

# THE MULBERRY SCHOOL BYLAWS

UPDATED 4/22/2017

## Article I. Title

The name and legal title of the not-for-profit corporation is the Bloomington-Normal Mulberry School Corporation.

## Article II. Purpose

The purpose of the corporation is set forth in its Articles of Incorporation and further described as:

Being dedicated to providing McLean and surrounding counties with a play based, cooperative, early education foundation for students Pre-school through second grade in which students, teachers, and parents work together to ensure that children grow and learn at their own pace while encouraging exploration, creativity, and self-confidence.

## Article III. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the corporation shall begin on the first day of July, and end on the last day of June of the next year.

## Article IV. Membership

Membership of the corporation shall include all families under current contract and in good financial standing with the Mulberry School. Membership of the corporation will also include all salaried employees. All Members of the corporation are entitled to vote on matters presented to the membership, unless those matters pertain to a member's employment with the Mulberry School.

## Article V. Meetings

- A. Board meetings are to be scheduled monthly and open to all members in good standing. Member Meetings are to be scheduled at least six (6) times during the school year and are open to all members in good standing. Beginning 10.2016, Member and Board Meetings are to be merged. There will be longer be regularly scheduled Board Meetings, although the Board will continue to meet in executive session following Member/Board Meetings and for specially called meetings.
- B. A quorum is constituted when one-fourth ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) of all Mulberry voting members are present at member meetings. A quorum is the minimum number of voting members that must be present at the meeting for business to be validly transacted. A simple majority prevails for items to pass, so long as quorum is

met. Only one vote is allowed per family regardless of how many family members are present.

C. Elections will be held annually for each Board of Director's position. In the case of a vacancy during the year, an election will be held as soon as possible to fill the vacated position.

D. Policy may be initiated by the general membership and/or members of the Board.

## **Article VI. Financial Management**

The funds of the corporation shall be deposited in the bank(s) or the savings and loan association(s) designated by the Board of Directors. The funds of the corporation may be withdrawn from the financial institutions designated by the Board by checks or withdrawal orders signed by the Bookkeeper, Director of Finance, or Academic Director of the corporation.

All check or withdrawal orders of non-budgeted nature require signatures of both the Bookkeeper or Director of Finance and the Academic Director. A Finance Committee will meet regularly and provide monthly written reports to the Board of Directors. The Finance Committee will be chaired by the Director of Finance, and include all the Board members or staff with financial access and/or responsibilities (for example, the Director of Finance, the President, the Academic Director, and the Bookkeeper). The Committee is charged with providing clear, up-to-date, and publically available financial policies, determining responsibilities and providing yearly evaluations of the bookkeeper, arranging for and managing yearly audits when required, and providing monthly financial updates and projections to the Board. Any member of the Finance Committee may be removed from the committee by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

## **Article VII. Board of Directors**

The business of the corporation shall be managed by a Board of Directors who are members, or former members of the not-for-profit corporation and elected in accordance with these bylaws and the Academic Director. The Board of Directors will include the corporation positions of President, Director of Facilities, Director of Finances, Director of Communications, Cooperative Liaison, Director of Technology, Director of Marketing, Director of Advancement, and the Academic Director. Each director will have responsibility for a segment of school operations.

All Directors will be elected at an annual meeting by the general membership of the corporation. All Directors may only serve two, one year terms in the same position on the Board of Directors. The term of office will begin after the transition meeting takes place. The Academic Director will have voting rights on all issues except those directly related to his/her employment.

A. *Resignation:* A Director who wishes to resign shall do so, in writing, giving the effective date of resignation. If three (3) consecutive meetings are missed by a

Board member, the Board has the option of removing said board member, thus creating a vacancy.

B. *Impeachment*: Impeachment of a member of the Board of Directors requires the unanimous consent of all other Board members.

C. The Directors shall not be personally liable for the debts, liabilities, or other obligations of the Mulberry School.

1. The Board of Directors hereby affirms the need for all of the following:
  - a. effective and respectful communication between all members of the school including the Academic Director, the Board of Directors, teaching and support staff, student workers, and families.
  - b. effective and respectful leadership and mentoring of staff
  - c. clear and consistent goals and expectations for staff and the Academic Director
  - d. clear, consistent, and transparent direction from the Board regarding long-term changes to the school
  - e. respect for teacher's autonomy in the classroom and input into decision making processes and school policy
  - f. clear, consistent, and up-to-date school policies including behavior management plans, bullying policy, and field trip policies
2. The Board of Directors hereby affirms that all interactions among the Board, Academic Director, and staff should reflect our shared values of integrity, respect, openness, preparedness, and communication.
3. The Board of Directors hereby affirms that Academic Director and individual teaching staff will work together to identify individual goals for each teacher's pedagogy and classroom environment at the beginning of each school year. These goals will be submitted to the Board of Directors for approval no later than the October meeting of the Board of Directors. The Academic Director and teaching staff will work together to achieve these goals in a way that is consistent with the core values of the school.
4. The Board of Directors hereby affirms that Academic Director and teaching staff will meet twice a semester to review goals and report on progress. Reports on progress will be submitted to the Board of Directors once each semester.
5. The Board of Directors hereby affirms that reports on progress will be developed by the Academic Director in consultation with the teaching staff and the Board of Directors.
6. The Board of Directors hereby affirms that individual meetings between the Academic Director and teaching staff to discuss reports on progress and evaluations should be structured to provide clear and constructive feedback using research based best-practices methods for mentoring and effective leadership.
7. The Board of Directors hereby affirms that, as stated in current guidelines, the Academic Director is "responsible for establishing and distributing the the Mulberry School calendar of events, prior to the beginning of the academic year." The Academic calendar will include the dates of board, staff, and parent meetings.
8. The Board of Directors hereby affirms that the Board of Directors must provide clear deadlines for completion of tasks required of the Academic Director, the staff, and the Board itself. In addition to guidelines, the Board must hold itself, the Director, and staff accountable for meeting deadlines.

9. The Board of Directors hereby affirms that, as stated in the by-laws, the Board of Directors is responsible for setting school policies and is responsible for keeping these policies current and up-to-date. In the 2015-2016 school year the Board will work with the Academic Director and teachers to update or create school policies regarding bullying, behavior management, field trips, playground supervision, and expectations for the conduct of parent volunteers and teaching assistants in the school.
10. The Board of Directors hereby affirms that the Cooperative Liaison shall serve as an available, neutral party when listening to Mulberry staff and will serve to relay information and improve communication between the board, director, and staff.
11. The Board of Directors hereby affirms that while, in accordance with school policy, it is the Academic Director's responsibility to keep the Board and teachers "informed of current needs, developments, and trends in..." education fields, and, in accordance with the by-laws, it is the Board of Directors' responsibility to determine the "direction of the program and policy of the corporation", we also respect each teacher's unique contributions to the school and value their autonomy in the classroom. The Academic Director and Board of Directors will seek to implement curricular changes while also respecting teacher autonomy.
12. The Board of Directors hereby affirms that the the Board of Directors and Academic Director should, at the beginning of each school year, communicate a clear statement of the current mission of school, a status for the development of the school, and current expectations for staff.
13. The Board of Directors hereby affirms that the following Bathroom Policy shall be in effect.

All salaried teachers may vote to select a Teacher Representative to attend Board meetings and other official functions on behalf of the teachers. The Teacher Representative is entitled to present motions to the Board, to participate in policy discussions, and to vote on Board actions; however, the Teacher Representative is not a member of the Board of Directors, and is not entitled to participate in Executive Sessions.

The Teacher Representative will be elected by the vote of salaried teachers at the conclusion of each school year. The elections will be conducted and votes tallied by either the President of the Board of Directors or the Cooperative Liaison. The Teacher Representative's term will begin at the same time the new Board of Directors begin their service. The current Teacher Representative may be re-elected in subsequent terms, but may serve no more than three years consecutively. The Teacher Representative may be removed from their position at any time by a majority vote of salaried teachers. In such cases, a new Teacher Representative will be elected immediately. The Teacher Representative may also resign at any time by providing written notice to the Board of Directors and staff. Service as the Teacher Representative is voluntary, is not compensated, shall not be considered a part of a teacher's normal duties, and shall have no bearing on a teacher's evaluations.

## **Article VIII. Duties of the Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors shall have the general direction of the program and policy of the corporation; shall have charge of its property, its administration, including appointment of such committees deemed necessary. (Duties of each Director are detailed in the policy pages, and updated annually).

## **Article IX. The Staff**

The staff shall consist of all employees of the corporation and shall be chosen according to policies established by the membership of the corporation. Terms of the appointment shall be for no more than one (1) year and be renewable. Staff members may from time to time ask membership to help him/her carry out responsibilities and/or duties.

## **Article X. The Bylaws**

- A. *Adoption.* These bylaws shall become effective when adopted by a two-thirds vote of all voting members present at any lawful meeting and shall constitute the rules adopted by the corporation of the regulation and management of its affairs.
- B. *Amendment to the Bylaws*
  - 1. A proposed amendment to these bylaws shall be considered by the membership at any lawful meeting that such proposed amendment is distributed to the members at least five (5) days before a vote is taken.
  - 2. A proposed amendment shall be accepted when approved by two-thirds of the members present at a lawful meeting.
- C. *Dissolution.* The corporation will be dissolved in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation.