous opportunities for learning with the context of the AMI Montessori environment. The classroom design by its very nature encourages and nurtures choice and the natural development of academic and social skills. Moving away from seat time, bells, and teacher-directed learning, CMES prides itself on truly and naturally individualizing learning for each child.

- 3) CMES will encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods:

Though Montessori education took shape in 1909 with AMI forming in 1929 to protect the integrity of Dr. Maria Montessori's work, AMI-certified Montessori instruction is **the** innovative approach for the 21st century. In stark contrast to factory-style schools with an increasing emphasis on drill-and-grill approaches to improve test scores, authentic Montessori education offers a viable and innovative alternative.

More specifically (and this is illustrated throughout this report) – Dr. Montessori literally wrote the books on differentiating instruction. Each child moves at his or her own pace in his or her own manner. The learning environment allows for this multiplicity of children's approaches to the materials.

- 4) CMES will measure learning outcomes and create different and innovative forms of measuring outcomes:

Using the Optional Local Purpose Assessments (OLPA) tests in mathematics and reading to establish baseline data and areas in need of remediation or exceptional challenge for children 3rd grade – 6th grade in the Fall of the year, CMES will extend its individualized instruction by looking at standardized test data as a way to focus and inspire learning in areas of need. Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs) in Math, Reading, and Science will be given in the spring as one measure of proficiency in those subject areas. Lastly, CMES piloted in one classroom environment, an independent assessment tool to gauge learning and growth within the AMI-certified Montessori environment and will expand its use in the coming year.

- 5) CMES will create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site.

CMES staff members have a unique opportunity to blend AMI-certified training with Minnesota state standards and expectations. As they weave these two approaches together to maximize child success, each educator will explore new territory from at least two unique perspectives. Using both as a foundation for making wise decisions about the school environment and curriculum will be paramount to making CMES an outstanding place of learning for all children.

Per state guidelines [*Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.16 Subd 2 (2015)*], this report begins with a background about who CMES is, who authorizes us, and who attends CMES. Then we move onto how CMES operates. We look at finances, committees, board composition, and licensure. The last section looks at the work we do with children in grades K-6: their performance, our innovative programs, and our future plans to maintain and sustain CMES far into the future.



Authorizer Information

Volunteers of America (VOA) is CMES's authorizer and has been since the school's inception. VOA is committed to uplifting all lives through its mission to help people "gain self-reliance, dignity, and hope," according to its website, voamn.org.

In addition to providing numerous services to those in need since 1896, VOA also "offers authorization to Minnesota charter schools ... [that] provide successful learning opportunities to children in small, educationally creative settings. Authorization includes strong oversight, accountability and resources to help charter schools succeed."

CMES is proud to be associated with an organization of such integrity and determination to support underserved communities.



Volunteers of America of Minnesota

Main Contact: Stephanie Olsen, Manager VOA Charter School Authorizing Program
Address: VOA-MN Education Center, 924 – 19th Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55404
Cell: 612-270-1998
E-Mail: solsen@voamn.org.

For a description of VOA's oversight as well as reporting/accountability requirements for Cornerstone Montessori Elementary, see Appendix A.



School Governance

School Governance Model

CMES staff, Board of Directors, and Head of School work together to create a program that supports the growth and achievement of all children enrolled at CMES. The Board of Directors, whose responsibilities include hiring and reviewing the performance of the Head of School, oversees the school. The Board entrusts the operations and management of the school to the Head of School and supervises the Head of School in this role. The staff collaborates on the program with the Head of School, who approves all programmatic decisions and presents them to the Board. The Director of Business Operations, in managing the finances of the school in conjunction with the consulting financial management firm, supports the Head of School. The Head of School and the Director of Business Operations report to the Finance Committee, which prepares and presents information to the Board of Directors for approval and oversight.

See Appendix F for a copy of the Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School By-Laws.

Site Operations Committees

Board Level

Finance: Chris Bewell, Liz Coenen, Melissa Santrach, Liesl Taylor, and Sandra Schmidt of SandMark Services LLC (our financial management firm)

Governance: Chris Bewell, Liz Coenen, Jane Reilly, Melissa Santrach

Accountability Committee: Jane Reilly, Melissa Santrach, Liesl Taylor

Head of School Evaluation Subcommittee: Jane Reilly, Liz Coenen, Molly O'Shaughnessy (MTCM)

Development Committee: Liz Coenen, Jane Reilly, Julie Richards and Melissa Santrach

School Level

Parent Involvement Committee (Part of Title I): Celine Vanderkelen (Parent), Yulonda Hayes (Parent), Connie Gottfried (Parent), Liesl Taylor (Head of School)

Reading Well by 3rd Grade Literacy Plan Committee/Child Study Team: Amber Osterkamp (Lower Elementary Teacher), Suzi Splinter (Special Education Teacher), Kristen Campbell (Children's House Guide), Cynthia Crooks (ELL Teacher), Jessica Goff (Upper Elementary Teacher), Megan Reimer (Literacy Specialist), Liesl Taylor (Head of School)

2015-2016 School Year Charter Public School Board

This table contains information for ALL board members.

2015-16 Election Date: May 17, 2016

Name	Board Position	Group Affiliation (if teacher, file folder #)	Skills	Date Elected	Date Seated	Term Expiration	Phone Number	E-Mail Address	Member Meeting Attendance Rate
Melissa Santrach	Treasurer	Community Member	Previous Montessori Board Chair	5/19/2015	12/15/09	6/30/2018	651-303-3796	melissasantrach@cornerstone-elementary.org	11/13
Jane Reilly	Secretary	Community Member	Child in a Montessori school	5/21/2013	8/16/11	6/30/2016	651-216-4014	janereilly@cornerstone-elementary.org	13/13
Elizabeth Coenen	Board Chair	Parent	Runs non-profit organization	5/19/2015	7/13/10	6/30/2018	651-493-7194	elizabethcoenen@cornerstone-elementary.org	13/13
Kristen Campbell	Trustee	Teacher – file folder #471882	AMI-certified Montessori teacher	5/21/2013	7/1/13	6/30/2016	651-774-5000	kristencampbell@cornerstone-elementary.org	11/13
Andrea Galdames	Trustee	Community Member	AMI-certified Montessori teacher	5/20/2014	7/1/14	6/30/2017	612-220-2923	andreagaldames@cornerstone-elementary.org	10/13
Eve Lo	Trustee	Parent		5/21/2013	7/1/13	6/30/2016	612-868-7043	evelo@cornerstone-elementary.org	7/13
Juliann McDermott	Trustee	Community Member	AMI certified Montessori teacher	5/20/2014	7/1/14	6/30/2017	612-716-6077	juliannmcdermott@cornerstone-elementary.org	7/13
Julie Richards	Vice Chair	Community Member		5/20/2014	7/1/14	6/30/2015	571-435-5350	julierichards@cornerstone-elementary.org	8/13
Liesl Taylor	Ex-Officio	Head of School	AMI-certified teacher	NA	NA	NA	651-774-5000	liesltaylor@cornerstone-elementary.org	11/13

Policy Additions and Changes Adopted in FY 2015-2016

700 Series

705: Financial and Cash Management (6/27/2011; revised 1/19/2016)

Original policy titled Segregation of Duties

ByLaws Revision 2-13-16

VOA Site Visit Report Highlights

VOA provided the following feedback to the school following the October 7, 2015, Fall Visitation.

School Mission and Vision: CMES management presented a variety of evidence to verify that they are a strong mission and vision focused organization. Board provides ongoing oversight of the mission and the integrity of AMI and its grounding philosophies. School materials and observations confirm that school management and faculty similarly share a passion and adhere to the integrity of the mission, vision and AMI philosophies.

School Culture and Learning Environment: The authorizer verified the quality of the CMES learning environment through a management guided tour of the facility with thorough explanation of safety drill procedures and new partnership with the Saint Paul Police Department to help further define school safety measures. There is a master safety inspection and drill procedures binder and each instructional guide/instructor has one as well. The authorizer suggests investing in strategic window coverings to further ensure student safety given the beautiful, large windows in classrooms and hallways.

The school regularly works to engage parents in parent-school partnering activities. One such activity is a night when parents can role play what it is like to be a student in a Montessori classroom. The school also distributes the “Stepping Stone” newsletter weekly to all families. The school maintains a binder containing state standards based alignment to each AMI activity and students maintain “work journals” for recording learning objectives that have been met. The school is in “Continuous Improvement” this year, but has a clear plan for increasing student learning growth. The school switched from the NWEA to the OLPA. The school is also doing DRA – developmental reading assessments which directly influence instruction.

Compliance: The school management maintains a complete “VOA-MN Compliance Binder” and has more recently added a second “VOA-MN Site Visit Binder” aligned to this new rubric. This organizational initiative by Ms. Bewell and Ms. Taylor helped the site visit go very smoothly and efficiently. There are only two areas of suggested improvement in this section of the site visit rubric. First, it is suggested that CMES define a job description for Director of Operations Chris Bewell. Presently one does not exist. Second, it is suggested that the board review its “Background Check Policy” to discuss how often employee background checks are conducted. Similar to the standard for school volunteers, some charter schools are moving to annual background checks on employees, vs. just at the time of hire.

Special Populations: The authorizer engaged in interviews with the school management, special education director and special education teacher. All are in agreement that the school is compliant with required laws and many improvements have occurred this year compared to last. CMES has a new, more attentive special education director, Brittney Thomforde, with Indigo (formerly ISES). The school also has a new, larger special education room. The school has a well-defined and documented Child Find Process. The school works to continue to try to improve parent attendance at Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) meetings. The school has two full time special education teachers and part time special education coordinator in addition to the special education director.

Board Training

Ongoing training in financial matters occurred as part of the audit presentation in October. The auditor details every component of the financial reports and guides the board members in developing a deeper understanding of the financial condition of the school.

Its School Business Manager presented proposed budget revisions to the Board. During these presentations, Sandy Schmidt (SandMark Services Inc) goes over every component of the school's revenue and expenses, elaborating on any changes to state or federal law and their impact on the school's financial condition. These sessions are very dynamic and interactive, allowing for the active participation of each board member.

As a member of Minnesota Association of Charter Schools (MACS), board members are invited to various seminars and presentations throughout the school year with other member charter schools. Notices of these events are passed along to board members.

These board training sessions were held during scheduled board meetings during the 2015-16 school year for all school board members.

- *CMES 2015-2016 Audit Report*
 - October 20, 2015, Presented by John Lorenzini, CPA, CliftonLarsonAllen
- *Honoring and Supporting the Development of Resiliency in Children*
 - November 17, 2015, Presented by Kristen Campbell, AMI Primary Guide
- *Strategic Board Conversation – Who Are Our Stakeholders?*
 - January 19, 2016, Presented by Elizabeth Coenen, Board Chair
- *Budget Revision and Review*
 - February 16, 2016, Presented by Sandy Schmidt, SandMark Services LLC – School Finance
- *State of the School*
 - March 15, 2016, Presented by Liesl Taylor, Head of School
- *2016-17 Budget and Long Range Planning*
 - June 28, 2016, Presented by Sandy Schmidt, SandMark Services LLC – School Finance

Additional trainings attended by individual Board Members:

Kristen Campbell

- AMI Refresher course – February 12-15, 2016 – Long Beach, CA.

Elizabeth Coenen

- Minnesota Comeback Kickoff - Sept 29, 2015 - Collaboration of funders purpose and goals - information on MinnCan's activities.
- Blurring Boundaries: How Do We Navigate Between Governance and Fundraising – 12/2/2015 - Workshop sponsored by MN Council on Nonprofits addressing fundraising/governance and fiduciary responsibilities
- Upper & Lower Elementary Classroom Observations: November 12, 2015, March 17, 2016
- CharterSource Board Chair Training & Peer Learning Community = Session One: School Leader Evaluations – June 6, 2016

Andrea Galdames

- AMI Elementary Teacher Training completed August 2015.

Eve Lo

- No additional trainings reported

Juliann McDermott

- AMI Refresher course – February 12-15, 2016 – Long Beach, CA.

Jane Reilly

- No additional trainings reported

Julie Richards

- No additional trainings reported

Melissa Santrach

- Third Annual Charter School Conference, sponsored by CliftonLarsonAllen , July 28, 2015
Day-long conference on variety of charter school topics.
- National Night Out, August 4, 2015 - Ames Ave Boys & Girls Club. Assisted at Cornerstone's booth and engaged with children, parents, and community members.
- Minnesota Comeback Kickoff - Sept 29, 2015 - Collaboration of funders purpose and goals - information on MinnCan's activities.
- Minnesota Comeback Partner Luncheon and Legislative Policy Update - January 8, 2016 - Legislative issues and court rulings pertaining to charter schools. Sen. Greg Clausen and Rep. Jenifer Loon presented
- East Side Area Business Association (ESABA) - Attended meetings on March 10, 2016, May 12, 2016, and June 14, 2016 - Community outreach and information about issues important to our East Side community.
- Cornerstone's first Upper Elementary Graduation – June 10, 2016



School Management

2015-16 School Management and Faculty Information

This table contains information for ALL members of the school management/administrative team and also includes faculty employed by the school who did not serve as a classroom teacher (e.g., curriculum coordinators, social workers, counselors, administrative assistance, paraprofessionals, custodial, technology, librarians, etc.).

Name	File Folder Number	Assignment	Years Employed by the School	Left During 15/16	Not Returning 16/17
Christine Bewell		Director of Business Operations	5		
Hayley Bahnemann		Special Education Assistant	1		
Guled Hassan		Special Education Assistant	2	X	
Jane Hwang		Educational Assistant	1		X
Margaret Jenkins		Educational Assistant	1		X
Frankie Nesbitt		Special Education Assistant	2		
Nadiya Rapp		Classroom Assistant	2		
Liesl Taylor	424839	Head of School	5		
Anne Thao		Special Education Assistant	2		
Padee Thao		Educational Assistant	4		X
Kathryn Vanney		Educational Assistant	1		X
Sara Wade		Special Education Assistant	1		

School Management

The school is led by the Head of School who is hired and held accountable for the success of the school by the Board of Directors. The Head of School reports to the Board of Directors monthly and is reviewed annually by the Head of School Review sub-committee of the Accountability Committee.

The Head of School oversees all aspects of the school, manages all staff and, specifically, is the pedagogical leader of the school. The Director of Business Operations manages many operational aspects of the school (e.g., the lunch program, busing, MDE MARSS reports, etc.). In the classroom environments the teachers are supported in their work and guided by the Head of School. The Head of School observes in the classroom and meets with teachers on a weekly basis to discuss lessons and student progress. The teachers are responsible, with the support of assistants, for supporting the growth and development of each Cornerstone student.

See Appendix C for the 2015-16 CMES Organizational Chart that describes the structure of the CMES management team.

Administrative Professional Development

Liesl Taylor, our Head of School:

- October 25-27, 2015 – Montessori Public Policy Initiative; speaker and participant, Washington, D.C.
- AMI Refresher course – February 12-15, 2016 – Long Beach, CA
- Administration Retreat – March 19, 2016
- Montessori for Social Justice Conference – June 24-25, 2016, Cambridge, MA

Chris Bewell, our Director of Business Operations:

- FFVP Program Training – MDE – August 26, 2015
- FNS Verification Webinar – November 3, 2015
- Administration Retreat – March 19, 2016
- MDE Direct Reports Workshop – MDE – April 5, 2016
- Charter School Lease Aid Training – MDE – April 7, 2016
- MDE Title Grant Workshop – MDE – April 15, 2016
- PowerSchool Webinar – June 21, 2016

Head of School Professional Background

Liesl Taylor received her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology and Family Studies from St. Olaf College. Prior to pursuing her career in education, she served as the Supervisor of Early Intervention and the birth-to-three cognitive specialist in a program reaching out to an underserved population in Chicago. Liesl taught parenting classes while raising her own family and then began her career as a Montessori educator by receiving her AMI Montessori Elementary certificate through the Montessori Center of Minnesota (MCM) and her Minnesota State Teaching License through the College of St. Scholastica. Liesl worked and taught in public Montessori elementary classrooms for 12 years (two at Cornerstone) and assisted MCM teacher-training assessing student work and mentoring new teachers for three years prior to beginning her work in administration.

School Leader Review – 2015-2016

The Head of School Evaluation Committee, in conjunction with the Montessori Center of Minnesota, completed a comprehensive process for evaluation of Cornerstone's Head of School. The Head of School Evaluation committee consisted of CMES Board Chair Liz Coenen, Executive Director of MCM Molly O'Shaughnessy, and Board member Jane Reilly. Jane served as Chair of the committee.

Having developed a solid evaluation tool, timeline, and process during 2013-14 and repeated during 2014-15, the committee decided to use the same basic format in 2015-16, which would allow for comparisons from year-to-year. Much like the previous year, the evaluation survey was made available (online and on paper in English and Spanish) to school staff, board, and parents of children in both the private preschool and the public charter school since the head of school serves both schools. The response rate decreased from 66 respondents in 2014-15 to 55 respondents in 2015-16. The CMES Board and the Head of School Evaluation committee are considering ways to increase participation among all groups at Cornerstone.

Jane Reilly, Chair of the committee, prepared a summary of the survey results and shared with the Head of School. The survey responses indicate that significant progress has been made in addressing concerns raised in the 2014-15 survey. The surveys also cited opportunities for continued growth and development – all of which were being actively addressed by the Head of School and the administrative team.

To conclude the 2015-16 year, the committee met with the Head of School to share reflections of the year. The Head of School presented an annotated version of the goals and challenges she offered at the beginning of the year and commented on the things that went as planned as well as how she modified the plan as the year unfolded. Overall, each area was thoroughly and thoughtfully attended to so that by year's end significant advancements were made in all areas. The reflections from the 2015-16 year will become the basis for the Head of School's 2016-17 professional development goals.



Staffing / Teaching Faculty Information

Teaching Staff Information

Six of the ten teachers at CMES are licensed in their area of instruction. One teacher, Mara Johnson received a Community Expert Special Permission and one teacher, Suzi Splinter is working towards Special Education licensure completion and received a Personnel Variance for the 2015-2016 year. One teacher, John Albright, was granted a waiver to teach outside his licensure area, and one teacher, Sara Papacek, continued working towards licensure completion. Ms. Papacek has AMI certification as well as a community expert waiver approved by the Minnesota Department of Education.

Name	File Folder Number	Assignment	Years Employed by the School	Left During 15/16	Not Returning 16/17
John Albright	465409	Lower Elementary teacher	3		X
Susan Buerger	392840	Special Education teacher	3		
Kristen Campbell	471882	Kindergarten teacher	5		
Cynthia Crooks	267424	ELL teacher	5		
Jessica Goff	391619	Upper Elementary teacher	3		
Mara Johnson	486194	Upper Elementary teacher	2		
Amber Osterkamp	455024	Lower Elementary teacher	2		
Sara Papacek	997893	Kindergarten teacher	5		X
Megan Riemer	396133	Literacy Specialist	1		
Suzanne Splinter	332621	Special Education teacher	2		

Academic Professional Development

Staff:

August 31, 2015: Opening Staff Meeting Review of All Policies; Health and Safety Procedures, Mission and Vision, Food and Nutrition in Schools Training

September 19, 2015: Supporting in a Montessori Elementary Environment

October 15, 2015: Circle of Security Training for Staff 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Lourdes Harris, Trained Facilitator and Parent Engagement Coordinator, Montessori Center of Minnesota.

November 14, 2015: All Day Montessori; Connie Black, AMI Trainer and Director of Outreach, Montessori Center of Minnesota

February 12-16, 2016: AMI Refresher Course; Conflict Resolution as a Core Competency, Long Beach, CA

February 24, 2015: All Staff Dinner and Professional Development; Positive Phrasing

March 12, 2016: Cultural Competency; Managing our bias by owning our thoughts.

All Staff Meetings (Monthly): All staff must attend – Standard Agenda:

- Updates/important upcoming dates
- Policy/procedure review or changes
- Staff development topic (i.e. special education intervention training, assessment training or review, Montessori reading and topic, cultural competency training)
- Suggested topics from staff

Lead Guide Meetings (Monthly): Head of School and all lead teachers expected to attend – Standard Agenda

- Immediate issues/concerns
- Sharing – successes, challenges, assessments, progress towards goals.
- Supporting our support staff
- Lesson planning discussion (informed by observation, children's work, assessments)
- Child study (reserve at least 20 minutes for this discussion, longer if needed) and intervention discussion.

Level Meetings (Bi-Monthly): Lead Guides and assistants or aides as requested for each level, Head of School attends frequently and reviews reports – Standard Agenda

- Immediate issues/concerns
- Systems and routines ~ collaboration
- Intervention discussion for children who may need additional support.

Additional Staff Development Training by Individual:

John Albright

- AMI Refresher course – February 12-15, 2016 – Long Beach, CA

Susan Buerger

- No additional training

Kristen Campbell

- AMI Refresher course – February 12-15, 2016 – Long Beach, CA

Cynthia Crooks

- No additional training

Jess Goff

- AMI Elementary Teacher Training completed August 2015

Mara Johnson

- No additional training

Amber Osterkamp

- AMI Elementary Teacher Training completed August 2015

Sara Papacek

- AMI Refresher course – February 12-15, 2016 – Long Beach, CA

Megan Riemer

- No additional training

Suzanne Splinter

- No additional training

Staff Turnover and Staff Longevity

This year we had ten licensed staff members, four with waivers. Eight of these staff members plan to return to the classroom next year. One of our Special Education paraprofessionals is returning to Cornerstone in a teaching capacity next year. One teacher is moving out of state to be closer to family. Another teacher is changing focus from lower elementary to middle school and moving to a private Montessori program. One Special Education paraprofessional left mid-year to care for an aging parent. One educational assistant is continuing her education full time to become licensed as an ELL teacher, returning to us as a long-term substitute in January of next year. One Montessori trained educational assistant left to become a guide in another program. One educational assistant is returning to Cornerstone in a new capacity in 2016-17. Another Montessori trained assistant is changing her focus and working with the Montessori Center of Minnesota in their Primary Guide Training Program. The retention rate for licensed staff is at 80%; for overall staff, our retention rate is 68% (or 15/22).



School Admissions and Enrollment

Enthusiasm continues to grow for CMES in St. Paul's East Side community, as is evidenced by our waitlists for each grade level. It is our intention to provide high quality AMI instruction to families of the East Side. Included below are the admissions policies in the Board manual.

Also included in this section is the demographic information about the children who attended CMES this past year. We have a few more female versus male children (45%-55%), approximately 16% of Cornerstone children are Hispanic and 25.5% are African-American. 49% percent of CMES children qualify for free and reduced lunch, 16% of children receive special education services at CMES, and 12% of children qualify for limited English proficiency services (LEP). CMES children reside in St. Paul more than anywhere else (60% with 21% coming from Maplewood/Oakdale/North St. Paul and Woodbury and 19% from the Twin Cities Metro area).

Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School Enrollment Policy

Under Minnesota law, Cornerstone's enrollment process starts with an enrollment period. The enrollment period will be November 1 – December 1. Notice of this enrollment period will be made public through postings in community centers and newsletters targeting the Phalen Village community and on the school's website.

The Board of Directors prior to the start of the Open Enrollment period will approve the enrollment model for each grade. This enrollment model will accommodate slight over-enrollment to account for likely child attrition.

Enrollment Preference: As required in Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School must offer preferential enrollment to siblings of children currently enrolled at Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School. As allowed for in Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Cornerstone Montessori offers preferential enrollment to children of school employees. **Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School may not and will not give preference to children of the private pre-school Cornerstone Montessori School. Any family from Cornerstone Montessori School who wants their child to attend Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School must participate in the enrollment and lottery process.** Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School is a public school and as such, the enrollment process may not consider eligibility based on intellectual ability, aptitude, measurement of achievement, or any other specific characteristic of children whose enrollment form is received in a timely manner.

Enrollment Process: Current children of Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School are considered enrolled for the purpose of determining the number of openings for the following year. On the first day of the Open Enrollment period, the number of openings in each grade level will be determined and the Open Enrollment process will begin. Prospective new children must submit enrollment applications by the Open Enrollment deadline.

If openings still exist in any grade after the Open Enrollment deadline, enrollment applications received after the deadline will result in admission on a first-received, first-enrolled basis. In the event post-deadline enrollment results in a full class and later enrollment applications are received, those children will be placed on a waiting list in the order in which the applications were received.

Lottery Process: If more enrollment applications are received during the open enrollment period than available openings in any grade, a public lottery for those openings in those grades must be held. Each of the grades is subject to the lottery process.

The lottery, if necessary, will be conducted on December 10. If December 10 falls on a weekend or holiday, the lottery will be held on the next business day following the weekend or holiday.

The lottery will be conducted by a third-party, unrelated to school staff, board, or applicants. It will occur in a public meeting with adequate notice. The children who are not chosen will be placed on a waiting list in the order their names are drawn.

Upon admission, Cornerstone may require additional information about enrolling children including information on special education needs, health care summaries, family background, and family routines and habits.

Kindergarten Enrollment: Prospective children entering kindergarten must be five years of age on or before September 1 of the school year for which they are applying.

Non-Discrimination Statement: No child may or will be denied admission to Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School on the basis of gender, religion, ethnicity, or intellectual or physical ability. Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School is a tuition-free school. Students from all backgrounds are encouraged to apply.

*Board Approved October 18, 2011
Revised August 28, 2012*

Acceleration & Retention Policy

Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School accepts children into grade levels based on their age on or before September 1 of the school year with 5 years being the age for acceptance into Kindergarten. Cornerstone will provide each child with an educational environment that provides optimal challenge and meets the child's developmental needs. Due to the nature of the Montessori environment and the training of the teacher, which covers multiple ages and the multi-age classrooms, lessons can often be remediated or accelerated to meet the needs of each child.

Cornerstone staff members – teachers and administrators – will continually and consistently assess the needs and development of each child to determine the best environment for each child. Decisions to advance or retain a child will be made by the Head of School in conjunction with the child's parents and will be based on staff experience and assessment of the needs of the child.

Board Approved May 17, 2011

Please see Appendix D for a copy of the CMES Application Form and Appendix E for a copy of the Student Enrollment Form.

Enrollment Process

When a child is admitted to Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School, the family is notified and is required to complete the Student Enrollment Form and return it to the school by the stated deadline. Once CMES receives the Student Enrollment Form, an enrollment packet is given to the family for completion. The enrollment packet includes the following forms: Health Information, Emergency Information, Home Language Questionnaire, Computer and Internet Usage Contract, General Permission Slip, Parent Permission for Child Pickup, Parent Directory Permission, Family and Cultural Information, and Immunization Records.

Student Background and Demographics

2015-16 School Year	October	%	June	%
Total # of Students	132	-	129	-
Females	74	56.06	71	55.04
Males	58	43.94	58	44.96
American Indian	4	3.03	3	2.33
Asian	19	14.40	19	14.73
Black	34	25.75	33	25.58
Hispanic	23	17.42	21	16.28
White	52	39.40	53	41.08
Free & Reduced	66	50.00	63	48.84
Special Ed (incl. 504)	19	14.39	21	16.28
LEP	16	12.12	16	12.40

Resident District	2015-2016	
	#	%
St. Paul	78	60.47
North St. Paul/Maplewood/Oakdale	18	13.95
Washington County/Woodbury	9	6.97
Inver Grove Heights/Cottage Grove/Eagan	2	1.55
Roseville/Little Canada	8	6.20
Minneapolis	9	6.98
New Brighton/Brooklyn Park	5	3.88

As demonstrated in these two tables, CMES works predominantly with children living in St. Paul with close to 50% that qualify for free and reduced lunch and identify as Hispanic, African-American, or Asian. In the past, children fitting this profile would not have had access to AMI-certified Montessori instruction; this data reminds us that we are making progress towards fulfilling our mission.



Student Attrition

We began the school year with 24 children on the Kindergarten waitlist, 8 children on the 1st Grade waitlist, 8 children on the 2nd Grade waitlist, 6 children on the 3rd Grade waitlist, and 1 child on the 5th Grade waitlist. Three families moved from St. Paul and left CMES during the school year. Three families moved their children to St. Paul Public Schools in their neighborhoods. One family moved their child to a private Montessori school closer to their home. One family moved their child into a St. Paul Public School program for which they had been on the wait list. Several new families enrolled their children during the school year. We began the school year with an enrollment of 132 children and with the movements and decisions of families, total enrollment was 129 by the time the school year ended. Our Average Daily Membership (ADM) for the 2015-16 school year was 130.12. Over the course of the year, we served a total of 138 children, meaning that 7% were not retained, putting our retention rate at 93%. For the 2016-17 school year, we see waitlists continue to grow for Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th Grades, a sure sign that word has spread about CMES's impact on young people's lives.

Student Enrollment and Attrition Rates

This table identifies the 2015-16 end of year enrollment and an estimated 2016-2017 enrollment. Data based on end of year Average Daily Membership (ADM).

School Year	Total	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	Attrition/Retention Rates
2011-2012	58	21	22	15					89%
2012-2013	81	22	23	22	14				96%
2013-2014	102	22	21	18	21	17	2	1	94%
2014-2015	118	19	23	19	16	25	16	0	91%
2015-2016	129	24	18	21	15	16	22	13	93%
2016-2017 est.	134	20	20	19	21	20	17	17	



Academic Program / School Performance

Established with VOA before the school opened, our goals for academic excellence are clearly articulated, challenging, and critical to CMES's long-term success in supporting children on the East Side of St. Paul.

During our fifth year at CMES, we felt the positive impact of serving all ages, Kindergarten through grade six. We felt a new calm in being grounded on a stable foundation of systems and understandings we had been building the last four years. We continue to measure and address, in a positive intentional way, our challenges, seeing the opportunities for continued strides forward as we pursue our goals and high expectations – namely, that each child will be allowed an environment that fosters them to grow to their full human potential and to meet and exceed grade-level performance as measured by state, nationally-normed, and Montessori-based assessments.

In the first year, we implemented an authentic Montessori program and supported a student body, most of whom were new to Montessori and thus needed to adapt to the expectations of a Montessori environment which offers the freedom to responsibly move about school, to choose work and work partners, and to follow one's interests. During our second year, the children grew in their capacity to make responsible, challenging work choices that demonstrated academic growth while at the same time fostering an increasingly caring, conscientious and giving community. This combination is the foundation of authentic Montessori elementary education: challenging, integrated work within the context of community and with concern for the good of all. We continued to grow and last year, our fifth year, marked our first year with sixth grade graduates, many of whom were founding children. We are so proud of them, of what they've accomplished, and of the leadership they provided the younger children and, really, the entire Cornerstone community.

With the stability of a committed, highly trained and qualified staff, and established environments serving the full complement of ages, we achieved our goal of becoming the first and only AMI accredited public charter elementary school in the Midwest. While statewide scores remained static this year, we watched our children's standardized test scores increase, in some cases dramatically, as a result of our interventions and the children's hard work.



Learning Program Description

AMI (Association Montessori Internationale) was founded in 1929 by Dr. Maria Montessori to maintain the integrity of her work and her vision of education for children. Montessori as a name is not trademarked. In the Twin Cities alone, a Google search produced ten schools with Montessori in the title; however, that does not guarantee a rigorous commitment to Dr. Montessori's vision and principles in educating young people. By contrast, CMES hires only teachers who have been AMI certified, and CMES's director Liesl Taylor is AMI certified and has been a classroom teacher in an AMI environment. This level of rigor and consistency guarantees for families a high-quality authentic Montessori education.

Founded in 1907 by Dr. Maria Montessori (1870-1952), Montessori pedagogy educates children for life. Children have the freedom to explore and to develop their potential as they work with didactic materials, either independently or in groups, in a prepared environment. The Montessori Method is based in the concept of respect for self, others and the environment. Montessori classrooms are prepared to meet the developmental needs of the age span served within the environment.

The materials and furniture are designed for the child's physical needs (size and proportion) and psychological needs (areas of interest or skill development). Each prepared environment includes a full range of Montessori materials, a trained Montessori guide/teacher, and a trained assistant. The materials are designed to assist growth in practical life, sensorial, mathematics, language arts, music, art, science, history, and geography. The work the child performs with the materials is intended to develop mental and manual dexterity. While working with the materials, the child develops concentration, self-confidence, respect, an understanding of order, and a joy of learning.

We believe that the child and his or her needs are the central and commanding focus of the learning process. It is the role of the teacher to observe, to know, and to defend the child as he or she proceeds through the stages of development.

We see in each child the future of our society, of our nation, and of our planet. The child in the process of fundamental development has unlimited possibilities, and the future rests on our ability to cultivate and nurture these potentials.

We believe that the learning process is governed by certain basic human tendencies or needs:

- The need to communicate, to use language
- The tendency for order: the need to organize, classify, and interpret reality
- The need for independence and activity, the drive to work constructively and purposefully
- The need for social relationships

In a Montessori school, the outdoor environment is considered an extension of the indoor environment. While there is a scheduled time for large motor activities that encourage collaborative group play and allow children to gain an understanding of the rules and movements associated with a variety of sports, the space is used not only during recess. The outdoor environment is also a "work space" that can be used during the Montessori work-cycle. Throughout the day and with the accompaniment of an adult, children may work on materials, garden, or simply explore the natural landscape of our outdoor space. We also offer the children a multi-purpose room to refine their large motor skills when weather keeps us from going outside.

The Montessori teacher facilitates activities within the environment while modeling respectful behavior. The teacher is not the center of the learning process, but rather helps guide each child while also respecting his/her choices. The teachers help the children reach their full potential by guiding them towards materials that meet their developmental needs and current interests. Individual and group lessons are varied and designed to meet

each child's learning style and pace. The teacher observes the children often and plans lessons based on his/her observations of the needs and interests of an individual or group.

Within the multi-age community, older children often serve as teachers and mentors for the younger children. These children share their experiences by helping others. This process not only helps create a sense of community and interdependence, but also reinforces previous learning for the older children. Self-direction encourages trust, acceptance, and non-competitiveness. The materials, teacher, and children's community come together to assist the child in developing a strong self-image and sense of self-esteem, which is critical when building an attitude of learning and exploration to last a lifetime.

Children's House (Kindergarten)

Kindergarten is part of our Children's House program, which in partnership with Cornerstone Montessori School – a private, preschool – serves children from the age of 33 months to 6 years. Cornerstone's two Children's House environments will have up to 30 children when at full capacity with 10 children enrolled in Kindergarten at CMES and the other children enrolled in the private preschool program. Each environment has an AMI-trained guide/teacher along with an AMI-trained assistant and an aide. Either the trained assistant or the aide is a native Spanish-speaker.

This program is an all-day program. We offer a nutritious, catered lunch, which the children enjoy as a community. For much of the children's day they may choose work within the environment. There is also group time for music, stories, movement, and games. Children have time to play outside at least once a day (weather permitting). There is also the opportunity to use an indoor large motor space.

Children are free to choose work from the beautiful and well-defined areas of the environment. The adults in the environment serve as Guides who show the children how to use the concrete materials. Working with the materials not only helps develop coordination, concentration, independence, and a sense of order; it also helps the child become more disciplined and accomplished. Children in a Montessori environment usually have healthy self-esteem because they are helped to do things themselves. The children have ownership of the environment and take good care of it, returning materials with care.

The Children's House environment unifies the social, physical, and intellectual functioning of the child. We provide children with an early and general foundation that includes a positive attitude toward school, inner security, a sense of order, pride in the environment, curiosity, concentration, self-discipline, and a sense of responsibility for the self and for the group. Thus, through interacting with the Montessori environment, the child constructs him or herself in a positive manner. This benefits the child in school and in life.

Instruction occurs one-on-one and in small groups conducted at the child's pace. Montessori materials are organized in a logical, sequential nature, providing a structure that guides a child's discovery. A series of presentations, activities, and developmentally appropriate materials are designed to enable the child to master specific skills.

The Children's House environment is divided into four distinct areas:

Practical life: among other life skills, children learn how to wash, cook, sweep, plant, and sew.

Sensorial: children learn through sight, touch, sound, taste, and smell using binomial cubes, geometric shapes, constructive triangles, tasting bottles, and other materials that enable the child to classify, clarify, and comprehend the world.

Language: children are introduced to nomenclature and vocabulary through spoken-language games. They are also introduced to the 26 letters of the English alphabet and their associated sounds.

With the help of a movable alphabet, children are able to write words, sentences, and stories.

Reading quickly follows with materials that help explore grammar and the structure of language.

Math: children are taken from the concrete to the abstract through manipulation, experimentation, and invention by using math materials.

Elementary (Ages 6-12)

From age six through age 12 – the elementary school years – the child is driven by a natural curiosity and tendency to explore the expansive interconnectedness within and across disciplines such as the arts, math, and social studies. Dr. Montessori used the term “cosmic education” to refer to this stage of education best fitting this period of child development. The Great Lessons are at the center of Montessori elementary education. These lessons are stories that explore the beginnings of the universe, the formation of the stars and planets, the progress of plant and animal life, the arrival of humans and language, and the origins of mathematics, geometry, and the sciences. From these stories the child develops sensitivity to the way things live, to the interdependence of life, and to the fundamental needs of human beings. Timelines, charts, and research cards of human needs help the child in independent study and inspire more research in geology, sciences, biology, geography, and history. Montessori elementary children use their imagination and reasoning minds to explore all the parts of the universe. They may be engaged in a variety of learning activities at the same time.

At the center of the Montessori elementary classroom is the well-trained Montessori teacher. This professional is an “enlightened generalist” with knowledge deep enough to know details that add to the Great Lessons and connect the details into a big picture across the disciplines. The teacher’s role is to be the storyteller of our history and our world, as we understand it, to inspire the children, and then to guide them in acquiring the skills to pursue their interests and to explore the relationships among the different subject matters. This teacher is also trained in areas of child development. Because the Montessori child spends three years in the same classroom environment, the elementary teacher can be keenly tuned in to the unique personality of each child. This sensitivity permits the teacher to guide each child into areas of natural interest. The teacher or guide is in communication with the child and the family to help the child maximize his or her educational opportunities.

Much of the work of the elementary child is collaborative. The child learns in partnership with others through small group lessons and projects. At different times, each child is both a teacher and a learner. Because each child spends three years in the same classroom environment, the children have the freedom to explore subject areas as they become interested in them. The teachers, through the use of daily observation notes, lesson planning, and assessments, track each child’s use of materials and progress within a subject matter. The teacher uses the child’s interest to guide him or her to an exploration of all subject areas. The subjects that are covered in the Montessori classroom include mathematics, geometry, language, geography, science, art, and music.

Living in the world for the elementary child also involves working actively to make it a better place. Care of one’s environment is built into the Montessori curriculum. Children are responsible for keeping the environment clean, caring for the animals, and providing for the needs of guests. CMES children will take responsibility for recycling programs in their classroom environments, help maintain the grounds and the garden, and help the school be more energy efficient.

The Montessori curriculum is developed and reviewed by an international committee and not set according to US academic standards. As a consequence, there are elements in the Montessori curriculum, such as finding the cube root of a 9-digit number, that are not part of our state or national standards; also there are elements of our Minnesota state standards, such as the study of simple machines, that are not covered by the basic Montessori curriculum. There are however, specific provisions made in the training of Montessori teachers to ensure that the state standards are met in the Montessori classroom. CMES staff will continually evaluate state standards

and Montessori curriculum to ensure that children who graduate from a level (kindergarten, third, and sixth grades) have met the state required standards.

One of the guiding principles of Montessori education is the development of the whole person, with particular emphasis on the development of reason and the will, along with a lifelong love of learning. For this reason, children in a Montessori environment are expected to work at their own pace and have a major role in setting their own work schedule rather than just doing specific assignments given by the teacher. This vast amount of freedom given to the children is tempered by three very important limits: the public school curriculum, the daily work journal used by each child to track his/her progress, and frequent individual meetings between the child and the teacher. The trained Montessori teacher is expected to help each child progress through the state public school curriculum, which is available in the classroom for the children to refer to in planning their studies. As part of each child's assessment (including standardized assessments, Montessori records, the child's work journal, and Montessori teacher's observation notes), the Montessori teacher reviews with the child where the child is in terms of development within the Montessori curriculum and state standards and sets goals with the child for further development. There is also a consideration given to the developmental level of the child; that is, more of the responsibility for covering the state curriculum falls on the teacher's shoulders in the early grades with the child taking more direct responsibility as she/he matures.



Assessment Test Results

CMES conducted OLPA and MCA Assessments. It should be noted with such small grade level sizes, one or two test scores can dramatically impact the mean of the test results. For example, one child's score can swing a grade level four to seven percentage points.

AYP Goal

Indicator	4	3	2	1
Adequate Yearly Progress The school is making adequate yearly academic progress (AYP), as measured by the Minnesota Department of Education's system of accountability.	Met AYP across all subgroups for at least the last two school years	Met AYP across all subgroups for the last school year	Did not meet AYP across all subgroups for the last school year	Did not meet AYP across all subgroups for the last two school years or more

CMES received its Multiple Measures Rating (MMR) from the Department of Education last year and though our score went from 0 to 30%, boosting us up out of the 'below 25%' level in one year, there are no new designations for any school this year and we will remain in Continuous Improvement status.

MCA-III Goal Series

MCA III Math - 2015-2016 School Year – Meeting and Exceeding Standards				
Grade Level	# of Students Tested	% Partial Meeting	% Meeting	% Exceeding
Grade 3	14	7.1%	42.9%	7.1%
Grade 4	16	18.8%	6.3%	0%
Grade 5	22	27.3%	22.7%	0%
Grade 6	13	23.1%	0%	0%

MCA III Reading - 2015-2016 School Year – Meeting and Exceeding Standards				
Grade Level	# of Students Tested	% Partial Meeting	% Meeting	% Exceeding
Grade 3	14	14.3%	42.9%	14.3%
Grade 4	16	12.5%	18.8%	6.3%
Grade 5	22	13.6%	45.5%	27.3%
Grade 6	13	23.1%	15.4%	7.7%

MCA III Science - 2015-2016 School Year – Meeting and Exceeding Standards				
Grade Level	# of Students Tested	% Partial Meeting	% Meeting	% Exceeding
Grade 5	22	18.2%	50%	9.1%

Reading Percent Growth on MCA III – 2015-16 School Year		
Growth Level	# Tested	Percent in each category
% Not Proficient, High Growth	11	23.4%
% Not Proficient, Medium Growth	13	27.7%
% Not Proficient, Low Growth	7	14.9%
% Proficient, High Growth	3	6.4%
% Proficient, Medium Growth	13	27.7%
% Proficient, Low Growth	0	0.0%

Math Percent Growth on MCA III – 2015-16 School Year		
Growth Level	# Tested	Percent in each category
% Not Proficient, High Growth	4	8.5%
% Not Proficient, Medium Growth	15	31.9%
% Not Proficient, Low Growth	16	34.0%
% Proficient, High Growth	1	2.1%
% Proficient, Medium Growth	5	10/6%
% Proficient, Low Growth	6	12.8%

As a public charter school, we of course must remain committed to preparing our children to successfully demonstrate their skills as specified and measured in state mandated assessments, the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments or MCAs. We embrace this work. We are confident that given time and consistency, our children will meet and exceed expectations. This year, we see trends more positive than ever, especially in reading where we focused monetary resources and interventions led and mentored by our expert literacy specialist. We are excited to see our children's abilities to demonstrate stronger skills on these assessments and more closely match the strong academic progress we see daily in the classrooms. We remain aware that we have further to go.

School wide Cornerstone MCA math scores increased only slightly 2.1%. Statewide math scores decreased slightly.

Grade 3 MCA math proficiency scores increased 37.5%. Grade 4 MCA math proficiency scores dropped. Grade 5 MCA math proficiency scores increased 22.7%. This was our first year for grade 6 MCA assessments. Proficiency scores were low.

School wide Cornerstone MCA reading scores increased by 12%. Statewide reading scores increased only .4%.

Grade 3 MCA reading proficiency scores increased 38.3% and are at the state level, while state wide 3rd grade reading scores decreased slightly. Grade 4 reading proficiency skills decreased 16.7% while the state remained the same. Grade 5 reading proficiency scores increased by 28.9% to surpass the state proficiency level to 72.7%. State wide 5th grade reading proficiency increased only 1%. Sixth grade MCA reading proficiency scores were low at 23.1%.

Cornerstone is encouraged and excited about the impact of the reading program implemented under the guidance of our literacy specialist. Our Literacy Specialist used the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA)

to get a baseline assessment of each child attending Cornerstone in September, 2015. A benchmark assessment was done again in January for any child not reading at grade level initially.

At the beginning of the 2015-2016 academic year 44% of our children in grades 1-6 were reading slightly to moderately/severely below grade level. By January the percent of children not reading at grade level dropped to 26%.

By the end of the year, Cornerstone was able to happily post these percentages, as measured by the DRA, on our Reading Well by Third Grade and Record of Continuous Improvement reports.

1st Grade DRA: 48% reading at grade level
2nd Grade DRA: 67% reading at grade level
3rd Grade DRA: 100% reading at grade level
4th Grade DRA: 60% reading at grade level
5th Grade DRA: 88% reading at grade level
6th Grade DRA: 74% reading at grade level

Cornerstone continues to remain watchful of low and only slightly increasing math proficiency scores on the MCA. We are aggressively addressing these issues, which we expected to have in establishing a new program with many inexperienced and typically underserved children.

At the same time, we see our children perform better in the classroom than they demonstrate on these assessments, and it's important to look at these scores in the correct context so they are interpreted fairly in assessing the success of our program.

Cornerstone researched the scores in six neighboring schools who most closely serve our demographic. They are assessing a large number of children, on average just under 100 children per grade. Because of the large number of children they are assessing, their child "count", for lack of a better word, is .9 of a percentage point. At Cornerstone we are assessing on average 17 children per grade, making each of our children roughly "count" as 6 whole percentage points. How does this play out? If a child has a rough day during his or her assessment at an area school, to which we are compared, it doesn't drastically affect their scores for that grade or drastically affect their school-wide scores. If one child at Cornerstone has a rough day, it significantly and negatively affects our averages because of how much each child is "counted".

While we are committed to the work of preparing our children, among many other things, to demonstrate proficiency on their standardized tests, we are also unwaveringly grounded in our commitment to provide access to high quality Montessori to all children and especially those children with significant deficits in their skills. Our country has followed fad after educational fad, making desperate grabs at what might bring these children along ~ agreeing only on the fact that so far nothing is working ~ when all the while we have a scientifically proven method of education that supports the development of each human being to his or her fullest potential within the context of community. It is only by fostering the development of the whole child ~ all that makes each child human ~ in a community that is rich with acceptance, diversity, celebration, and respect that we have children who are ready to take academic risk; children who are willing to try and fail and know that they will be supported in trying again. It is in these classroom environments where the most disadvantaged child has the greatest opportunity for success. Part of that is indeed demonstrating our children are proficient in their basic skills, however we can never let education be reduced to just that. We cannot be in the business of simply filling children with 'content'. Our world is changing so quickly, we can't possibly guess at the content our children will 'need to know'. Our children need to experience their education... build amazing brains, be great thinkers and strong, confident decision makers to be truly successful.

Mission Specific Academic Goals

Cornerstone continues to see exceptional growth in our mission-specific goals of fostering development of executive functions. This year Dr. Steven J. Hughes, PhD, ABPdN, Research Consultant, conducted a pilot study entitled, “Executive Function Growth as a Function of Years of Education in a High-Quality Montessori School for Children from Disadvantaged and Relative-Advantaged Backgrounds: A Pilot Study”.

This study investigated the growth of executive functions (EFs) in children from disadvantaged and relatively advantaged backgrounds attending Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School.

The results show that children from both disadvantaged and relatively advantaged families demonstrate considerable growth in EFs across increasing years of attendance. While children from more advantaged backgrounds showed a slightly higher rate of growth, the differences between groups were not statistically significant.

At each successive level of Montessori education performance increased to the degree that by the time they had completed four or five years of Montessori education, about two thirds of the FRPL and essentially the entire FP group showed performance at or beyond above average range. This is a level of growth with real, observable, and potentially life-altering implications.

Attendance Rate

CMES School will meet or exceed its attendance rate goal for Adequate Yearly Progress.

Indicator	4	3	2	1
Attendance rate for the school year ([ADA/ADM]*100).	More than 90% AND improves by at least 1% over the previous year	More than 90% OR improves by at least 1% over the previous year	85-90%	Less than 85%

Our Average Daily Attendance (ADA) was 123.6, Average Daily Membership (ADM) 130.12, giving CMES a 95% attendance rate. The AMI Montessori method challenges and excites children, inspiring them to be present for what each new day brings. Cornerstone children truly enjoy their school experience and are inspired to be present as evidenced by the attendance rate.

Finances

Thanks to both Sandra Schmidt of SandMark Services LLC and to our Finance Committee, the school's finances are strong, and we have built a good foundation to move forward. Due to the conscientious approach of our Finance Committee Chair Melissa Santrach, Board Chair Liz Coenen, Director of Business Operations Chris Bewell, and Head of School Liesl Taylor (all of them working in concert with Sandra Schmidt), CMES has wisely plotted a course to achieve a 20-30% fund balance within five years and has made significant progress in achieving that goal.

Internal Controls and Board Oversight

Cornerstone's Finance Committee, which consists of the Board Chair, Board Treasurer, the school's contracted finance manager, and school administration, meets monthly to oversee the school's finances. The Finance Committee reviews monthly financial statements prepared by the contracted finance manager. The financial statements are then submitted to the school board members and reviewed and accepted at the monthly school board meetings. Clifton Larson Allen, Certified Public Accountants, prepares the school's annual audit.

Overview of Financial Health

The unaudited end-of-year fund balance as of June 30, 2016, was \$352,852.00 or 20.8%. The financial goal of the school is to continue to increase enrollment and work toward a fund balance of 20-30%. A finance summary is presented at the end of this section. Sandra Schmidt of SandMark Services LLC performs the accounting services for Cornerstone Montessori Elementary and Paychex performs the payroll services.

2014-15 School Audit

CMES ended FY 2014-15 year with a fund balance of \$82,364. This was an increase of \$76,354. Sandra Schmidt, using Skyward School Finance Software, provided the accounting services. Clifton Larson Allen, Certified Public Accountants, audited the school's financial records.

Clifton Larson Allen conducted an independent audit of the financial statements of the governmental activities and each major fund of Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School as of and for the year ended June 30, 2015. The financial statements were presented fairly and the auditor issued a "clean" audit report.

In accordance with Government Auditing Standards, Clifton Larson Allen issued their report on October 13, 2015, and it was submitted to the Minnesota Department of Education and Volunteers of America. Clifton Larson Allen presented the 2015 Fiscal Year Audit at the October 20, 2015, School Board Meeting and the audit was accepted.

See Appendix G for the 2015-16 Financial Statements and Revised Budget.

Innovative Practices and Implementation

Curriculum - AMI-Certified Montessori Approach

Innovative practice is AMI in the public sector. The broader educational community is recognizing many of Dr. Montessori's methods today as innovative best practices. Acknowledging "developmentally appropriate" as an ideal learning environment, child-centered practices are being merged into many traditional systems. At Cornerstone, the innovative practices of Montessori are time tested, but remain innovative. Now more than ever, it is of particular importance for our student population to experience authentic Montessori education in the public sector. Whereas more privileged children come to school having already had a wealth of positive experiences and viewing themselves as capable learners and important people, *many children represented in our student population have experienced the opposite*. Due in part to limited opportunities, they are often the children who start academically behind expected grade levels and then continue to fall further behind each year.

In an authentic Montessori classroom, the child is a central agent in the process of learning. The whole child is nurtured. The multi-aged classroom is set up as a community of people who are living and working together. Amongst this three-year span in age, the grades are not defined. Children don't see themselves or each other as "behind" or "smarter" or "in the slow group" because those distinctions aren't made. Children learn that they are at school to work extremely hard *doing their own best work each day*. In addition, all presentations in a Montessori classroom are designed to appeal to the specific developmental needs and attributes of the child receiving the lesson. All learning at all times is differentiated. Scaffolding is beautifully and inherently present in the materials children use for their work. Because each child's learning experience is tailored, children see that they are competent learners. Children are invigorated by the work they have completed and are inspired to explore increasingly greater academic challenges – and experience success in doing so.

Socially, children learn that all have strengths and all have struggles. Every child comes to realize through repeated interactions and experiences with others in the community that he or she has something important to offer. Setbacks and disappointments are dealt with as a community in a supportive, respectful, and nurturing way. As the community develops, children spontaneously address social issues right along side of academic concepts, and all interactions and choices are seen as opportunities to assist in the development of executive function strategies and engagement; skills that are now seen as increasingly important for each child's future success.

Children being mentored and educated in an authentic Montessori classroom in these ways believe in themselves as capable people and as important members of society. Children who believe in themselves in these ways have an enormous capacity to excel academically and to thrive in the inspiring and rigorous academics AMI classrooms are known for.

In addition, the long-term goal of children leaving the program and taking their exceptional citizenship skills, sound self-esteem, and positive attitude towards learning has profound implications for their success in future educational settings and in society as a whole.

Special Education Services

Twenty children of 134 (15%) qualified for special education services or a 504 plan to provide appropriate accommodations to maximize learning during the 2015-16 school year.

Though our Special Education program received wonderful reviews in 2014-15, we knew we had much more work to do. We knew we needed expert guidance from a more reliable, consistent source of expertise in all that

building an exceptional program requires. We contracted both a Special Education Director and a Special Education Coordinator through INDIGO Education and they have been a tremendous support in helping us develop our program, especially in helping us understand the intricacies of process, procedure, and systems that support the work with the children and families on a deeper level. Our Coordinator was on site one half day every week meeting with the Special Education Teachers and mentoring paraprofessionals and administration as well.

English Language Learners (ELL)

The English as a Second Language program at Cornerstone involved sixteen children in kindergarten through sixth grade who attended from September 2015 to June 2016. Cornerstone's ELL population is very stable; most of these children have been at the school for nearly all of their elementary years. The small size and Montessori methods and materials make Cornerstone a unique setting. Language learners have the benefit of many opportunities to speak with peers and adults for a variety of reasons in different settings during the school day. Oral language develops very naturally for Cornerstone's ELL children.

The ELL specialist at Cornerstone worked daily on reading this year on an individual basis with the kindergarten ELL children. According to the DRA assessment given in spring by our reading specialist, two of the children met all four DRA standards, and the other child met two of the four. The ELL specialist worked on reading daily with the lower elementary children also. Of the four 1st through 3rd graders, in the DRA year's growth measure, two grew .75, one 1.75 and one 2.1. This was a 3rd grader, who will be starting 4th grade where he should be. Two others are just one-quarter of a year behind, and the other is significantly behind grade level, with a very slow rate of growth during her kindergarten and first grade years at Cornerstone. She has been referred to special education services. There are nine upper elementary ELL children at Cornerstone. The ELL specialist worked daily on reading skills with two of these children. Our special education teachers also worked daily with these and three others who have IEPs, and the reading specialist included the remaining ELL children in literature groups during the year.

According to the DRA assessment, 6 children made one year's growth in reading, one grew 1.5, and one 1.75. Two of the children showed no growth. One of these is a 4th grader who in June tested at grade level for starting 5th grade, and the other is below grade level. This was unusual for her this year. Social factors influenced her growth as a reader. We hope to turn that around during her sixth grade year. Writing in a Montessori school is integrated with the children's meaningful work.

The ELL specialist worked on writing tasks as needs and opportunities arose. Improving writing skills for all of Cornerstone's ELL children using methods that fit Cornerstone's philosophy will be a goal of the ELL specialist in the coming school year. The children took the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs in March. The computer-given format was a challenge for some of them. The scores showed that one of our 5th graders is proficient in all language domains. The others will continue to receive ELL services in the coming year.

Student Highlights

Our First Graduation

Of course there are countless highlights regarding the children; highlights in each moment, hour, day, week. One extra special highlight for the entire school was graduation! This year our first 13 sixth year children graduated from Cornerstone, marking a new beginning. After five years of start-up and growth, Cornerstone begins a new stage of development as a fully enrolled K-6 school. This is also a new beginning for each graduate as they head out onto their next adventure. We sent our graduates off with these heartfelt wishes:

Our hearts and minds are overflowing with memories and thoughts of each of you, and the work we've all done together to build Cornerstone!

Many of you remember our first year of elementary school when we used to share the story of Molly's Dream with our many guests. Feneti used to skip around saying, "Look at us! Right here living in Molly's Dream!"

As you may have supposed by now, there is much more to Molly's Dream; it was a starting point and it has grown in every adult's heart at Cornerstone; it drives our work. Our dream for you ~ our hope now ~ is that we have together built a place for you to grow into people who have the skills and the courage, and the joy of learning life-long, to go out and make your own dreams come true.

From the beginning of your time in elementary you learned that human beings have very special gifts: human heartedness, the ability to imagine that which has not yet been done or made, beautiful hands with which to work... you have been given a unique opportunity ~ an opportunity many children don't have ~ to practice using those gifts all your days here; making good choices and poor choices and learning to do better for yourself each day. Now it is time to take those skills out into the larger community, other schools, sports programs, neighborhoods, and use them wisely.

Go forward believing as deeply in yourselves as we believe in you whether things are going well or whether things are really hard. There is going to be work you have to do that you don't like. There are going to be teachers who seem hard or unfair... you must remember that you are special. You are well prepared not to let those things get in the way of you being successful; do the work you have to do. Follow the rules you have to follow; stay strong in your own minds about who you are and what you think, making wise choices, and living to make your own dreams come true. If a door shuts, go around. Go over. Go under. Go in the window. Do not give up on your dreams. Put your chin up and respectfully succeed despite the obstacles in your way.

We feel reverence for you... it is a feeling of the deepest respect, with love and awe for who you are all mixed in. We believe in you unconditionally. Every minute. We honor you. We present our pioneers, our ground-breakers, our beloved graduates: Caleb, Dareon, Dylan, Feneti, Fikir, Frederick, Gabryella, Jay, Mai Choua, Nazia, Penelope, Saniea, Shanice.



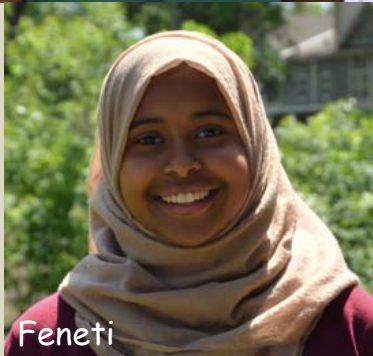
Shanice



Saniea



Caleb



Feneti



Dylan



Nazia



Frederick



Penelope



Gabryella



Dareon



Mai Choua



Jay



Fikir

Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School
6th Year Graduates - June 8, 2016

Staff Highlights

At Cornerstone we are often too eager to recognize only our areas for growth. It is equally as important to recognize the extraordinary work of our staff. Our trained Guides provide expert leadership and work passionately with every child. Every single supportive assistant and aide does just that: supports their guides, children and environments. The absolute champions that are our specialists and Special Education staff, tirelessly and lovingly advocate for each and every child while doing the tricky work of integrating all that they do into authentic Montessori environments not compromising the experience of the children. Our kitchen staff keep us nourished as well as in compliance with all our food safety regulations. Our administrative team joyfully provides support wherever there is a need. This amazing team did something that couldn't have happened without everyone's whole-hearted participation in their roles: we became the first and only AMI Accredited Montessori Public Charter School in the Midwest. Our consultant had this to say:

"Each person is dedicated to providing the very best of Montessori for children who normally would not have access to it. Their dedication was also expressed in the consultation forms that they gave me. I have never received such complete and thoughtfully done forms. Each teacher took the time to reflect and completely and honestly answer the questions. Having read the consultation report from 2016 and talked to staff I acknowledge that great progress has been made in helping the children to work toward normalization. I have no hesitancy in saying that even though there are still improvements to be made, this is a well- functioning Montessori elementary program. It was a pleasure to visit Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School. The staff and board members were great hosts, making my work very easy. Working with children who are underserved is very dear to my heart and it was encouraging to see such fine work in action."

In addition, on behalf of the entire school, we are deeply grateful for our Board members and our colleagues and partners in the Montessori Center of Minnesota. We truly appreciate their unwavering support of all that we do ~ from riding the bus our first year to being the most invested landlords an entity could hope for. They are Cornerstone's steadfast visionaries and friends, and have been a continuous thoughtful, insightful, presence during some of our most sensitive and challenging moments.

2015-16 Awards

Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School received the 2016 VOA School Board Governance Award.

Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School received the 2016 VOA School Finance Award

Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School received the Minnesota Department of Education FY 2016 School Finance Award.

Service Learning

As the service learning program has strengthened and evolved, the children continue to be supported in following their natural desire to help when and where they find a need. This year many of the children in the upper elementary classrooms had a presentation and became interested in the cleanliness of our water supply. They tested the health of their own marsh and went out into the community to stencil the drains all around the neighborhood letting everyone know that the water and litter that goes into the drains goes straight into the river!

Another group of children researched and studied TED talks and then wrote one about the importance of healthy eating and presented it to their fellow schoolmates and many of their parents.

Our youngest children in Children's House ran an extremely successful drive for supplies for our local Humane Society and were able to take baskets overflowing with love and supplies to the shelter!



Future Plans

Cornerstone has seen, most importantly and consistently, the development of strong children in body, spirit and mind; children who see themselves as learners, and know themselves as people each with a special contribution to society and who are able to independently and conscientiously advocate for themselves and the good of the community. We also celebrate the strong progress of our reading program and the affect it had on our children. With the Literacy Specialist position increased to .75, and the implementation of new components to the literacy program such as mentoring teachers and guides, scores increased significantly as seen in the Academic Progress section of the report. We recognized the profound impact of having our school psychologist spend a tiny fraction of time with children not receiving special education services and still struggling emotionally. We searched, found, and allocated funds from our General Education fund for this new piece of our program; funds, it turns out, that were extremely well spent.

We paid close attention to our areas of need. 1.) Though we see beyond grade-level math skills in many of our children, many others struggle with basic math proficiency. 2.) More children desperately need support in gaining and maintaining good mental health. 3.) The staff and administration has recognized the impact of working so passionately and tirelessly with children who have experienced trauma and crises outside of their school day and need support in establishing good self-care practices and boundaries around work-life balance so that long-term commitment to this work is sustainable. 4.) Parents need a deeper understanding and knowledge of the work their children are doing and want this information more often. 5.) Staff and administration need to better tap the wealth of information our parents have to offer our school community.

Our future plans stem directly from our commitment to continue what we see working and swiftly address and support areas of need.

- We have allocated funds for some administrative support so that the Head of School is available to mentor consistency in math presentations school-wide especially in terms of using and supporting strong connection between the vocabulary used in standards and on standardized tests and the Montessori materials the children use. In addition, we will give the OLPA's sooner allowing more time to address areas of need. We will continue and expand the use of the IXL math practice.
- We have allocated funds for more hours of school-based mental health available for our children and staff. Our school psychologist will be on site 3 half days this year to work with individuals and groups of children on self-care and healthy friendships and relationships. In addition, the school psychologist will lead bi-weekly sessions for staff care all year.
- We will use the GATs we piloted last year in one class, in all elementary environments to help keep the parents more informed about their children's academics measured by their progress on the Montessori materials.
- We will implement school-wide listening sessions to more deeply engage with our parents and learn from what they have to offer.

World's Best Workforce Report Summary

In accordance with Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.11, a school board, at a public meeting, shall adopt a comprehensive, long-term strategic plan to support and improve teaching and learning that is aligned with creating the world's best workforce. The school board must publish an annual report on the previous year's plan and hold an annual public meeting to review goals, outcomes and strategies. An electronic summary of the annual report must be sent to the Commissioner of Education each fall.

The report summary must include:

- A summary of progress toward improving teaching and learning and striving for the world's best workforce (specifically, progress toward closing the achievement gap); all students ready for kindergarten; all students in third grade achieving grade-level literacy; all students attaining career and college readiness before graduating from high school; and all students graduating from high school.
- Information about best practice strategies that were implemented and that are showing evidence of impacting closing the achievement gaps and working toward creating the world's best workforce in Minnesota.

Identified Needs Based on Data

Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School submitted a World's Best Workforce Report to the Minnesota Department of Education and posted the report to the school website in December 2015. At that time the 2014-15 school year assessment data was reviewed to determine Cornerstone's needs.

Assessment Test Results

CMES conducted MCA III assessments for 3rd – 6th grade children. It should be noted with such small grade level sizes, one or two test scores can dramatically impact the mean of the test results. For example, one child's score can swing a grade level four to seven percentage points.

This year CMES received its first Multiple Measures Rating (MMR) from the Department of Education and is currently designated as a Continuous Improvement School. We have been following our trend and our goals closely and knew this was likely in our early years with our student population. We are exceedingly aware of the attention we must pay to these goals and outcomes, but we are not discouraged. We are where we expected to be and we see many positive trends, especially everywhere we have put our careful efforts and energy. We will continue, with intention, to bring about progress in our children's abilities to demonstrate strong skills on these assessments and, more importantly, truly strong academic success for each child.

Last year, our less experienced fourth years, with some children brand new to Montessori, showed only 6% meeting standards in math, with 13% partially meeting math proficiency. In reading, 13% met standards, with 6% partially meeting standards. This year, Cornerstone prioritized, in particular, this group of children and we implemented more supports in terms of extra math practice times in before school programming and the support of our newly hired Literacy Specialist. In looking at the results for this year, we can see that we were very successful with our literacy interventions and not as successful in our math interventions. The group of children we targeted improved from 6% partially and 13% meeting standards to 19% partially and 44% meeting standards in reading. This year in math that group demonstrated only 25% partially meeting standards in math.

In 2014, in Math, 29% of our third year children "met" standards with 10% exceeding standards and 14% partially meeting standards. This year, (2015) as 4th years, 25% met standards with 8% exceeding and 13% partially meeting standards. Even though we added several new children into our fourth grade group who are

not experienced Montessorians and some of who were struggling significantly in other systems, percentages remained about the same. When the data is broken down further, we can see that the children who have been with us the longest are improving and the children just entering will need more support. In reading, 63% compared to 65% last year of children ranged from partially proficient to exceeding proficiency, with more children falling in the partially meets standards than last year.

There are many trends to consider and we will aggressively address the negative trends and continue to support the positives! We will not be swayed or panicked in our approach but will instead hold steadfastly to the time tested, scientifically proven Montessori approach and add needed support to address the needs of our children who struggle with these skills and assessments, not forgetting to foster their many strengths as well.

School Specific Academic Performance Goals

For a description of Academic Performance Goals see Appendix A - VOA's oversight as well as reporting/accountability requirements for Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School.

Support Category / Best Practice Strategies and Action Steps

Though we recognize our challenges and seek to address them head-on, we are also extremely excited by the future! Cornerstone has much to celebrate and much to pay close attention to.

Cornerstone will pay close attention to our Continuous Improvement School rating, but we don't want to lose sight of the strong progress of our reading program and the affect it had on our children. In FY2014, 40% of our third year children "met" standards and 20% exceeded them. In FY2015, private charitable contributions allowed us to offer a stipend for a half-time Literacy Specialist who conducted reading assessments of all children and worked one-on-one with 9 students who were the most in need of support. By the end of the 2014-2015 school year, our internal reading assessment demonstrated that 36% of the children who were below grade level made over one year's worth of growth as a result of the support they received. 75% of those children whose gains were greater than one year worked directly with the Literacy Specialist. Overall, 65% of our elementary students are at or above grade level on the Developmental Reading Assessment scale. We are confident that our approach is working. In reviewing MCA scores, however, we are mindful of the work yet to be done. We have increased the Literacy Specialist position to .75 and have implemented new components to the literacy program. 1) We hired a literacy specialist with experience in mentoring parents and teachers in best practice when reading with children. 2) More children will be seen directly by the specialist since we saw such success with this last year. 3) Cornerstone has a new "All School Sustained Silent Reading Period" during which the literacy specialist will model best practices and mentor parents (who are invited to join us for this time) and teachers in strong, effective reading instruction and support. 4) Cornerstone is making books for all children to take home each evening to read; our goal is that every child has material to read and reads for 30 minutes at home every night. 5) The literacy specialist will conduct a staff training and a separate parent training on how to read with children; she will cover 'Three Ways to Read' and 'Eight Steps to a Successful Silent Reading period. 6) The literacy specialist will lead the school in applying for Reading Corp Tutors, a program we are ready to support and embrace for the success the children consistently demonstrate in that program.

Where we see the most discrepancy between what children do in the classroom and what they demonstrate in their standardized assessments is in math. Cornerstone purchased subscriptions to on-line math practice software for the 2015-16 academic year in an effort to help the children make the leap from the concrete world of Montessori math (as it should be for all children through age 11, developmentally) to the abstract world of demonstrating their skills on the computer. This software will be used in the classroom in limited amounts and for the purpose, not of learning math, but to support the children in learning how to demonstrate what they do know on the computer vs. the Montessori materials.

Cornerstone plans to pursue School Based Mental Health Services. We are currently doing our research and putting together a task force to consider this valuable resource for our children and families. Indirectly and directly, supporting our most struggling students in this way will benefit every aspect of the program.

Cornerstone's parent volunteer population has grown considerably both in number and in the generous commitment of time they are dedicating towards big, on-going projects. Next year a group of parents will continue deepening our relationship with Buttermilk Farms by taking the steps to become a CSA drop site. The older children will eventually run the weekly drop site with the support of the parent volunteer.

Parents are also beginning the project of connecting with our community to develop a community garden! Others are interested in helping to support and develop our ideas for a nature playground. Cornerstone is going to be one busy place on Saturday mornings!

In a sincere effort to support and sustain our precious staff, we are pursuing some mindfulness training and other staff-care efforts beginning with additional staff and new staffing patterns. Both in the elementary school and in the preschool, we have hired a full time, fully-trained Montessori Float and expect the impact to be dramatic in many ways.

Current Student Achievement Plans

Plans included as appendices, Reading Well By Third Grade Literacy Plan, CMES Record of Continuous Improvement School Improvement Plan and Title I Schoolwide Program Plan, Montessori Guide Effectiveness Rubric ELEMENTARY, CMES Behavior and Work Contract, and Montessori Guide Effectiveness Rubric PRIMARY.



Conclusion

During 2015-2016, we were afforded a few moments to transcend the hands-on and demanding pace of each day and reflect upon where we started and where we are now, five years later. We have built, with intention and care, an authentic high quality public charter Montessori program for the children on the East Side of St. Paul; we have seen the results of this in the attitudes, actions and work of our children, families, and staff for some time ~ long before now. This year, however, that progress was validated on paper ~ and in measureable terms we can share with others in the Montessori and education communities ~ in two important ways. First, we enjoyed a wonderful visit, full of insight, from AMI Consultant, Carol Hicks, and received our full AMI Accreditation. Secondly, during a year when proficiency scores remained relatively static statewide in Minnesota, Cornerstone's proficiency scores, especially in reading, increased dramatically. There is a strong sense of community, a growing work ethic, and joy in the air at Cornerstone, spreading to our surrounding community as more of our children spend time seeking expertise and knowledge from all that St. Paul has to offer, and finding ways to contribute to their society as well.

While we have much to celebrate, we are old enough now to see with great clarity the difference between doing things 'pretty well' as we are now, and the program of unique and undeniable excellence we have set out to become. With feet firmly planted on our foundation, we have new and continued really hard work to do together. We must develop a strategic plan to guide us in our next important years clearly addressing sustainability in our mission, structure, systems and funding; we must pay attention to the climate in our society and understand and expertly address the effects of trauma, crisis, and violence on the well-being of our children and their ability to learn; we must provide what staff members need to sustain their deeply passionate commitment to this work; we must listen to our parents and creatively and consistently embrace all aspects of our work with our families who have so very much to offer; we must address issues of equity in education; we must open our school spaces and our hearts and have hard conversations to deepen understandings of ourselves and our community; we must listen; we must, absolutely must, establish a strong donor base and raise money to fund programs so critical to our success. *The sustainability of Cornerstone depends on our ability to attend to these details.*

Again this year, we are renewed and energized for the immensity of this work by the realization that our mission of providing high-quality, rigorous, authentic Montessori education in the public setting is a reality that parents, staff, and most importantly, the children experience in the exceptionality of the education at Cornerstone. We look forward to sharing our continued growth towards our mission with you in the 2016-2017 Annual Report.



Appendices

Appendix A – VOA Accountability and Oversight System



School Accountability and Authorizer Oversight System

I. School Accountability System & Authorizer Oversight

II. Authorizer Intervention Tool

III. Contract Renewal Rubric

Introduction

Volunteers of America of Minnesota (VOA-MN) is committed to fulfilling its role as a charter school authorizer by holding its schools accountable for a range of results. The accountability system presented in this document ensures that VOA-MN will uphold its legal obligation to make sure the schools it authorizes are reaching (or making adequate progress toward) the goals and benchmarks outlined in its charter contract and Minnesota statute.

VOA-MN uses a standard charter contract with unique school-specific terms that capture different approaches to achieving student success. The individuality of each school will be preserved in the “Academic Program Description” addendum to the charter contract.

One of the most important ways VOA-MN gathers information about the schools it authorizes is through on-site visits. Site visits allow the authorizer to observe the school in action firsthand, hear directly from all key stakeholders, and corroborate school-reported information and data. VOA-MN conducts two different types of site visits: Formal and Informal - Monitoring. The Formal site visits will follow a more structured protocol, and will produce written and oral feedback to the school staff and board. VOA-MN will also make informal monitoring visits to schools for follow-up oversight, special events, and check-ins.

Volunteers of America of Minnesota has developed an assessment system that will be used to determine the extent to which the school is meeting expectations under the VOAMN School Performance and Accountability Framework, as well as guide charter contract renewal decisions. The assessment system uses the same standards scale as the Authorizer Accountability and Oversight System:

- Meets standard
- Partially Meets / Approaching standard
- Not meeting standard
- ★ A school may also earn an additional star if the school meets standard in an area of examination and demonstrates an exemplary practice (e.g., academic growth, model policy or procedure). In the Academic Performance section, the star is also synonymous with Exceeding Standards on the tables.

The primary purpose of a charter school is to improve pupil learning and student achievement. VOA-MN holds the schools it authorizes accountable in five major areas: academic performance, fiscal management, board governance, management and operations and legal compliance. Each area has multiple indicators of success and the charter school’s performance on each indicator will be rated as indicated in the aforementioned paragraph. Four essential questions drive VOA-MN’s accountability of charter schools.

BOARD GOVERNANCE PERFORMANCE

Does the school have a compliant board engaged in proper oversight?

Effective board governance is essential to the successful start-up and operation of a public charter school. The diversity of charter school board memberships – teachers, parents, community leaders, and volunteers – heightens the importance of consistent expectations and development activities.

The authorizer regularly monitors the performance quality of the school board based on authorizer observations; interviews with the director, board and faculty; and the review of school policies, reports and board meeting minutes. A school must have a governance model that provides quality oversight by ensuring that there are checks and balances between the board and the school administrators.

A school board is responsible for developing, implementing, and assessing policy; defining sound employee relations; conducting open meetings; recognizing and conforming to the legal mandates imposed by state and federal laws; and governing within the limits of a delegation of state authority – as a nonprofit and public school board. Additionally, the board has an obligation to assess its successes and failures; inform the public of all deliberations and decisions; promote accountability; enhance public understanding of its mission; conform to standards of ethical behavior; provide a framework for setting goals; and develop strategic plans for the accomplishment of those goals.

VOA-MN’s governance expectations / performance indicators include the following: The Board of Directors complies with Minnesota law regarding board training requirements and board governance structure.

- The board regularly reviews, updates, and approves its bylaws. The bylaws are consistent with state law.
- The Board conducts a comprehensive evaluation (including all aspects of the position description) of the performance of the school leader through a defined annual evaluation process.
- The Board has a board-approved professional development plan for the school director (if applicable as required by Minnesota Statutes 2009, 124D.10, subd. 11(b)).
- The Board of Directors will maintain a quorum for all board meetings.
- A board packet, containing the agenda, related documents, and monthly financials is distributed to all members of the Board of Directors, the school leadership and the Authorizer at least three days prior to each board meeting. The Board of Directors complies with the Minnesota Data Practices Act (Minn. Stat. Chapter 13).
- The Board of Directors institutes / follows an orientation process for bringing on new members.
- The Board of Directors completes a self-evaluation each year.
- The school board periodically engages in strategic planning, and the school exemplifies the strategic direction set by the board.
- The school board meets its governance model requirements laid out in its bylaws and as required by Minnesota Statute and will maintain a balance of skills and expertise among members at all times (i.e. business, marketing, legal, accounting, fundraising, human resources, education, etc.).
- The Board of Directors maintains a “Board Documents Binder” at all times which includes meetings minutes, board documents (bylaws, articles of incorporation, etc.), and financial statements.
- The Board maintains a “School Board Policy Binder.” The board reviews, updates, and approve its policies as needed or required by state law.

SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS

Is the organization effective and well run?

Effective day to day operations of a charter school support the Learning Program. A well-run school provides an environment in which staff and students can perform at the highest possible level and more effectively reach the school's goals. Management and operations of the school will be monitored by the authorizer on an ongoing basis.

VOAMN's school management and operations expectations / performance indicators include:

- The school will maintain a high level of parent, teacher and student satisfaction rates based on interviews, surveys and retention rates.
- Mission and Vision are central to the school's identity and inform all decision making processes.
- The school's learning program exemplifies the mission and vision of the school.
- The school exhibits strong academic and organizational leadership.
- The school employs highly qualified, appropriately licensed teachers.
- School has an employee retention rate exceeding 75 percent (excluding retirements).
- All school staff and volunteers have completed criminal background checks per state law and school policy.
- The school meets / maintains its enrollment goals and experiences stable to growing enrollment (waitlists).
- The school maintains a safe facility that is conducive to learning.
- The school institutes a fair and open student admission process that complies with Minnesota law.
- The school is fulfilling its purposes as defined in the Charter School Law (Minnesota Statutes (2009), 124D.10, subd. 1) and charter contract.
- The learning program exemplifies VOA Hallmarks.
- The school institutes a fair and open employment process that complies with state and federal law.
- The school has defined job descriptions and evaluation process for all faculty members.
- Teacher evaluations are designed and conducted consistent with state statutory requirements.
- The school maintains a complete and well-organized VOA-MN "Compliance Binder" on site that includes VOA-MN defined evidence of compliance with state and federal statutes organized in the manner prescribed by VOA-MN.
- The school shall submit information to the authorizer in accordance with the VOA-MN prescribed "Annual Submission Calendar."

SCHOOL ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Is the school's learning program a success as evidenced by high academic performance annually?

All public schools, including charters, must fully participate in the state assessments - Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments. Additionally, the school shall annually complete a VOA-MN (authorizer)/School jointly approved interim assessment in reading and math. Data from state assessments will be compiled and evaluated in the Annual VOA-MN Authorized Charter Schools Academic Performance Report by the authorizer. Charter schools are also required to set specific and measurable goals in academic and nonacademic areas for which they agree to be held accountable in their charter contract. These goals provide the central focus for the charter school leadership, staff, and families.

Each of the following expectations and performance indicators pertain to the individual school specific VOA-MN performance goals. The indicators provide the ability for the school to achieve their goal over the course of the entire term as well as providing benchmarks for each individual year of the contract term. Each VOA-MN authorized school will have a different term length. The SMART goals will accommodate those terms and

variables such as past performance & demographics of the school. School specific academic SMART Goals are negotiated in every new or renewal charter contract. VOA authorized schools will be judged on whether they meet their goals for the entire contract term, for half of the term or part of the term. If only half or part of the contract term goal is reached, the length of the renewal contract term will be reduced accordingly. The authorizer also reserves the right to terminate the charter based on poor academic performance.

VOAMN's academic performance expectations / performance indicators for all schools include:

- Students are performing as well or better than students at schools in their local district on state examinations in reading, math, and science based on VOA SMART goals unique to individual schools.
- Individual school individual SMART goals are achieved during contract term.
- Students are performing as well or better than the State on state examinations in reading, math, and science based on VOA SMART goals unique to individual schools.
- Students are showing positive growth based on the growth z-score average from year to year in math and reading according to VOA SMART goals unique to individual schools.
- School has adopted a formal teacher evaluation process and adheres to the requirements set forth in state statute (Minn. Stat. 122A.40).
- All teachers (but especially new teachers) are supported through a school-wide professional development plan.
- Professional development is job-embedded and directly linked to instructional practice in order to improve student achievement.

SCHOOL SPECIFIC ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE GOALS

Goal increase: Term 5 year contract

- ***Reading Proficiency 24 percentage points***
- ***Math Proficiency 28 percentage points***
- ***Science Proficiency*** (Science proficiency goal will be amended after a proficiency percentage is publicized, approximately June 15, 2016 as long as the cell size is large enough)
- ***Reading growth z-score*** (Growth will not be shown until October of 2014, being that only 3rd graders have tested at the current time. A growth goal will be written at that time.)
- ***Math growth z-score*** (Growth will not be shown until October of 2014, being that only 3rd graders have tested at the current time. A growth goal will be written at that time.)

2013-2014 (contract renewal year)

Proficiency

READING – The percentage of all students enrolled October 1 in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori who earn an achievement level of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all reading state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will increase from 30.8% in 2013 to 36.8% in 2014. *(Increase of 6 percentage points)*

MATH - The percentage of all students enrolled October 1 in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori who earn an achievement level of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all math state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will increase from 15.4% in 2013 to 22.4% in 2014. *(Increase of 7 percentage points)*

SCIENCE – There will not be a cell testing in Science in 2013-2014

Growth

READING – Goal will be amended by June 15, 2015 after growth has been shown during the 2014 testing cycle.

MATH - Goal will be amended by June 15, 2015 after growth has been shown during the 2014 testing cycle.

2014-2015 (year 1)

Proficiency

READING – The percentage of all students enrolled October 1 in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori who earn an achievement level of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all reading state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will increase from 36.8% in 2014 to 42.8% in 2015. *(Increase of 6 percentage points)*

MATH - The percentage of all students enrolled October 1 in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori who earn an achievement level of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all math state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will increase from 22.4% in 2014 to 29.4% in 2015. *(Increase of 7 percentage points)*

SCIENCE – This will be the first year of science testing. The science proficiency goal will be amended after the testing cycle provides a percentage. If the cell size is too small, it is expected that Cornerstone Montessori will make every effort to move each student toward individual proficiency.

Growth

READING – Goal will be amended by June 15, 2015 after growth has been shown during the 2014 testing cycle.

MATH - Goal will be amended by June 15, 2015 after growth has been shown during the 2014 testing cycle.

Goal increase: Term 5 year contract revised JUNE 2015

- *Reading Proficiency 15 percentage points*
- *Math Proficiency 15 percentage points*
- *Science Proficiency 3 percentage points*
- *Reading growth z-score 0.15 point increase*
- *Math growth z-score 0.15 point increase*

2015-2016 (year 2)

Proficiency

READING – The percentage of all students enrolled October 1 in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori who earn an achievement level of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all reading state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will increase from 34.5% in 2015 to 39.5% in 2016. *(Increase of 5 percentage points)*

The percentage of all students enrolled October 1 in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori who earn an achievement level of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all reading state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will continue to close the gap between the state by making a five percentage point increase in proficiency during the 2016 school year, compared to the previous school year.

MATH - The percentage of all students enrolled October 1 in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori who earn an achievement level of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all math state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will increase from 18.2% in 2015 to 23.2% in 2016. *(Increase of 5 percentage points)*

The percentage of all students enrolled October 1 in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori who earn an achievement level of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all math state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will continue to close the gap between the state by making a five percentage point increase in proficiency during the 2016 school year, compared to the previous school year.

SCIENCE – The percentage of all students enrolled October 1 in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori who earn an achievement level of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all science state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will increase from 43.8% in 2015 to 44.8% in 2016. *(Increase of 1 percentage points)*

The percentage of all students enrolled October 1 in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori who earn an achievement level of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all science state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will continue to close the gap between the state by making a one percentage point increase in proficiency during the 2016 school year, compared to the previous school year.

Growth

READING - The average growth score on the state reading accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) for all students enrolled the full academic year and taking the same test in consecutive testing years in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori will increase from -0.4209 in 2015 to in -0.3709 2016. *(Increase of 0.05)*

MATH - The average growth score on the state math accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) for all students enrolled the full academic year and taking the same test in consecutive testing years in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori will increase from -0.7503 in 2015 to -0.7003 in 2016. *(Increase of 0.05)*

2016-2017 (year 3)

Proficiency

READING – The percentage of all students enrolled October 1 in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori who earn an achievement level of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all reading state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will increase from 39.5% in 2016 to 44.5% in 2017. *(Increase of 5 percentage points)*

The percentage of all students enrolled October 1 in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori who earn an achievement level of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all reading state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will continue to close the gap between the state by making a five percentage point increase in proficiency during the 2017 school year, compared to the previous school year.

MATH - The percentage of all students enrolled October 1 in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori who earn an achievement level of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all math state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will increase from 23.2% in 2016 to 28.2% in 2017. *(Increase of 5 percentage points)*

The percentage of all students enrolled October 1 in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori who earn an achievement level of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all math state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will continue to close the gap between the state by making a five percentage point increase in proficiency during the 2017 school year, compared to the previous school year.

SCIENCE – The percentage of all students enrolled October 1 in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori who earn an achievement level of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all science state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will increase from 44.8% in 2016 to 45.8% in 2017. *(Increase of 1 percentage points)*

The percentage of all students enrolled October 1 in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori who earn an achievement level of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all science state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will continue to close the gap between the state by making a one percentage point increase in proficiency during the 2017 school year, compared to the previous school year.

Growth

READING - The average growth score on the state reading accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) for all students enrolled the full academic year and taking the same test in consecutive testing years in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori will increase from -0.3709 in 2016 to in -0.3209 2017. *(Increase of 0.05)*

MATH - The average growth score on the state math accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) for all students enrolled the full academic year and taking the same test in consecutive testing years in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori will increase from -0.7003 in 2016 to -0.6503 in 2017. *(Increase of 0.05)*

2017-2018 (year 4)

Proficiency

READING – The percentage of all students enrolled October 1 in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori who earn an achievement level of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all reading state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will increase from 44.5% in 2017 to 49.5% in 2018. *(Increase of 5 percentage points)*

The percentage of all students enrolled October 1 in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori who earn an achievement level of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all reading state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will continue to close the gap between the state by making a five percentage point increase in proficiency during the 2018 school year, compared to the previous school year.

MATH - The percentage of all students enrolled October 1 in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori who earn an achievement level of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all math state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will increase from 28.2% in 2017 to 33.2% in 2018. *(Increase of 5 percentage points)*

The percentage of all students enrolled October 1 in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori who earn an achievement level of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all math state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will continue to close the gap between the state by making a five percentage point increase in proficiency during the 2018 school year, compared to the previous school year.

SCIENCE – The percentage of all students enrolled October 1 in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori who earn an achievement level of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all science state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will increase from 45.8% in 2017 to 46.8% in 2018. *(Increase of 1 percentage points)*

The percentage of all students enrolled October 1 in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori who earn an achievement level of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all science state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will continue to close the gap between the state by making a one percentage point increase in proficiency during the 2018 school year, compared to the previous school year.

Growth

READING - The average growth score on the state reading accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) for all students enrolled the full academic year and taking the same test in consecutive testing years in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori will increase from -0.3209 in 2017 to in -0.2709 2018. (Increase of 0.05)

MATH - The average growth score on the state math accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) for all students enrolled the full academic year and taking the same test in consecutive testing years in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori will increase from -0.6503 in 2017 to -0.6003 in 2018. (Increase of 0.05)

2018-2019 (year 5 contract renewal year)

Proficiency

READING – The percentage of all students enrolled October 1 in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori who earn an achievement level of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all reading state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will increase from 49.5% in 2018 to 54.5% in 2019. *(Increase of 5 percentage points)*

The percentage of all students enrolled October 1 in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori who earn an achievement level of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all reading state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will continue to close the gap between the state by making a five percentage point increase in proficiency during the 2019 school year, compared to the previous school year.

MATH - The percentage of all students enrolled October 1 in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori who earn an achievement level of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all math state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will increase from 33.2% in 2018 to 38.2% in 2019. *(Increase of 5 percentage points)*

The percentage of all students enrolled October 1 in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori who earn an achievement level of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all math state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will continue to close the gap between the state by making a five percentage point increase in proficiency during the 2019 school year, compared to the previous school year.

SCIENCE – The percentage of all students enrolled October 1 in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori who earn an achievement level of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all science state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will increase from 46.8% in 2018 to 47.8% in 2019. *(Increase of 1 percentage points)*

The percentage of all students enrolled October 1 in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori who earn an achievement level of Meets the Standards or Exceeds the Standards on all science state accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) will continue to close the gap between the state by making a one percentage point increase in proficiency during the 2019 school year, compared to the previous school year.

Growth

READING - The average growth score on the state reading accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) for all students enrolled the full academic year and taking the same test in consecutive testing years in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori will increase from -0.2709 in 2018 to in -0.2209 2019. (Increase of 0.05)

MATH - The average growth score on the state math accountability tests (MCA, MOD, MTAS) for all students enrolled the full academic year and taking the same test in consecutive testing years in grades 3-6 at Cornerstone Montessori will increase from -0.6003 in 2018 to -0.5503 in 2019. (Increase of 0.05)

SCHOOL FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

Does the school exhibit strong fiscal health?

Charter schools receive public funds and must meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management. It is VOA-MN's duty to ensure that the schools are responsible stewards of public funds. The charter school shall provide VOA with a copy of its draft and final annual budgets and monthly cash flow projections for each fiscal year by July 1 of each fiscal year. VOA-MN shall use submitted budget and cash flow statements, along with any other relevant information, to determine if the charter school has a realistic balanced budget plan each year. VOA shall use the financial statements presented in the charter school's annual financial audit, along with any other relevant information, to determine if the charter school maintained a balanced budget during the prior-year. In general, schools are expected to have "clean" annual financial audits.

The VOA-MN Charter School Authorizing Program publishes annually a School Financial Oversight Report on their network of authorized charter schools. The parties acknowledge that the Minnesota Charter Schools Law requires a charter school to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management. This requirement has two underlying purposes: to ensure the successful operation of the school into the future and to ensure the proper use of public funds.

VOA-MN's school financial expectations / performance indicators for all schools include:

- The school maintains a balanced budget.
- The school is compliant with state and federal financial reporting compliance.
- The school's financial audit will be submitted to the state by December 31. The school will have a clean financial audit (i.e. no major findings).
- The school is current on all financial obligations, including, but not limited to: pension payments, payroll taxes, insurance coverage, loan payments and terms.
- The school provides VOA-MN and school board members with monthly financials at least three days prior to board meetings. Packets include at least the following: 1) detailed income/expense report, 2) cash flow sheet, and 3) check register.
- The school develops and maintains a targeted fund balance determined by the school board for a projected period of years.
- The school board has a finance committee that meets monthly to review financials.
- All board members exhibit working knowledge of financial oversight.

LEGAL AND CONTRACTUAL COMPLIANCE - Charter schools are required to follow many state and federal laws pertaining to all public schools and are expected to uphold all provisions of the charter school contract. As such, VOA-MN expects rigorous compliance with legal and contractual obligations. Each VOA-MN authorized charter school shall maintain a "Compliance Binder" on site that includes VOA-MN defined evidence of compliance with state and federal statutes organized in the manner prescribed by VOA-MN. Additionally, VOA-MN authorized charter schools shall submit information to the authorizer in accordance with the VOA-MN prescribed "Annual Submission Calendar." Management and operations of the school will be monitored by the authorizer on an ongoing basis and reported on annual in the Formal Site Visit Report and additionally as needed. One of the most important ways VOA-MN gathers information about the schools it authorizes is through on-site visits. Site visits allow the authorizer to observe the school in action firsthand, hear directly from all key stakeholders, and corroborate school-reported information and data. VOA-MN conducts three different types of site visits: Formal and Informal/Monitoring.

SITE VISITS

- **Formal Site Visit-** Formal Site Visits are typically conducted once per year by a member of the VOA-MN Authorizing Program Leadership Team who interviews key stakeholders, and conducts classroom observations. Written feedback is provided to the Board of Directors and School leadership guided by the Site Visit Rubric. VOA-MN staff will provide formal written feedback summarizing our observations. The feedback will identify areas of strength and areas that require improvement. If a more serious issue arises from a site visit VOA-MN may implement an intervention from “Range of Interventions” table. This written feedback will be provided to both the board and school administration.
- **Informal or Monitoring Site Visit-** VOA-MN may conduct informal or monitoring site visits at any time to fulfill its duties as an authorizer. Reasons for monitoring visits may include: investigation of a complaint, determination of readiness to open, follow up on implementation of improvement plans, or documentation of best practices. These visits are typically less formal and may be impromptu or without notice. The frequency, duration, and intensity of these visits depend greatly on the school’s standing with VOA-MN.

BOARD MEETINGS

VOA-MN will observe a minimum of one school board meeting per year. The authorizer will use the Board Meeting Observation Rubric for internal use only (authorizer only documentation).

SCHOOL PUBLISHED ANNUAL REPORTS

The charter school law (MN Stat. 124D.10, subd. 14) includes requirements for a charter school annual report. Additionally, VOA requires that annual reports include specific elements defined by VOA-MN annually (generally in June). VOA-MN required elements include how the school is performing based on the three essential questions: Is the student learning program a success? Does the school exhibit strong financial health? Is the organization effective and well-run? VOA-MN requires that schools submit a draft to the authorizer for review and comment (by an annually defined date) and that the final draft be board approved and posted to the school’s official website by October 1st annually.

AUTHORIZER PUBLISHED SCHOOL PERFORMANCE REPORTS

In addition to the Formal Site Visit Report that each school is provided, VOA-MN will also annually publish three VOA-MN Charter School Network Reports: Academic Performance, Board Governance, and Financial Management. The cumulative purpose of these four reports is to assess the ongoing performance of VOA-MN authorized schools regarding academic success, fiscal viability, and organizational effectiveness. The combination of school performance based on the three VOA-MN Annual School Performance Reports, annual Formal Site Visit Reports, informal and monitoring site visit observations, authorizer observations of board meetings, and ongoing monitoring of school reporting and compliance provides an accountable oversight mechanism for the authorizer, schools, and other organizations. This collective body of evidence will also form the basis for contract renewal decisions. VOA-MN has aligned these materials to each other as closely as possible to reduce redundancy, allow for more efficient completion by both the schools and VOA-MN, and to better align to the NACSA authorizing standards.

AUTHORIZER LIAISON: Volunteers of America of Minnesota designates the following employee as the official authorizer liaison to the School:

Stephanie Olsen, Senior Manager
VOA-MN Charter School Authorizing Program
612-270-1998
solsen@voamn.org

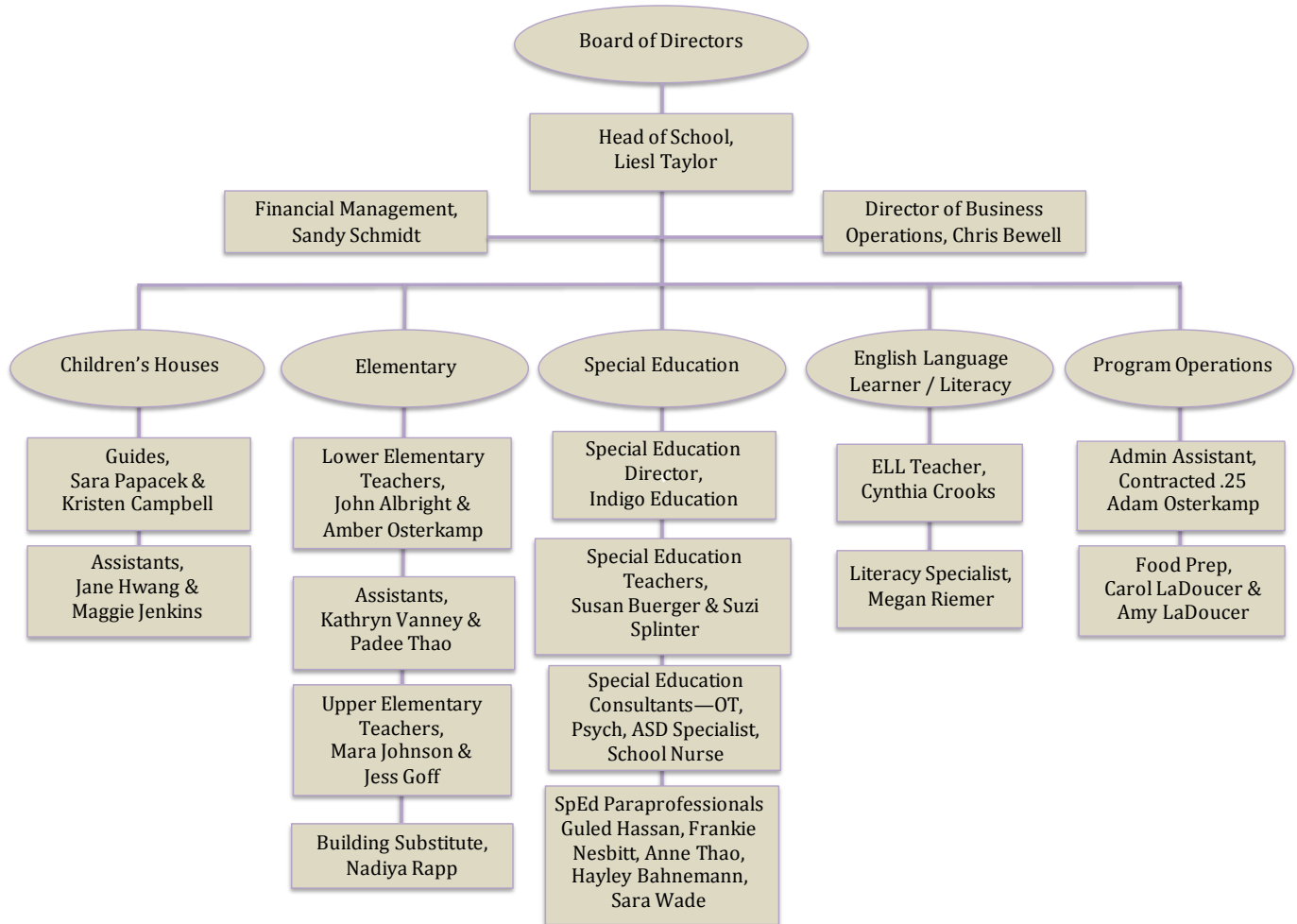
Appendix B – Non Profit Status

Organization Name	CORNERSTONE MONTESSORI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Organization Type	TRUST
Contact Person	LIESL TAYLOR
Address	1611 AMES AVE
City	SAINT PAUL
State	MN
Zip Code	55106-2903
IRS Code 501(c)	03
Purpose or Description	To support children from culturally and economically diverse backgrounds living in or near St. Paul's East Side through a rigorous and high-impact Montessori program that empowers them to make positive decisions.
Phone Number	(651) 774-5000
Status	ACTIVE
Extension	Granted

Taken from: <http://www.ag.state.mn.us/Charity/SearchResults.asp?FederalID=271556815>

Appendix C – CMES 2015-16 Organizational Chart

Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School Org Chart—Positions as of 2015-2016 School Year



Appendix D – 2015-16 Application Form

Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School Application Form for the 2015-2016 School Year Enrolling grades K-6 for the 2015-2016 School Year

Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School will accept applications for enrollment for the following academic year, from **November 1 to December 1, 2014**. To be eligible for kindergarten your child must be 5 years old by September 1, 2015. If you wish to enroll your child at Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School, please fill out the information and return it to:

Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School
1611 Ames Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55106

For more information, please contact the school at 651.774.5000

Student Information (Please print clearly)

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____
Street Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____
2015-2016 Grade (please circle one): K 1 2 3 4 5 6

Parent/Guardian Information (Please print clearly)

Mother/Guardian: _____
Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____
Cell Phone: _____ Email Address: _____

Father/Guardian: _____
Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____
Cell Phone: _____ Email Address: _____

I hereby verify that the above information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature of parent/guardian: _____
Date: _____

No child will be denied admission to Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School on the basis of gender, religion, ethnicity, immigrant (legal or non) status, or intellectual or physical ability. Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School is a charter public school and is tuition-free. Students from all backgrounds are encouraged to apply.

If more people apply than the number of spaces available for a given grade, program, or facility, Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School will conduct a public lottery to determine admittance to the school. The only preference we give in admitting students is for children who are siblings of current Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School students or children of Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School staff. In order to get this preference, parents **MUST** submit an application before the end of the open enrollment period. The lottery will be held on Monday, December 8, 2014, at 5:00 p.m.

(CMES Office Use Only)

Date Received: _____ Notice of Enrollment Sent on Date: _____

Appendix E – 2015-16 Student Enrollment Form

Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School

1611 Ames Avenue, St. Paul, Minnesota 55106

Phone: 651.774.5000 Fax: 651-209-0846

Student Enrollment Form 2015-16

Student Name (first middle & last) _____

Age _____ Date of Birth _____ Gender _____

Last School Attended _____

City _____ State _____ Grade (Sept. 1, 2015) _____

Home Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Country of Birth _____ Home Primary Language _____

Parent/Guardian/Mother Name (first & last) _____

Home Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phones: Home _____ Cell _____ Work _____

e-mail _____

Parent/Guardian/Father Name (first & last) _____

Home Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phones: Home _____ Cell _____ Work _____

e-mail _____

Siblings

Name _____ Age _____ School Attending _____

Name _____ Age _____ School Attending _____

Name _____ Age _____ School Attending _____

Name _____ Age _____ School Attending _____

The U.S. Department of Education requires the following two-part question regarding race and ethnicity. Please complete both Part A and Part B.

Part A. **Is this student Hispanic/Latino?** *(Choose only one)*

- ☐ **No, not Hispanic/Latino**
- ☐ **Yes, Hispanic/ Latino**
(A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race.)

The above part of the question is about ethnicity, not race. **No matter what you selected above, please continue to answer the following by marking one or more boxes to indicate what you consider your student's race to be.**

Part B. **What is the student's race?** *(Choose one or more)*

- ☐ **American Indian or Alaska Native**
(A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment.)
- ☐ **Asian**
(A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia. Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand and Vietnam.)
- ☐ **Black or African American**
(A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.)
- ☐ **Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander**
(A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa or other Pacific Islands.)
- ☐ **White**
(A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East or North Africa)

Did your child receive special services or participate in special programs at a previous school? ____Yes ____No

Does your student have an IEP? ____Yes ____No

Does your student receive any other community services? ____Yes ____No

Provider _____ Phone _____

Are there any custody related issues? ____Yes ____No

Other Comments:

Signature of parent/guardian: _____ Date: _____

Appendix F – CMES By-Laws

BY-LAWS OF CORNERSTONE MONTESSORI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

ARTICLE 1 – NAME AND OFFICE

- 1.1 **NAME.** As registered with the State of Minnesota through its Articles of Incorporation, the name of the School shall be Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School.
- 1.2 **OFFICE.** The registered office shall be as stated in the Articles of Incorporation. The Corporation may have such other offices within the State of Minnesota as the board of directors may determine or as the affairs of the corporation may require. The registered office may be, but need not be, identical with the principal office in the State of Minnesota.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE AND AFFILIATION

- 2.1 **PURPOSE.** The purposes for which the School is organized are stated in its Articles of Incorporation.
- 2.2 **AFFILIATION.** The School is founded on the principles and pedagogy of the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI), the organization founded by Maria Montessori in 1929. As such, the school will strive to hire AMI-trained teachers whenever possible.

ARTICLE III – MINNESOTA LAW COMPLIANCE

- 3.1 **COMPLIANCE.** The governance of the Corporation will at all times be in accord with the provisions of MN Stat. §317A (Nonprofit Corporations), MN Stat. §124D.10 (Charter Schools) and §124D.11 (Revenue for a Charter School), MN Stat. §13D.01 et seq (Minnesota Open Meeting Law), and such other provisions of Minnesota laws therein referenced.

ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP

- 4.1 **MEMBERSHIP.** The school shall have no members.

ARTICLE V – BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- 5.1 GENERAL POWERS.** The affairs of the Corporation shall be managed by its Board of Directors. Except as limited by the Articles of Incorporation, these Bylaws, MN Stat. §124D.10, and by law, the Board of Directors shall have the power and authority to do all acts and perform all functions that the Corporation may do or perform.
- 5.2 DIRECTOR RESPONSIBILITIES.** Board members are expected to be good stewards of the Corporation, attend all board meetings, actively participate in Board activities, attend Department of Education-approved training as may be required from time to time, and comply with all state and federal laws that pertain to Minnesota Charter schools.
- 5.3 NUMBER AND COMPOSITION.** At all times, the Board of Directors shall consist of at least five (5) but no more than fifteen (15) nonrelated members and include: (i) at least one licensed teacher employed at the school or a licensed teacher providing instruction under a contract between the School and a cooperative; (ii) the parent or legal guardian of a student enrolled in the charter school; and (iii) an interested community member who is not employed by the charter school and does not have a child enrolled in the school. The Board will also consist of at least one (1) AMI-trained individual, to serve in any capacity. The chief financial officer and the chief administrator are ex-officio nonvoting board members. At the date of these by-laws, the Board of Directors is a “non-teacher majority,” and board membership shall be in accord with the provisions of MN Stat. 124D.10 Subd. 4(g).
- 5.4 TERMS**
- 5.4.1 FOUNDING BOARD MEMBERS.** The Founding Board members shall consist of those individuals named in the Articles of Incorporation, and shall serve a two-year term. New terms will begin on July 1 and end June 30, coinciding with the corporation’s fiscal year. Any vacancies created during that time and any newly created directorships shall be filled by a majority vote of the Board of Directors. Founding Board members will serve until a timely election for members of the ongoing charter school board of directors is held, before the school completes its third year of operation.
- 5.4.2 ONGOING BOARD MEMBERS.** The ongoing board of directors will be elected before the School completes its third year of operation. At the Annual Meeting in the third year of the School’s operation, one third of the directors will be elected to a one (1) year term; one third of the directors will be elected to a two (2) year term; and one third of the directors will be elected to a three (3) year term. Thereafter, directors shall hold office for a three (3) year term or until a successor has been duly elected and qualified, or until the director dies, resigns, is removed or the term otherwise expires as provided by law or by the Bylaws of

this Corporation. Board members are eligible for re-election for up to three (3) consecutive terms.

- 5.5 **NOMINATION PROCESS.** Beginning 60 days in advance of the Corporation's annual meeting, the Board of Directors will solicit nominations for all of the Directorate positions that will be filled at the next annual meeting. The Board of Directors will compile the list of nominees and notify the eligible voters of the nominees for each position 30 days before the date of the annual meeting.
- 5.6 **ELECTIONS.** The election of the board of Directors shall be in compliance with Section 124D.10 subd. 4(c) of the Minnesota Statutes.
- 5.7 **QUORUM AND ADJOURNED MEETING.** A duly called meeting at which at least a majority of the members of the Board of Directors are present shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Board of Directors. If, however, such quorum shall not be present at any such meeting, the director or directors present thereat shall have the power to adjourn the meeting. If a quorum is present when a duly called meeting is convened, and later enough directors withdraw from the meeting so that less than a quorum remains, no further business can be transacted and the Board Chair may adjourn the meeting.
- 5.8 **PRESENCE AT MEETINGS.** Members of the Board of Directors or of any committee, as applicable, may participate in a meeting of the Board of Directors or any committee by means of conference telephone or similar communications equipment by which all persons participating in the meeting can simultaneously hear each other. Such participation at a meeting, however, shall not constitute presence at the meeting for purpose of achieving quorum, and such members may not vote on any board business.
- 5.9 **VOTING.** Each member of the Board of Directors shall have the power to exercise one (1) vote on all matters to be decided by resolution of the Board. The affirmative vote of a majority of a quorum of Board members shall constitute a duly authorized action of the Board.
- 5.10 **RESIGNATION AND REMOVAL.** Directors may resign at any time, effective immediately or at a specified later date, by giving written notice to the Board Chair or the Secretary of the Corporation. Unless otherwise specified therein, the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective. A director may be removed at any time, with cause, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of a majority of all remaining directors of the Corporation. Board members missing more than two (2) regularly scheduled board meetings per year may be removed with cause.
- 5.11 **VACANCIES.** Unless otherwise provided by Minnesota Statutes, Section 317A.227, vacancies of the Board of Directors caused by death, disqualification, resignation, disability, removal or such other cause shall be filled by appointment

of a new director by the affirmative vote of a majority of the remaining directors, even if less than a quorum. A director filling a vacancy shall hold office until the end of the term for the seat which that Director holds or the next annual election of directors, whichever first occurs.

- 5.12 COMPENSATION.** Directors, as such, shall not receive stated salaries for their services. Directors may be reimbursed for reasonable out-of-pocket expenses, as the Board of Directors from time to time determines to be directly in furtherance of the purposes and in the best interests of the School.
- 5.13 DIRECTOR CONFLICTS OF INTEREST.** Directors must comply with MN Stat. 124D.10 regarding conflict of interest. In addition, all directors are expected to fully disclose all conflicts or potential conflicts of interest and refrain from voting on any such matter.

ARTICLE VI – MEETINGS

- 6.1 REGULAR MEETINGS.** Regular meetings of the Board shall be held once each month during the academic year at a time and place to be set by the Board, with notice of the time and date published in accordance with Minnesota Open Meeting Law, MN Stat. 13D.01 et. seq. Summer meetings may be held at the discretion of the Board of Directors. Notification of such meetings shall be in accordance with Minnesota Open Meeting Law.
- 6.2 SPECIAL MEETINGS.** A special meeting of the Board of Directors may be called at any time by a majority vote of the Board. Notification of such meeting shall be in accordance with Minnesota Open Meeting Law. Such notice shall contain the date, time, place, and purpose of the meeting.
- 6.3 ANNUAL MEETING.** The Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors shall be held in May for the purpose of presenting reports by the Board President, Treasurer, and Head of School on the activities and financial condition of the school. The Board-approved Annual Report, as required under Section 124D.10 subd. 14, will be distributed at this time. Elections for open seats on the Board of Directors will also take place in accordance with Section 124D.10 subd. 4(d) of the Minnesota Statutes.
- 6.4 MEETING NOTICE.** Regular meetings of the Board shall be held once each month during the academic year at a time and place to be set by the Board, with notice of the time and date provided to the directors and all constituents in accordance with Minnesota Open Meeting Law.

ARTICLE VII – COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD

- 7.1 **COMMITTEE FORMATION.** The Board of Directors may, by resolution passed by a majority of the Board of Directors, designate, define the authority of, set the number and determine the identity of, members of one or more committees. The Board may, by similar vote, designate alternate or replacement members of any committee. Committee members need not be members of the Board of Directors. The Board Chair shall be an ex-officio member of all committees, unless the Board Chair serves as a member of such committee.
- 7.2 **AUTHORITY OF COMMITTEES.** Each committee shall be under the direction and control of the Board and shall keep regular minutes of its proceedings. All committee recommendations are subject to Board approval at a regular meeting of the Board.
- 7.3 **PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING MEETINGS.** Committee activities shall be conducted such that they will advance the best interest of the School. The meetings of all committees shall be open to attendance by all directors, but such directors may not vote unless they are members of that committee.

ARTICLE VIII – OFFICERS

- 8.1 **OFFICERS.** The officers of the School shall be elected by the Board for one (1) year terms, and shall consist of a Board Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary who must be concomitantly serving on the Board of Directors. The Board may appoint such additional officers with such duties as it deems advisable. Any officer may be removed at any time prior to the expiration of his or her term by affirmative vote of a majority of the Board. Duties of the officers shall be as follows:
- 8.2 **BOARD CHAIR.** The Board Chair shall act as the chairman of the Board of Directors and exercise the functions of the office of the president of the Corporation. The Board Chair, when present, shall preside at all meetings of the board; see that orders and resolutions of the board are carried into effect; sign and deliver in the name of the School deeds, mortgages, bonds, contracts, or other instruments pertaining to the business of the School, except in cases in which the authority to sign and deliver is required by law to be exercised by another person or is expressly delegated by the School's organizational documents or by the board to another officer or agent of the School; maintain records of and, when necessary, certify proceedings of the Board; and perform other duties prescribed by the board or by Minnesota Statutes, Section 317A.305, subd. 2.
- 8.3 **VICE CHAIR.** The Vice Chair shall act in the capacity of the Chair whenever the Chair is absent or unable to attend to the School's business. The Vice Chair shall perform other such duties prescribed by the board from time to time or by Minnesota Statutes, Section 317A.305, subd. 2.

- 8.4 SECRETARY.** The Secretary shall keep the minutes of all Board Meetings; in the absence of the Secretary, another Board member will act as secretary. In addition, the Secretary will see that all notices are duly given regarding Board meetings, be custodian of all documents and records belonging to the Corporation, and perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors or the Board Chair from time to time.
- 8.5 TREASURER.** The Treasurer shall keep accurate financial records for the School. The Treasurer shall endorse and deposit money, drafts, and checks in the name of the School; disburse the funds of the School as ordered by the Board, making proper vouchers therefore; and perform any other such duties as may from time to time be prescribed by the Board of Directors or by the Board Chair. The Treasurer may, with board approval, delegate the day-to-day financial operations of the School to another person. Monthly, or upon board request, the Treasurer shall provide the Board with an account of transactions and of the financial condition of the School. The Treasurer shall also serve as the Chair of the Finance Committee.

ARTICLE IX – DISTRIBUTION OF ASSETS

- 9.1 RIGHT TO CEASE OPERATIONS AND DISTRIBUTE ASSETS.** By a two-thirds (2/3) vote of all directors, the Board of Directors may resolve that the Corporation cease operations and voluntarily dissolve. Such resolution shall set forth the proposed dissolution and direct designated officers of the Corporation to perform all acts necessary to affect dissolution. If such cessation and distribution is called for, the Board of Directors shall set a date for commencement of the distribution.
- 9.2 CESSATION AND DISTRIBUTION.** When cessation of operations and distribution of assets has been called for, the Board of Directors and the designated officers shall cause the Corporation to discontinue its regular business activities and operations as soon as practicable, and shall liquidate and distribute all the Corporation's assets to other entities in accordance with Minnesota Statutes, Section 317A.735 and in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation. Notice of intent to dissolve shall be filed with the Secretary of State, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 317A.723.

ARTICLE X – INDEMNIFICATION

- 10.1 INDEMNIFICATION.** Each director, officer, and employee of the School, past or present, and each person who serves or may have served at the request of the School as an appointed representative, shall be indemnified by the School, for actions taken and decisions made by such persons on behalf of this School, in accordance with, and to the fullest extent permitted by MN Stat. 317A.521.

- 10.2 LIMITATION ON INDEMNIFICATION.** The School shall not be obligated to indemnify any other person or entity, except to the extent such obligation shall be specifically approved by resolution of the Board of Directors.
- 10.3 INSURANCE.** In accordance with MN 124D.10 subd. 25(c), the School shall obtain shall obtain at least the amount of and types of insurance up to the applicable tort liability limits under MN Stat. 466. A copy of the insurance policy must be submitted to the School's authorizer and the commissioner before starting operations. Changes in the School's insurance carrier or policy must be submitted to the authorizer and commissioner within 20 business days of the change.

ARTICLE XI – FINANCIAL MATTERS

- 11.1 FISCAL YEAR.** The fiscal year of the Corporation shall be from July 1 of one calendar year to June 30 of the following calendar year.
- 11.2 ACCOUNTING SYSTEM.** The Board of Directors shall cause to be established and maintained, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles applied on a consistent basis, an appropriate accounting and financial reporting system for the School.
- 11.3 ANNUAL AUDIT.** The Board of Directors shall engage an independent auditor to annually audit the records and books of the School. The Secretary and Treasurer shall submit all records and books of the School for examination by the auditor as requested. Pursuant to MN Stat. 124D.10 Subd. 6a, the School will submit an audit report to the commissioner and its authorizer by December 31 each year.
- 11.4 DOCUMENTS KEPT AT REGISTERED OFFICE.** The Board of Directors shall cause to be kept at the registered office of this Corporation all records required by the Minnesota Open Meeting Law and originals or copies of:
- 11.4.1** Records of all proceedings of the Board of Directors and all committees;
 - 11.4.2** Records of all votes and actions of the members;
 - 11.4.3** All financial statements of this Corporation; and
 - 11.4.4** Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of this Corporation and all amendments and restatements thereof.

ARTICLE XII – AMENDMENTS

Subject to the provisions of MN Stat. 317A.181, Subd. 2(b), these bylaws may be amended in whole or in part by an affirmative vote of a majority of the directors then seated.

CERTIFICATE

The undersigned Secretary of Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School, a Minnesota nonprofit corporation, does hereby certify that these bylaws were adopted and approved by a majority vote of the Board of Directors this 13th day of February, 2016.


Secretary

Appendix G - 2015-16 Financial Statements and Revised Budget

**Cornerstone Montessori Elementary
Revenue and Expenses
July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2016**

Annual Organization Revenue and Expense	Description	2015-2016 Revised Budget	2015-2016 Actual FYE
Annual Revenues			
Governmental Source Revenue	Federal Funds	102,354	106,127
Earned Income Revenue & Donations	Local Funds	46,915	54,053
State Aid Payments	State Funds	1,615,855	1,605,833
Total Organization Annual Revenues		\$ 1,765,123	\$ 1,766,013
Annual Expenditures			
Administration		\$ 54,672	\$ 53,723
District Support Services		180,822	172,731
Instructional Program Services		941,549	910,476
Instructional Support Services		31,804	33,765
Pupil Support Services		264,497	267,288
Buildings and Equipment		256,971	250,018
Fiscal and Other Fixed Cost Programs		11,543	7,523
Total Organization Annual Expenditures		\$ 1,741,858	\$ 1,695,524
Revenue Less Expenses Increases (Decreases) Fund Balance		\$ 23,265	\$ 70,489
Beginning Fund Balance, All Funds, July 1, 2015		\$ 282,363	\$ 282,363
Ending Fund Balance, All Funds, June 30, 2016		\$ 305,628	\$ 352,852
Percent Fund Balance to Expenditures		17.5%	20.8%

* This report is intended to display the revenue and expenditures during the fiscal year. Please note these are pre-audit numbers. Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School has an annual audit of its financial statements. An audited version of the 2015-2016 financials will be made available by December 2016.

**Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School
Saint Paul, Minnesota
Balance Sheet
As of June 30, 2016**

	Beginning Balance Audited June 30, 2015	Ending Balance Pre-Audit June 30, 2016
<u>Assets</u>		
Current Assets		
Cash and Investments	\$ 158,422	\$ 281,791
Accounts Receivable	1,260	1,291
State Aids Receivable	191,726	148,167
Federal Aids Receivable	3,725	8,487
Prepaid Expenses and Deposits	22,033	28,335
Total Current Assets	\$ 377,165	\$ 468,071
Total All Assets	\$ 377,165	\$ 468,071
<u>Liabilities and Fund Balance</u>		
Current Liabilities		
Salaries and Wages Payable	\$ 52,670	\$ 67,337
Accounts Payable	15,821	30,458
Line of Credit Payable	-	-
Payroll Deductions and Contributions	11,311	14,817
Deferred Revenues	15,000	2,607
Total Current Liabilities	\$ 94,802	\$ 115,220
Fund Balance		
Beginning Fund Balance	\$ 206,010	\$ 282,363
Fiscal Year Net Income (Loss)	76,353	70,489
Total Fund Balance	\$ 282,363	\$ 352,852
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance	\$ 377,165	\$ 468,071