

*La Crescent Montessori & STEM School*  
**POLICY 204: Board Election Process**  
Revised 7/10/2023

The Board shall appoint a Governance Committee that will follow the election procedures described below for the La Crescent Montessori & STEM School Board of Directors.

In accordance with the La Crescent Montessori & STEM School Bylaws and Minnesota law, elections for the Board of Directors will be held in May of every year.

**SELECTING POSSIBLE BOARD CANDIDATES**

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

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

C. The Board of Directors must be comprised of at least five members who are not related or affiliated with one another, including three licensed educators teaching at the school; a parent or legal guardian who is not an employee of La Crescent Montessori & STEM School; and a community member who is not an employee or parent of La Crescent Montessori & STEM School.

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

**CONTACTING POSSIBLE BOARD CANDIDATES**

A. Following the deadline for receipt of nominations, the Governance Committee members will then contact the prospects. The Governance Committee will utilize the following materials:

1. A personalized cover letter that informs the prospect of the Board's interest in him/her, a brief description of the recruitment and nominations process, and an invitation to be considered for the La Crescent Montessori & STEM School Board of Directors (see Attachment B).
2. A copy of the position description that details the roles and responsibilities of a Board Director (see Attachment C).
3. Additional material about the La Crescent Montessori & STEM School Board and its responsibilities.
4. A response form that the prospect can return indicating he/she would like more information and/or they want to be considered for the board of directors (see Attachment D).
5. A completed background check.

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

## **V. ORIENTATION**

A. The Governance Committee will then schedule an orientation with all prospective board directors who responded to the mailing and phone calls.

In this orientation, the agenda will consist of:

1. Welcome and introductions;
2. Overview of the mission, vision and educational goals of the school;
3. Overview of the roles and responsibilities of the Board of Directors;
4. Review of the individual job description detailing specific expectations (for example, committee work, meeting attendance, involvement in community outreach, etc.);
5. Opportunity for Board candidates to ask questions; and
6. Declarations of willingness to serve by the Board candidates.

B. After the orientation session is completed, individuals who wish to continue in the process will be asked to fill out the Candidate Questionnaire (Attachment E) to provide some background information. This information will be included in the materials that will be distributed to all eligible voters.

#### **FINAL SELECTION OF CANDIDATES**

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

#### **ELECTION**

A. After the Governance Committee has concluded the nomination process, it will create ballots and other election materials. The Director of Operations will facilitate the distribution and tabulation of ballots to all eligible voters at the Annual Meeting

B. La Crescent Montessori & STEM School must notify eligible voters of the board of directors' election at least 30 days before the election. No elections will be held during holidays or school breaks. Elections must be held during the school year.

C. Once all votes are in and tabulated, the newly elected board members will be announced, take the Oath of Office (See Attachment G), sign the Board Member Profile Agreement (see Attachment F), and take their place on the board of directors at the first meeting during their term.

**LA CRESCENT MONTESSORI & STEM SCHOOL  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOMINATION FORM**

All candidates must be nominated using this form. Nomination forms should be submitted to the school office or electronically to [Ima4054@lacscentmontessori.com](mailto:Ima4054@lacscentmontessori.com)

Nominee Information:

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Name	Phone Number
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Address

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Email

Relationship to LMSS:  Parent/Legal Guardian  Faculty  Community Member

For community member nominees, please briefly describe the nominee's interest in La Crescent Montessori & STEM School:

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Are you nominating yourself?  Yes  No

If no, please complete the following 3 lines:

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Your Name	Your Phone Number
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Your Relationship to LMSS:  Parent/Legal Guardian  Faculty  Community Member\*

Your Relationship to the nominee (if any) \_\_\_\_\_

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

Yes  No

Is the nominee/immediate family member/partner, an owner/employee/agent of an entity with whom LMSS contracts, directly or indirectly, for professional services, goods or facilities? \*\*\*

Yes  No

Is the nominee or spouse employed by La Crescent Montessori & STEM School?  Yes

No

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

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(continued on back side)

In addition to this Nomination Form, all nominees must also complete a Candidate Questionnaire. The Candidate Questionnaire and Nomination Form do not have to be submitted at the same time. Please contact Kate Garfin at [Kate@lacrescentmontessori.com](mailto:Kate@lacrescentmontessori.com) or 507-895-4054 if you have any questions about board service or the election process.

\*A Community Member is defined as a person: "...who is not employed by the charter school and does not have a child enrolled in the school.

\*\*Minnesota law provides strict conflict of interest rules regarding charter school board members, and further requires that all board members of a charter school be "non related." If you have a business relationship or have an immediate family relationship with any charter school board member, both as further defined in MINN STAT> 124D.10, subd. 23(a), you will be unable to serve on that same charter school board. Please contact any member of the board if you have any questions about conflict of interest or prohibited relationships.

\*\*\*The 2009 MN Legislature enacted strict Conflict of Interest for charter school boards. See MINN.STAT> 124d.10, Subd. 4a.

**LA CRESCENT MONTESSORI & STEM SCHOOL  
INVITATION LETTER DRAFT**

In May, new board directors will be elected to the La Crescent Montessori & STEM School Board of Directors. You have been recommended to the Governance Committee as a possible candidate for board service. We are requesting that you give serious consideration to this nomination for a board position.

The next several years promise to be exciting ones for La Crescent Montessori & STEM School. La Crescent Montessori & STEM School will continue to have a positive impact on the children and families we serve. The board of directors will play a central role in this important work.

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

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

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

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

If you have any questions, please contact Tammy Stremcha at 507-895-4054 or [Tammy@lacrescentmontessori.com](mailto:Tammy@lacrescentmontessori.com)

Sincerely,

Tammy Stremcha

La Crescent Montessori & STEM School Governance Committee

**LA CRESCENT MONTESSORI & STEM SCHOOL  
BOARD DIRECTOR POSITION DESCRIPTION**

1. Attend regular meetings of the La Crescent Montessori & STEM School Board, which are each approximately 2 hours in duration. The Board meets monthly. Be accessible for personal contact in-between board meetings.
2. Provide leadership to board committees. Each Board Director is expected to serve as an active, ongoing member of at least one committee. This requires a number of meetings per year plus individual committee task completions.
3. Commit time to attend important school related functions.
4. Responsibly review and act upon administrative or committee recommendations brought to the board for action.
5. Prepare in advance for decision-making and policy formation at board meetings; take responsibility for self-education on the major issues before the board.
6. Participate in the annual board director self-review process.
7. Participate in the annual board retreat.
8. In general, utilize personal and professional skills, relationships and knowledge for the advancement of La Crescent Montessori & STEM School.
9. Be familiar with and act in accord with La Crescent Montessori & STEM School's Board of Directors' Policy Manual.
10. Meet the duty of care, obedience and loyalty as defined in Minnesota Statutes §317A.
11. Participate in the board training required under Minnesota Statutes §124D.10.

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

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Board Director's Signature

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Date

**Attachment D**

**LA CRESCENT MONTESSORI & STEM SCHOOL  
BOARD NOMINATIONS RESPONSE FORM**

**Please Check One:**

I am interested in being considered for a La Crescent Montessori & STEM School Board position. Contact me with information about the upcoming orientation session.

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Day Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Return by Mail to:

1116 S. Oak Street, La Crescent, MN 55947

Or

Return by Fax to: 507-895-4064

Or

Return by email to: [Ima4054@lacrescentmontessori.com](mailto:Ima4054@lacrescentmontessori.com)



**LA CRESCENT MONTESSORI & STEM SCHOOL  
CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE**

Complete this form and return to the La Crescent Montessori & STEM School (LMSS) Governance Committee. Your responses (or portions thereof) will be shared with the greater LMSS community.

In 2-5 sentences, describe why you are interested in serving as a board member of La Crescent Montessori & STEM School.

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

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

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

Please choose two of the following eight board topic areas and describe how your background will enable you to provide collaborative leadership and make a significant contribution as a board member:

1) educational expertise, 2) finance, 3) fundraising, 4) governance, 5) human resources, 6) legal, 7) marketing/communications, 8) strategic planning.

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

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Signature of Nominee

Date

**LA CRESCENT MONTESSORI & STEM SCHOOL  
BOARD MEMBER PROFILE AGREEMENT**

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

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

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

All board members are expected to attend a yearly board retreat where the goals of the board are defined, a board self-evaluation critique is conducted, speakers present information on effective board leadership, and other pertinent topics are discussed. Parent and community board members will annually attend a Board Visit Day to observe and visit with staff and become familiar with current school concerns. The board will annually conduct a self-evaluation which will determine goals for the next year. Directors shall fulfill their responsibilities on the board and committees to their fullest capability. All board members should be the school's best public relations representatives.

**BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS**

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

Board members are expected to fulfill their responsibilities to their fullest potential. When receiving criticisms from parents or other interested parties about staff, the board member shall direct the speaker to the Head of School who shall process the criticism in a manner consistent with board policies. Board members are expected to present a positive image of staff and the board to the school community or parties outside the school.

Board members will commit to resolving conflict directly with each other or with the appropriate staff member and not share the conflict with anyone outside of the conflict, including, but not limited to other parents, other staff members or the media.

Board members shall exemplify integrity, honesty and respect. A dedication and commitment to

the vision of La Crescent Montessori & STEM School and the charter school movement shall be the top priority for all board members. Any board member finding him or herself involved in an irresolvable conflict shall put the vision of the school first and step down from the board.

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

Board members with poor attendance at board meetings may be relieved of their Board involvement.

### **GOVERNANCE OF La Crescent Montessori & STEM School**

La Crescent Montessori & STEM School shall be governed by a Board of Directors. The Head of School and Director of Operations shall answer directly to the Board. The Head of School and Director of Operations shall make decisions on a day-to-day basis and fulfill all administrative duties for the school. The board will maintain the vision and steer the school's direction as it carries out its Mission.

As with all charter schools, La Crescent Montessori & STEM School is an entity separate from the resident school district. This unique characteristic of charters shall be guarded by each board member.

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

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

Board members shall remember that stepping out of their advisory/board capacity and attempting to run the school as an administrator will always cause problems. Individual board members do not have any delegated authority. Only during board meetings, with quorum, and as a group does the board hold authority.

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

Signed, this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2024

Board Member, La Crescent Montessori & STEM School

**LA CRESCENT MONTESSORI & STEM SCHOOL  
ADMINISTRATION OF OATH SCRIPT**

To the newly elected board:

“Please stand as your name is called, take your place in front of the head table, and face the assembled membership.”

\_\_\_\_\_ (name), \_\_\_\_\_ (position)

\_\_\_\_\_ (name), \_\_\_\_\_ (position)

\_\_\_\_\_ (name), \_\_\_\_\_ (position)

\_\_\_\_\_ (name), \_\_\_\_\_ (position)

\_\_\_\_\_ (name), \_\_\_\_\_ (position)

To the assembled membership:

“As a member of the La Crescent Montessori & STEM School community, will you pledge your support and encouragement in helping these officers and directors who are about to be installed? If so, please signify by saying, “I will”.

(People respond with “I will”)

To the newly elected board:

“Directors; The office to which you have been elected is one of dignity and importance. In accepting this office you undertake a responsibility, which is not to be assumed lightly or carelessly discharged. You are charged with the duties of seriously and resolutely furthering the mission and objectives of La Crescent Montessori & STEM School. With the bylaws and policies as your guide, you must be ever ready to exercise the functions of the office to which you have been entrusted.

Do you so solemnly swear to abide by and uphold the bylaws of this organization, to perform your duties to the best of your ability and capacities, without fear or favor, with the aim of developing self-assured, lifelong learners who are compassionate, globally minded, and empowered to positively impact the world; to advance the interest of the community to which it is dedicated; and to conduct yourself in a manner befitting a good and true member so as to bring honor and prestige to the organization, and that you take this pledge without mental reservation

or purpose of evasion?

(Directors respond with “I do”)

“Let me congratulate and wish each of you every success possible”

Lead membership in applauding the new board.

Once the applause begins to die down, turn the microphone over to the temporary meeting chair and return to your seat.