

MONTSSORI LEARNING CENTER, INC. FORT WALTON BEACH FLORIDA

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	The Invitation	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1.
2.	Background	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1.
3.	Student Profile	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1.
4.	Staff	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2.
5.	Curriculum	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2.
6.	Governing Board	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2.
7.	Strategic Planning	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	3.
8.	Financials	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	4.
9.	Facilities	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	5.
	A. Current Facility									
	B. Alternative Facilities									
	a. Leasing School Facilities									
	b. Building New Structure									
	c. New School Building Requirements									
	d. Construction, Cost & Schedule									
10.	Governance	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	7.
	A. Responsibilities									
	B. Size and Composition of Board									
	C. Selection of Board Members									
	D. Orientation of New Board Members									
	E. Conduct of Board Meetings									
	F. Annual Review of Board Members									
	G. Satisfaction of Serving									
	H. Removal of Board Members									
	I. Job Descriptions									
	J. Prioritization of Organization’s Work									
11.	Observations/Recommendations	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	13.
12.	References	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	14.
13.	Attachments	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	14.

1. THE INVITATION

In October 2017 the Institute for Senior Professionals received a request (See Attachment 1) from the Montessori Learning Center, Inc. Fort Walton Beach (MLC) for assistance in the following areas: 1. Assessing the right type of location needed to meet current needs and those expected from anticipated growth; 2. Properly positioning staff and gaining diversity on the Board based upon changing needs of the school; and 3. Setting a financial plan including finding the appropriate tuition base and future tuition increases. Specific goals and objectives proposed by the MLC Board of Directors include: expanding enrollment from age three through first to fifth grades incrementally, gaining Montessori accreditation, offering after-care for working parents and offering more enrichment activities for the students. Upon project approval at the October 17, 2017 ISP meeting, an ISP team consisting of Mack Gay, Jock Patterson Mike Dwyre, Don Bohler, Bob Garcia, Fred Pryor, Jim Marasia, and Charla Cotton was formed. After acceptance of the project the team committed to a March 2018 completion for the final report to the MLC Board of Directors.

2. BACKGROUND

Founded in 1978, MLC is a private Montessori-based school currently serving children in PK-3 through first grade. The school is located at St. Simons on the Sound Episcopal Church and has a contract to remain there through the 2018-19 school year. Presently it is the only Montessori in Fort Walton Beach although there are several Montessori schools in neighboring Walton County. Montessori is an international education philosophy based on self-directed activity with a focus on hands-on learning. Children make creative choices in their learning, while the classroom and the teacher offer age-appropriate activities to guide the process.

3. STUDENT PROFILE

MLC has served students from ages three through Kindergarten until 2017 when First Grade was added.

The current enrollment for the 2017-2018 school-year is as follows:

Pre-K3:	14 Students
Pre-K4:	16 Students
Kindergarten:	6 Students
First Grade:	11 Students

The Montessori method fosters creativity, curiosity and critical thinking in students. MLC seeks to foster the same qualities by providing students with a variety of meaningful experiences and intentionally developed hands-on activities that empower students to learn and explore the world around them. Each child is encouraged to explore his or her individual interests and strengths and learn how to build on those unique gifts for success, not only during their time at MLC, but as a

foundation for lifelong learning and achievement. The school has chosen not to seek Montessori Accreditation at this time as the benefits of accreditation seem few comparing the cost in time and personnel to work through the process. That option continues to be open as the pressing issues of location, tuition, and aftercare are resolved.

Scholarships were offered to eight (8) of the forty-seven (47) students for the current year. The availability of funds for future scholarships is unknown presently.

4. STAFF

The current staff of eight is distributed as follows: one director, five full-time teachers, one part-time teacher and one part-time office administrator. Currently three teachers have qualified for Montessori Certification. The school has a goal for all teachers to become Montessori Certified by the 2018-2019 school year. Following the completion of Montessori Certification, teachers are awarded a bonus to cover the cost incurred by the teacher.

5. CURRICULUM

The school uses traditional Montessori resources as a foundation for instruction. However, due to limited funds and the restricted space some of the Montessori strategies cannot be followed, e.g. multiple ages of children within a classroom, a limiting factor to following the Montessori philosophy upon which the school is based. The result is a “hybrid” classroom which is of necessity a result of the limited facility for the school. The school expects the curriculum and teaching methods to be adjusted toward the Montessori philosophy upon relocation to a new facility designed to accommodate the foundations of Montessori. The school expects to add enriching experiences and after care to the curriculum upon expanding to more suitable facilities.

6. GOVERNING BOARD

There are currently eleven (11) members of the board of directors including five (5) elected officers, five (5) members-at-large and the previous year’s president. Members are elected for a single one year term and all members are parents of current students. This is a limiting factor for continuity of membership beyond their child’s enrollment in MLC. The Board has recently added members to the board, to increase from seven(7) to the current eleven (11) as an effort to expand the diversity and impact in the community in view of the new goals for the facility and expansion of grade levels. By-laws have been revised to accommodate the additions to the board.

7. STRATEGIC PLANNING

The Board engaged the services of the President and CEO of the Destin Chamber of Commerce, Shane Moody, a very experienced facilitator of strategic planning sessions. Members of the MLC Board, staff, parents and ISP team members have participated in two very enlightening and productive planning sessions, with one remaining at this writing.

From these sessions MLC has defined their Mission Statement, Vision and Core Values. A draft of these elements of an evolving Strategic Plan follows:

Mission: To provide a Montessori based education for the development of the whole child and create a lifelong foundation for learning.

Vision: Academically established, independent thinkers becoming positive stewards of the world

Core Values:

- Nurturing
- Academics
- Collaboration
- Whole-child development
- Community Environment

Strategic Goals are being prioritized and an Implementation Plan is being worked. Some elements of this development time lines are reflected in the **Potential Development Schedule** (Attachment 6).

8. FINANCIALS

At the first meeting between the ISP team and the MLC Board of Directors the ISP team was given a fact sheet describing the school including its finances. The financial information included the estimated income and expenses for the 2017-18 school-year. The school representatives stated that the financial records were in disarray. To bring the school's financial records up to date the software program, Quick Books, has been acquired and a part time administrative assistant has been hired. A board member volunteered to install Quick Books, to enter the financial records for this school year into the program and to train the administrative assistant in the use of Quick Books. At subsequent team meetings we have received a year-to-date Profit and Loss statement and an Expense Budget for this school year. While there is considerable work to be done it appears the school is well on its way to stabilizing their financial plans and records.

Despite the problems with financial records, the school is financially secure. An adequate bank account balance is maintained and projected income more than covers expenses. Projected income for this school year is \$279,350, of which \$249,350 is from operations and \$30,000 from fund raising. Projected expense is \$239,991 leaving a surplus of \$39,359. Even without fund-raising activities the surplus will be \$9,359.

The school's expansion plans will require some financial planning. Either purchasing property from the Emerald Coast Science Center or leasing property from the City of Fort

Walton Beach adjacent to the Science Center and erecting a 4,000 or 5,000 square foot modular building will require raising at least \$500,000. The cost of the building will be \$300,000 to \$375,000 depending on the size, plus the slab, utilities, landscaping, outfitting and debt service. Unless financial and construction experts are available among the school's parents or friends, outside consultants will be needed to help develop such an expansion plan.

The ISP team developed a proposed **Pro Forma Three Year Budget** (Attachment 2) and a **Student and Tuition Plan** (Attachment 3). The ISP team recommends the budget format and used the best numbers that were available to us for the study. The board will need to check all numbers for accuracy.

The first year is the current year. Known numbers were used as a starting point. Income was projected by multiplying the number of students by the different fees shown in the Three Year Student and Tuition Plan. The expenses were taken from the current year's budget that the team received from the school. Student growth in the Student Plan was estimated based on the breakdown of students in the various grades in the current year. Tuition was not changed because based on the projections a net profit is achieved in all three years which indicates the current tuition plan is sound. An across the board increase of 3% was applied to the second year projection of expenses. Second and third year income was calculated using the same method as the first year.

The third year expense projections are more daunting. This is the year the school is expecting to move into their new facility. Regular expenses were calculated assuming a 3% increase from the previous year. Under Facility Fees rent was zeroed and Debt Service was added. It is assumed that \$500,000 will be needed to fund the new facility. Debt service is estimated to be \$45,000. As the board moves forward with their plans, this number must be recalculated based on the amount of any loan that is secured for the new facility.

9. FACILITIES

9A. Current Facility

MLC has been located at St. Simons on the Sound since the summer of 2011. MLC currently is leasing 2,554 sq. ft. of dedicated space for \$1,325/month shown in Red. The lease includes the use of the fenced playground area. The school also shares use of an additional 550 sq. ft. for an indoor playground at no-cost is shown in Blue (The Rubber Room).

This space is not adequate for the school's plan to expand the lower elementary grades and provide a new **After School Care** program. Attachment 4 is the floor plan of St Simons showing in Red the current Montessori space with shared space in Blue. The new space being considered is in Green. Storage is and will continue to be a major problem.

St. Simons is evaluating a request for a new lease that would include:

- A 12 month, year by year lease period

- An additional dual-use space of 500 sq. ft. which will require an \$8,000 - \$10,000 capital investment by MLC.
- The new lease will be higher due to the need to use rates which are more in line with market rates and for the additional 500 sq. ft.
- The dual-use room is being shared with the church. MLC will have use during the week but must remove their furniture and all school materials each weekend for the Church's use of the room. This requirement will pose a logistics problem and exacerbate the storage situation.

9B. Alternative School Facilities

a. Leasing Existing Property

The Board has researched the availability of properties that might be leased in the area surrounding their current location. Several potential properties were identified, but nothing was found that provided the required class room sizes, bathrooms, room exits, indoor play room and fenced playground. All would require extensive modifications (expensive).

b. Building New Structure

At this point building a Montessori School for themselves has become an exciting option for the Board. Discussions with The Emerald Coast Science Center (ECSC) about locating Montessori School at their place were very positive. The ECSC had purchased the old FWB City's Memorial Park facility. The ECSC was excited about the possibility of having MLC students use the science center and incorporating their resources into the MLC curriculum. ECSC see real value in MLC as a partner. Aside from the obvious overlapping academic missions, the ECSC offers parking and land, not to mention the city park that is right there. The plan would be for ECSC to sell approximately 0.2 acres to MLC to build a 3,500 sq. ft. school building. The two possible site locations (1 & 2) can be seen in Attachment 5, Boundary Survey for the old FWB city park on Memorial Parkway.

Discussions with the city about building requirements on the ECSC property led to the city tentatively offering to lease a portion (approximately ½ acre of the remaining old ball park to build a Montessori school. This lot location is #3 in Attachment 5. A school is one of the few purposes that the land can be utilized. From all reports the city likes the partnership potential of the ECSC and MLC and thinks it would be a real benefit to the city.

c. New School Building Requirements

Over-all General Requirements

- Total of 4,000 - 5,000 sq. ft.
- Staff office for 3-4 people
- Separate Teacher/Student Restrooms
- Multi-purpose Indoor Play Room
- Large Outdoor Play/Physical Ed Space

Preschool

- Two 1,000 sq. ft. rooms or 4 rooms NLT 525 sq. ft.
- 35 sq. ft./student = about 57 preschool students
- One exit per classroom
- Four Bathrooms

Lower/Upper Elementary

- Two 500 sq. ft. rooms
- Two Exits per classroom

d. Construction, Costs, and Schedule

Neil Hoy, Board Treasurer, is the point person on the New School Project. Neil has researched and contacted several builders of prefabricated buildings regarding the purchase and location of a modular school facility on the property (site 1, 2 or 3). At a cost of approximately \$75 a sq. ft. a 4,000 sq. ft. building would cost \$300,000 plus site prep. Site preparation, infrastructure and foundation could run as high as \$50,000-\$75,000. Ramps, deck areas, stairs, fences and playground equipment must be provided. Mortgage money for building on leased property must almost certainly come from a private lender. This will be difficult but not impossible. Another issue is higher insurance premiums for pre-fab buildings. Refer to the construction schedule in the three year development plan which is part of the spread sheet which is Attachment 6.

10. GOVERNANCE

This section of the report covers areas related to the governance of the school by the board of directors and the school administrator. Observations of areas that are done well are included in the text. Recommendations for improvement made by the ISP team are at the end of this report in Section 11.

Governance for a nonprofit organization is very similar to governance for a commercial entity. This requires establishment of policies and continuous monitoring of their proper implementation by the members of the governing body of an organization. It includes the mechanisms required to balance the powers of the members with the associated accountability, and their primary duty of enhancing the success and viability of the nonprofit organization.

There are certain management practices that the school's board should consider to improve their effectiveness and efficiency. The team was provided copies of job descriptions written by each employee and the MLC's by-laws. To obtain other perspectives, the ISP team talked with the head of school and/or the administrator of The Tree House Episcopal Montessori School and the South Walton Montessori Academy. Also, the ISP team researched boards on best practices from various internet sites.

10A. Responsibilities of the Board of Directors

The board of directors is the governing body of a nonprofit organization. Individuals who sit on the board are responsible for overseeing the organizations activities. Board memberships are not set up to be permanent positions; most organizations have terms typically between 2 and 5 years. The board of directors should focus on the organization's mission strategy and goals. Staff members are responsible for implementation of the mission. Typically a board will elect three members to serve as President, Secretary and Treasures who have roles and terms defined in the by-laws. Major responsibilities of a board of directors are summarized below.

1. formulates policies and strategies
2. approves major decisions
3. raises funds and make a personal contribution
4. oversees management and employees actions
5. evaluates performance and risk
6. protects assets of the organization
7. provides guidance and advice
8. identifies and selects board members
9. elects officers
10. establishes the executive committee and other committees
11. review the execution of the strategic plan annually or more frequently, if the organization is in transition

In addition to the board's collective responsibilities, all board members should be encouraged to commit themselves to a specific task(s), such as student recruitment and retention, board recruitment, administrative oversight, finances, fund raising, etc. The board member(s) who accept responsibility for a specific task(s) should report to the full board on a regular basis.

10B. Size and Composition of the Board

The MLC's by-laws define that there will be 11 board members. Ten will be elected to one year terms and the past-president completes the board staffing. The board will have four elected officers: president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer. Each board member shall have a child in the school for at least 1 year prior to joining the board. MLC's board compares to one Montessori school in Walton County that has 15 board members and another that currently has 3 members but has been as high as 7 members. The by-laws define 4 standing committees.

- Finance Committee – chaired by Treasurer
- Building-Ground-Equipment Maintenance Committee – chaired by Board Member at Large
- Public Relation Committee – chaired by the Secretary
- Fund Raising Committee – chaired by the Vice-President

The Montessori school in Walton County that is associated with a church has 15 board members and has diverse representation that is clearly defined in the by-laws: the church pastor, Head of school, one faculty member, two vestry appointees, two parents and 2 to 10 from the community. This board has similar standing committees. However, having an expanded number of board members, this school has the ability to have professional representation in accounting, banking, law, religion and construction. For example, having a CPA on the board to assure all financial reporting is done correctly and as required by the IRS for a 501c (3) nonprofit. Community board members are recruited mostly by word of mouth, or by searching for individuals with a specific skill set that the board needs.

The current MLC by-laws that were provided to the ISP Team are adequate at this time to run the school. The by-laws clearly define the current board arrangement and functions for their current operation.

10C. Selection of Board Members

The selection of board members is crucial to the ongoing success of any organization. New members should be chosen for their skills, experiences, integrity, motivation, team orientation, and willingness to serve. In addition, a consideration of personal styles that will complement and support each team member will help to build a stronger team.

One reference stated that the following questions should be asked of a potential board member as part of the application process:

- a. How can I contribute?
- b. How much time can I give/is expected?
- c. What committee/role is best suited for my skills/interests?
- d. What orientation will I receive?

Prospective board members should be sought for the expertise and desire to contribute to the organization's mission. MLC limits board membership to parents with children in the school. This limits the quantity and needed skills for the board members. While having parents on the board is important, a broader base of dedicated members could bring needed skills to the board.

It is recommended that the board select a nominating committee, made up of two or three current board members, to develop an application process, to interview prospective board members and to make a recommendation to the board. Written documentation of the entire process should be an output also of this committee.

10D. Orientation of New Board Members

A written outline of what is expected should be available for board candidates. A BroadSource publication, **Thinking about Joining a Nonprofit Board**, provides key questions a candidate

should ask when considering joining a nonprofit organization. The school should provide these questions to board candidates.

New board members should receive an orientation by the Executive Director or a designated board member. New members should receive a copy of:

- a. The organization's by-laws
- b. Recent financial statements
- c. The organization's mission statement
- d. Board policies and practices
- e. Meeting schedules

10E. Conduct of Board Meetings

The Chairman rather than the Executive Director is responsible for conducting board meetings. The Executive Director's role is to report to the board on agenda items and, when necessary, obtain the approval of the board.

Among the recommended key practices that make for effective board meetings are:

- a. Ensure minutes and actions are taken
- b. Effective meeting practices
- c. Good facilitation
- d. Good time management
- e. Base decisions on collaboration and for the good of the organization
- f. Allow adequate time to discuss issues
- g. Foster an environment of trust, respect and participation
- h. Set and enforce policies on attendance and term limits
- i. Develop succession plans
- j. Develop an recruitment, application and election process for board members

10F. Annual Review of Board Members

An annual meeting of all board members is recommended. The purpose is to evaluate the board performance against its predetermined goals. In addition, it is a time for each board member to address key questions:

- a. What will my commitment be to the school for the coming year?
- b. What do I want the school to accomplish in the coming year?
- c. How can I personally elevate the performance of the school in the coming year?

10G. Satisfaction of Serving

Among the factors that promote board member satisfaction are: proper documentation of policies and practices; enforcing attendance policies; fostering an environment that builds trust and respect; ensuring financial oversight; and organizational success.

Board members need to have a passionate belief in the organization and a willingness to share their passion with others. Also, a willingness to commit an extended time period on the board is critical. Studies have found that many board members who resign from non-profit boards do so because they feel that they are not making a personal contribution, or that their service is not appreciated or needed. It is important that the MLC board make an effort to have an inclusive approach to all board members, and to treat everyone's suggestions and efforts with respect.

10H. Removal of Board Members

According to the BoardSource publication, **Board Leadership**, "Bylaws should spell out the process for board officer removal. Removal is necessary when a major disagreement cannot be solved by other methods. Reasons for removal could include not fulfilling board requirements or inappropriate behavior." An attendance requirement should be established, such as 60% on an annual basis.

The Executive Committee should review the facts of the situation, and recommend action to the entire board. The entire board should vote by secret ballot.

10I. Job Descriptions

The board of directors for nonprofit organizations should develop written job descriptions and decision making authority for each position, both paid and volunteer positions. For paid positions, compensation ranges for each position should be documented and updated annually. The job description should include the minimum required knowledge, skills and personal characteristics a candidate should possess in order to be considered for the position. In particular, for an Executive Director's position, in addition to the knowledge, skills and personal characteristics, the job description should include the Board's expectations regarding:

- a. Performance criteria
- b. Setting priorities
- c. Public and community relation responsibilities
- d. Financial authority and responsibilities
- e. Leadership
- f. Code of conduct

The Board should provide the Executive Director with a measurable set of goals to be achieved.

While MLC doesn't have an executive director position, the Administrator and Education Director position should be considered as such. Therefore, the above content should be included in the director's job description. The ISP team has seen the job descriptions for MLC

employees. The ISP team understands that the current job descriptions were written by the employees. It is not clear if a review of the job description has been made by the board or a standing committee as yet.

10J. Prioritization of Organizations Work

Most nonprofit organizations have a number of opportunities to improve the organization but have limited financial and people resources to take advantage of all the opportunities. The Board of Directors has the responsibility to chart the course of the organization into the future. This requires usually prioritizing the use of all resources. Also, documenting the timing of various actions that are required to move the organization forward is very important. Finally, the various stake holders need to understand the existing constraints, be given an opportunity to input to the board their ideas and preferences and the board must then make the difficult decisions for moving forward.

MLC enumerated the following key opportunities and challenges to the ISP team.

- Expand Lower Elementary and add Upper Elementary grade
- Have the school become Montessori certified
- Have all teachers Montessori certified
- Find a new facility for use after the 2019 - 2020 school year
- Determine how to finance new facility; build, buy or rent

During the interviews with the heads of school for the two Walton County Montessori school, it was learned that neither school was Montessori certified. Both schools did not believe it was worth the expense or the time (about 2 years) for the certification process to be completed. Since none of the Montessori schools in the Panhandle compete for students, being certified didn't create a differentiation between the schools that parents might examine. Both schools were in the process of having all teachers become Montessori certified for the grade that they teach or for school administration. It is believed that this assures parents that a true Montessori education is being received by their students. Out of the five opportunities MLC stated above, the ISP team believes that school certification might be lowest priority based on their interviews.

The Tree House Episcopal Montessori School will be eliminating some grades for older children. The Tree House Episcopal board of directors followed a process which might serve as a model for MLC.

First, the board looked at the current enrollment (Pre-Primary, Primary and Lower Elementary) and determined that there were not enough families invested in keeping their children in school beyond kindergarten. The board found out that the original families who pushed for the lower elementary class and invested in materials were no longer with them. The head of school shared with the ISP team that for every one inquiry that she received for lower elementary class, she

received 25-30 for the lower grades. This confirmed that their community needed more options for toddlers and preschool aged children's education.

Second, the board provided clear communications to the parents. Parents were informed that the lower elementary class after 3 years was not self-sustaining and could be temporary for the last year based on attendance. The lead teacher was told each spring that the class might not be offered the next year based on enrollment. The board informed families by sending out a joint church/school memo. Parents were present at the board's meetings on this subject and a formal vote of the board to discontinue the lower elementary class was done in October 2017. With this class ending at the end of the 2017-18 school-year, parents were provided over 8 months' notice.

Perhaps, expanding beyond the 6 year old class should be investigated thoroughly by MLC. Expansion of age groups affects the size of a new physical facility and the teaching staff. Communication with existing parents should be undertaken to see if the current 11 children in the 6 year old age group will stay at MLC another year. Based on the findings this could be a quick and easy indicator of expansion. The team suggests that a horizontal expansion (more children in the various age groups) should be investigated along with the proposed vertical expansion (more age groups). Both expansions affect the size and number of classrooms in any new physical facility. It may be expected that the addition of after-care may attract families who would otherwise enroll elsewhere due to the need for after school care.

11. OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Below are observations/recommendations for improvement documented by the ISP team during the study.

1. Determine the financial needs for the school, consistent with the MLC strategic plan and prepare a three-year budget including projected income, expense and capital expenditures. A tuition plan and debt service for any loan must be clearly defined in the plan.
2. Continue to develop financial statements using the Quick Books software. A Balance Sheet detailing assets, liabilities and capital should be included.
3. Identify and engage possible financial advisors
4. The current employee job descriptions are inadequate. What the team has seen may be a good starting point but a structure format and input from the board will be necessary to improve them.
5. The documented MLC standing committees need to be fully functioning and staffed.
6. The MLC Fund Raising Committee should increase donor recruitment; need to tap into corporate sponsors and small business donors as well as more local residents who give charitable contributions. Monetary or donations in kind should be solicited. Regular communication with all donors should be established and monitored for successes.

7. Longer terms for board members and staggered terms would allow the institutional memory of the board to continue.
8. Attendance by board members at each meeting should be an enforced requirement.
9. Increase the size of the board by including members from the community. The MLC by-laws define patron members and allow them to serve on the standing committees. Initially, the board should use this to get added skills involved in their current projects
10. The MLC board should develop specific quarterly goals.
11. Develop a timeline for accomplishing all the challenges of school grade expansion and selecting a new location as identified by the board. (See Attachment 6)
12. Prioritize the school improvements; i.e. a new facility, new teacher recruitment, school accreditation, and uniform teacher Montessori accreditation through the strategic plan.
13. Set a goal for all teachers to be certified. A thorough review of the Montessori Society of American Standards and criteria for accreditation on their website (www.amshq.org). One item found was that July 1, 2020 is a key date put forth for teachers to have Montessori accreditation. Even without seeking school certification striving to have all MCL teachers meet Montessori standards is desirable. (See Attachment 7)
14. As primary grades are added the Board revisit the value of adopting a system of standard performance metrics, whether Montessori or AdvancED accreditation standards, both commonly used by public and private schools to communicate expected student outcomes.
15. Formally seek input from parents on the expansion of the school. Examine a horizontal expansion (more students per existing class) as well as a vertical expansion (more age groups). Also, included in the examination should be after school care.

11. REPORT REFERENCES

- **American Montessori Society:** www.amshq.org
- **Association Montessori International/USA:** www.amiusa.org
- **Montessori Accreditation for Teachers Education:** www.macte.org
- **Board Source:** www.boardsource.org
- **North American Montessori Center:** www.montessoritraining.net
- **South Walton Montessori Academy:** www.southwaltonmontessori.com
- **The Tree House Episcopal Montessori School:** www.thetreehousectk.org
- **Montessori Learning Center of Fort Walton Beach:** www.montesorifwb.com
- **AdvancED:** www.Advanc-ED.org (AdvancED is the largest community of education professionals in the world. It is a non-profit, non-partisan accrediting agency)

12. ATTACHMENTS

1. **Montessori Learning Center Request Letter**
2. **Pro forma Budget**
3. **Three year Student and Tuition Plan**
4. **Current MLC Space**
5. **Boundary Survey For Old FWB City Park**
6. **Four year time-line for school 's expansion**
7. **Teacher Accreditation Standards from Montessori Society of America**

ATTACHMENT 1.
MONTESSORI REQUEST LETTER



October 17, 2017

Dear Members of the ISP:

The Montessori Learning Center is the only Montessori in Fort Walton Beach with 47 students. Montessori is an international education philosophy based on self-directed activity with a focus on hands-on learning. Children make creative choices in their learning, while the classroom and the teacher offer age-appropriate activities to guide the process. Founded in 1978 as a 501c(3) not-for-profit organization, the Montessori Learning Center of Fort Walton Beach has served students from ages 3 through Kindergarten until this past year. For the 2017-2018 school year, we have moved our school forward, adding First grade and we plan to expand all the way to Fifth.

Our expansion has been a huge success and it has helped us financially. We have seen a demand for our educational program at an elementary level in the community. We have many future goals for our school. In addition to expanding through Fifth grade, we would like to become an accredited Montessori School, add aftercare solutions for our working parents, and offer more enrichment activities to our students.

With future goals of course come challenges. We need your help in assessing those challenges and making appropriate and timely decisions moving forward. Our biggest challenge is our current location. We are located at St. Simons on the Sound and it has been an ideal location with affordable rent, but as we move to expand and seek Montessori certification it is meeting less and less of our current needs. We need your help in assessing the right type of location we need to move onto that will not only fulfill our immediate needs but allow our school to continue to grow. We would also like your organization to help us determine how to properly position our staff and find a way to gain diversity on our Board based on the changing needs of our school. In addition, we would appreciate help in setting a financial plan; including finding the appropriate tuition base and future tuition increases.

Our school is honored at the opportunity to be considered by your organization. We have been working hard on gathering our specific organizational and operational documents to support ISP assistance in our strategic planning process.

Thank you, 
McKenzie Smith
President
Montessori Learning Center of Fort Walton Beach

ATTACHMENT 2.
Proposed Three Year Budget
Pro Forma (3/19/2018)

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
<u>Income:</u>				
<u>Tuition:</u>				
Preschool	\$ 171,000	\$ 205,800	\$ 224,700	\$ 267,500
Lower Elementary	\$ 55,000	\$ 77,250	\$ 134,550	\$ 174,000
	<u>\$ 226,000</u>	<u>\$ 283,050</u>	<u>\$ 359,250</u>	<u>\$ 441,500</u>
<u>Curriculum Fees:</u>				
Preschool	\$ 10,800	\$ 12,600	\$ -	\$ -
Lower Elementary	\$ 5,500	\$ 7,500	\$ -	\$ -
	<u>\$ 16,300</u>	<u>\$ 20,100</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>
Registration Fee	<u>\$ 7,050</u>	<u>\$ 8,550</u>	<u>\$ 9,750</u>	<u>\$ 12,000</u>
Income from Tuition and fees	<u>\$ 249,350</u>	<u>\$ 311,700</u>	<u>\$ 369,000</u>	<u>\$ 453,500</u>
Fund Raising #	<u>\$ 30,000</u>	<u>\$ 30,000</u>	<u>\$ 30,000</u>	<u>\$ 30,000</u>
Total Income	<u>\$ 279,350</u>	<u>\$ 341,700</u>	<u>\$ 399,000</u>	<u>\$ 483,500</u>
<u>Expense:</u>				
Staff Salaries	<u>\$ 200,000</u>	<u>\$ 200,413</u>	<u>\$ 206,425</u>	<u>\$ 275,000</u>
<u>Facility Fees:</u>				
Rent	\$ 15,900	\$ 18,000	\$ 18,540	\$ -
Cox	\$ 1,634	\$ 1,634	\$ 1,683	\$ 1,734
Culligan	\$ 660	\$ 660	\$ 680	\$ 700
	<u>\$ 18,194</u>	<u>\$ 20,294</u>	<u>\$ 20,903</u>	<u>\$ 2,434</u>
<u>Admin/Licensing:</u>				
DCF License	\$ 39	\$ 39	\$ 40	\$ 41
Sunbiz Fee	\$ 70	\$ 70	\$ 72	\$ 74
Health Dept. Inspection	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 309	\$ 318
ACH Fees	\$ -	\$ 150	\$ 155	\$ 159
	<u>\$ 409</u>	<u>\$ 559</u>	<u>\$ 576</u>	<u>\$ 593</u>
<u>Insurance:</u>				
Workers Comp	\$ 286	\$ 286	\$ 295	\$ 350
Employment	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,236	\$ 1,273
Johnson & Johnson	\$ 2,177	\$ 1,088	\$ 1,121	\$ 1,154
Fisher Brown	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,120	\$ 4,244

	\$ 7,663	\$ 6,574	\$ 6,771	\$ 7,021
<u>Parties:</u>				
Halloween	\$ 150	\$ 150	\$ 155	\$ 159
Thanksgiving	\$ 65	\$ 65	\$ 67	\$ 69
Christmas	\$ 155	\$ 155	\$ 160	\$ 164
Graduation	\$ 275	\$ 275	\$ 283	\$ 292
K Dining Out	\$ 80	\$ 80	\$ 82	\$ 85
	\$ 725	\$ 725	\$ 747	\$ 769
<u>Academic Materials:</u>				
Materials	\$ 55	\$ 7,000	\$ 7,210	\$ 7,426
Testing	\$ 200	\$ 188	\$ 194	\$ 199
	\$ 255	\$ 7,188	\$ 7,404	\$ 7,626
<u>Office Supplies:</u>		\$ 2,000	\$ 2,060	\$ 2,122
<u>Cleaning:</u>				
Supplies	\$ -	\$ 1,250	\$ 1,288	\$ 1,326
Carpet	\$ 280	\$ 280	\$ 288	\$ 297
	\$ 280	\$ 1,530	\$ 1,576	\$ 1,623
<u>Marketing:</u>				
Website	\$ 115	\$ 115	\$ 118	\$ 122
Track Club	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 309	\$ 318
Facebook Ads	\$ 50	\$ 50	\$ 52	\$ 53
	\$ 465	\$ 465	\$ 479	\$ 493
Debt Service	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 45,000
Taxes	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,360	\$ 12,731	\$ 13,113
Total Expense	\$ 239,991	\$ 252,108	\$ 259,671	\$ 355,794
Net Income	\$ 39,359	\$ 89,592	\$ 139,329	\$ 127,706
Income per Student	\$ 5,944	\$ 5,995	\$ 6,138	\$ 6,044
Expense Per Student	\$ 5,106	\$ 4,423	\$ 3,995	\$ 4,447
Net Income per Student	\$ 837	\$ 1,572	\$ 2,144	\$ 1,596

Estimated

ATTACHMENT 3.

MLC Three Year Student and Tuition Plan Pro Forma (3/19/2018)

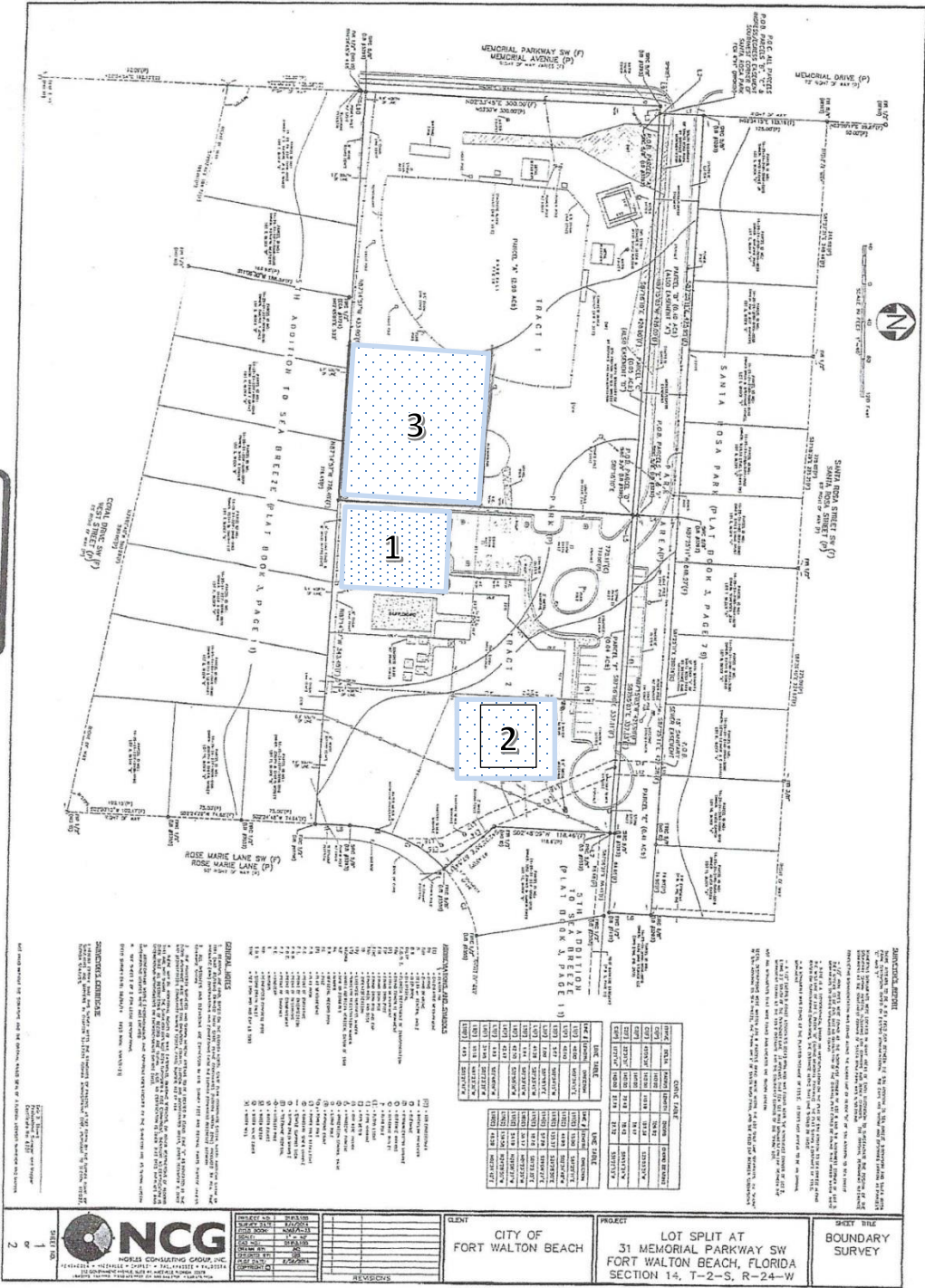
	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
<u>Students:</u>				
Pre K 3	14	14	14	24
Pre K 4	16	16	16	18
Kindergarten	6	12	12	18
Total Pre School	36	42	42	50
First Grade	11	5	5	5
Second Grade		10	10	15
			8	10
	11	15	23	30
Total Students	47	57	65	80

<u>Tuition:</u>				
Preschool	\$ 4,750	\$ 4,900	\$ 5,350	\$ 5,350
Lower Elementary	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,150	\$ 5,850	\$ 5,800

<u>Curriculum Fees:</u>				
Preschool	\$ 300	\$ 300		
Lower Elementary	\$ 500	\$ 500		
Registration Fee	\$ 300	\$ 150	\$ 150	\$ 150

ATTACHMENT 5. Boundary Survey For Old FWB City Park

berg No. 0119
EXHIBIT A



ATTACHMENT 6

POTENTIAL MONTESSORI THREE YEAR DEVELOPMENT PLAN													
Calendar Year	2018				2019				2020				
	1QT	2QT	3QT	4QT	1QT	2QT	3QT	4QT	1QT	2QT	3QT	4QT	
Establish Study Subcommittees	▲												
Expand Board of Directors	▲			▲									
Extend St. Simons Lease													
Financial 3 Year Forecast		▲											
Seek School Accreditation Decision		▲											
Add Additional Teachers/Staff			▲										
Montessori Teacher Certifications				▲									
Montessori Curriculum Materials				▲									
School Facility Needs Finalized	▲												
Determine New School Site													
Determine Type Construction													
Execute Capital Campaign													
New School Construction													
Located in New Facility													
School Year	2017-18				2018-19				2019-20				2020-21
Grade Expansion	Add 1st				Add 2nd				Add 3rd			Add 4th	
Capital Funds Required (Est)	\$35,000				\$75,000				\$400,000				

ATTACHMENT 7.

SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND CRITERIA (From American Montessori Society Document, Page 12)

STANDARD 5: PERSONNEL

The quality Montessori school provides for ethical, fair and non-discriminatory practices for all employees, teaching and non-teaching.

CRITERIA:

- 5.1 Provides written employment agreements for all school personnel annually, including written job descriptions, compensation, benefits, and terms of employment.
- 5.2 Provides an employee handbook that includes a written non-discrimination policy.
- 5.3 Ensures that all staff participates in a continuous program of professional development and documents teachers' plans for and participation in ongoing professional development.
- 5.4 Provides opportunities for faculty and staff to provide input in decision-making.
- 5.5 Ensures that the Head of School and at least 50% of credentialed lead teachers maintain active membership in the American Montessori Society.
- 5.6 Maintains copies of lead teachers' Montessori credentials, licenses, teaching certificates, and transcripts and updates this information with AMS as changes occur.
- 5.7 Implements an annual evaluation system that provides for the professional growth of all personnel and maintains records of all evaluations.
- 5.8 Assigns professional staff responsibilities based on their qualifications (i.e., professional preparation, ability, knowledge, and experience).
 - 5.8.1 Administrative leader (head of school/principal/executive director) has professional qualifications that meet state and local regulations, as applicable.

Emerging criterion effective July 1, 2020: Administrative leader (head of school/principal/executive director) holds a bachelor's degree and qualifies with the minimum number of points required in the Head of School Requirements Verification.

5.8.2 A school that employs more than one lead teacher shall designate an educational supervisor/coordinator who holds a qualifying Montessori administrator or teacher credential. The coordinator will oversee the consistency of educational quality and serve as a resource to other staff members.

5.8.3 Employs lead teachers who qualify with the minimum number of points required in the Teacher Requirements Verification and hold a Montessori teaching credential for the age level taught. Pre-1991 credentials must be from a non-distance learning Montessori teacher education program. Post-1991 credentials must be from an AMS, NCME, AMI teacher education program, or from a MACTE-accredited course. Note: All AMS teacher education programs are accredited by MACTE.

*Emerging criterion effective July 1, 2020: Secondary teachers must hold a Montessori teaching credential for the age level taught from an AMS, NCME, AMI teacher education program, or a MACTE-accredited course.

5.8.4 Elementary and Secondary lead teachers must hold a Bachelor's degree from a regionally-accredited institution or equivalent.