NORTH STAR
MONTESSORI ACADEMY

Admin/Board Workshop
August 17th 2026
Room 141 Whitman Hall, Northern Michigan University

1. Call to Order
    a. Call to order at 9:06 a.m.
2. Roll Call
    a. Melissa Bowers, Derek Pugh, Jessica Pfitzer, Marguerite Guter
3. Others Present
    a. Mary VanderMolen, Angela Chang
4. Public Comment
    a. No public comment was received.

Agenda

Discussion Items

2026-27 Theme - INTENTION

2025-26 Reflection

The Board and administration reviewed successes, challenges, and lessons from the previous school year in the areas of students, staff, Board, PTO, events, finances, and school operations.

- Successful integration of the middle school into the main building.
- Addition of GSRP.
- Recognition of staff accomplishments and Teacher of the Year Amy Andrews.
- Improved student discipline and academic performance.
- Continued intervention supports for students.
- Improved communication through ClassDojo.
- PTO accomplishments and the need to evaluate its future structure and sustainability.
- School events, field trips, and opportunities for family involvement.
- Financial progress, transportation challenges, and continued attention to the school's fund balance and long-term financial sustainability.

Updates

- Modular Updates
    - An update was provided regarding the modular project, including fundraising, sponsorship opportunities, committee involvement, and future Board discussion/action.

- Marketing Committee
    - The Board reviewed recent marketing and community-outreach efforts, including participation in the Blueberry Festival.
    - The committee will continue its work during the school year. Digital advertising, family referrals, community visibility, and regular social-media communication were discussed as important components of student recruitment and community engagement.
- Finance Committee
    - The Finance Committee will meet on a regular basis, with focus on a balanced budget, enrollment, revenue and expenditures, fundraising, and long-term financial sustainability.

New Business

- Set goals for the 2026-2027 school year
    - Stakeholder engagement
        - Increase Board visibility and opportunities for Board members to interact with students and families.
        - Increase parent involvement based on staff and school needs.
        - Continue classroom celebrations, family-engagement opportunities, and an annual Town Hall.
        - Expand student voice and leadership opportunities.
        - Strengthen partnerships with local organizations and community resources.
    - School culture and climate
        - Continue to foster a welcoming school environment for students, staff, and families while being intentional with scheduling, available resources, and staff time.
    - Achievement data
        - Continue the current approach to collecting and reviewing student achievement data and using it to guide student support and school improvement.
    - Student number goals
        - Previously established enrollment goals will continue to be monitored.
    - Financial
        - Develop and maintain an action plan focused on achieving a balanced budget and supporting the school's long-term financial health.
- Long-term planning (2+ years)
    - Student success
    - Financial sustainability
    - School culture and climate
- Set a monthly cadence to review
    - Sections of the NMU agreement
    - Teachers First contract

Other Topics

- Board Communication

- The Board discussed establishing dedicated email resources for Board business, including a public-facing Board email address and the possibility of individual school email accounts for Board members.
- Additional review will occur regarding compliance and FOIA considerations.

Announcements

- Next regularly scheduled meeting is Wednesday, August 26th, 2026.
- Public Comment
- Workshop concluded - 12:22 p.m.

NOTICE: The location of the meeting provides barrier-free access to all persons. Persons needing assistance should call North Star Academy (906) 226-0156 approximately 1 hour before the meeting is scheduled. Official minutes of the school board meetings are stored in the school's business office and available for public inspection eight days after a meeting as proposed minutes and five days after the meeting at which they are approved.

Melissa Bowers

8.26.26