

Geist Montessori Academy Board of Directors Governing Policies

1.0 Ends Policies

Geist Montessori Academy is a public charter school that exists so that

- central Indiana students in grades K-8 can access an enriching and authentic Montessori environment at a per pupil cost competitive with surrounding public schools,
- students will demonstrate outstanding academic growth, and
- graduates will transition successfully to higher education systems of their choice.

1.1 Montessori Environment Outcomes

GMA will be recognized locally as a provider of an authentic Montessori education.

1.1.1 An independent surveyor (of the Board's choosing) with Montessori certification will report that GMA classrooms 1) are normalized, 2) are utilizing Montessori curriculum, and 3) are functioning in a uniquely Montessori fashion.

1.1.2 80% of surveyed Montessori preschool administrators in the Indianapolis and surrounding county areas will report that they would recommend GMA to their families.

1.2 Satisfaction Outcomes

The majority of GMA parents will report satisfaction with the quality of education at GMA.

1.2.1 The average parent satisfaction rating on the BSU OCS constituent survey will be 3.5 or above.

1.3 Academic Outcomes

GMA will be recognized by the Ball State University Office of Charter Schools and the Department of Education as a top provider of education services in the Indianapolis metro area.

1.3.1 GMA will be ranked among the top 5% of BSU's charter schools for academic performance.

1.3.2 80% of GMA students will experience either "typical growth" or "high growth" as designated by the DOE in both Math and ELA. (In other words, no more than 20% of GMA students will experience "low growth" as designated by the DOE in either Math or ELA.)

1.3.3 GMA will score in the "high student growth" section of the DOE School Achievement and Growth Table for both Math and ELA.

1.3.4 80% of students will demonstrate growth of **x**% or better across the school year, based on a benchmark pre- and post-test (e.g., NWEA).

NOTE: Policies 1.3.2 and 1.3.3 and 1.3.4 will remain in place until at least 80% of GMA ISTEP+ track students pass the Math portion of ISTEP+ and at least 80% of ISTEP+ track students pass the ELA portion of the ISTEP+.

GMA graduates will transition successfully and thrive in other school systems of their choice.

1.3.5 GMA 8th graders will perform well on one national assessment upon graduation (e.g., Terra Nova).

1.4 Financial Outcomes

The per pupil cost of education at GMA will be comparable or lower than the per pupil cost of education in neighboring districts.

1.4.1 Each year, the ADM, as calculated by the DOE, will either match or exceed an ADM target established in a budget forecast. (For the fall 2011, the ADM target is 241.) As a result, revenue forecasts will be achieved.

2.0 Governance Process Policies

As a policy governing board, on behalf of the taxpayers of Indiana and the charter authorizer, the board exists to ensure that GMA a) achieves outstanding educational results with appropriate use of public and nonprofit funds and b) avoids unacceptable, unethical and imprudent actions and situations.

2.1 Governing Style

The Board will govern lawfully, observing the principles of the Policy Governance model, with an emphasis on (a) outward vision rather than internal operations, (b) encouragement of diversity in viewpoints, (c) strategic leadership rather than administrative detail, (d) clear distinction of Board and Head of School roles, (e) collective rather than individual decisions, (f) future rather than past or present, and (g) proactivity rather than reactivity.

2.1.1 Group Responsibility

The Board will cultivate a sense of group responsibility. The Board, not the staff, will be responsible for excellence in governing. The Board will be the primary initiator of governing policy. The Board will not use the expertise of individual members to substitute for the judgment of the Board, although the expertise of individual members may be used to enhance the understanding of the Board as a body.

2.1.2 Written Policies

The Board will direct, control and inspire the school's performance through the careful establishment of broad written policies reflecting the Board's values and perspectives. The Board's major policy focus will be on the intended long-term impacts outside of GMA, not on the administrative or programmatic means of attaining those effects. All policies of the Board are contained in this document, and they remain in effect, unless amended or deleted by Board action.

2.1.3 Board Discipline

The Board will enforce upon itself whatever discipline is needed to govern with excellence. Discipline will apply to matters such as attendance, preparation for meetings, policymaking principles, respect of roles, and ensuring the continual development of governance capability. Although the Board can change its governance process policies at any time, it will scrupulously observe those currently in force.

2.1.4 Board Development

Continual board development will include selecting new board members, orienting new board members in the board's governance process and periodic Board discussion of process improvement. The Board will engage in self-monitoring which will include comparison of Board activity and discipline to Governance Process and Board-Management Delegation policies.

2.1.5 Fulfillment of Commitments

The Board will allow no Officer, individual or committee of the Board to hinder or be an excuse for not fulfilling its commitments.

2.1.6 Annual Evaluation Process

The Board shall assess its performance and the performance of individual directors at least annually. This self-assessment shall include monitoring of Board and director performance against policies related to governance. This assessment may be conducted by a committee of the Board initially, especially with regard to the performance of individual directors, but the entire Board shall engage in a discussion and self-assessment of its performance at least annually.

2.2 Board Job Description

Specific job outputs of the board, as an informed agent of the ownership, are those that ensure appropriate organizational performance.

2.2.1 Ownership to Organization Link

The Board will produce the link between the taxpayers of Indiana and the operational organization.

2.2.2 Written Governing Policies

The Board will develop and maintain written governing policies that realistically address the broadest levels of all organizational decisions and situations:

- *Ends Policies* will define organizational products, effects, benefits, outcomes, recipients, and their relative worth (what good, for which recipients, at what cost).
- *Management Limitations Policies* will set constraints on executive authority that establish the prudence and ethics boundaries within which all management activity and decisions must take place.
- *Governance Process Policies* will specify how the Board conceives, carries out and monitors its own tasks.
- *Board-Management Delegation Policies* will delineate 1) how power is delegated and its proper use monitored and 2) the Head of School's role, authority and accountability.

2.2.3 Organizational Performance

The Board will assure successful organizational performance on Ends and Management Limitations.

2.3 Agenda Planning

To accomplish its job products with a governance style consistent with board policies, the board will follow an annual agenda which (a) completes a re-exploration of Ends policies annually and (b) continually improves board performance through board education and enriched input and deliberation.

2.3.1 Agenda Planning Cycle

The cycle will conclude each year on the last day of the last meeting of the year so that administrative planning and budgeting can be based on accomplishing a one year segment of the board's most recent statement of long term Ends. The cycle will begin with the Board's development of its agenda for the next year.

2.3.2 Determining Agenda Content

At the commencement of the Board's annual planning cycle, the Board will identify its priorities for Ends and other issues to be resolved in the coming year, and will identify information gathering necessary to fulfill its role. This may include consultations with selected groups in the ownership, other methods of gaining ownership input, governance education, and other education related to Ends issues. The Board President will then prepare for the Board's consideration a tentative agenda plan for the following year's meetings.

2.3.3 Monitoring Reports

Monitoring reports due and/or submitted will be on the agenda for acceptance by the Board. Discussion of the reports will be 1) for indication of policy violations, 2) to determine if the Board considers the Head of School's policy interpretations to be reasonable, and 3) to ensure the policies are met. Other discussion of operational activities and performance will be included on the agenda only if other data indicate policy violations, if policy criteria are to be debated, or if the Board for any reason chooses to amend its monitoring schedule.

2.3.4 Ad Hoc Issues & Notice

The Board President will determine the agenda for any particular meeting, although Board members or members of the public may request or recommend any appropriate matters for Board consideration. Board members and members of the public may recommend or request a matter for Board discussion by submitting the item in writing (via email) to the Board President at least three days prior to the scheduled Board meeting. By an affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Board, or of those present at a meeting, additional matters may be added to the agenda of any Board meeting.

2.3.5 Public Comment

The Board will include an opportunity for public comment at each public session. During the public comment portion of each Board meeting,

- observers will be allowed 3 minutes each to present to the Board, and
- the Board will only respond to public comments during public meetings when established policy applies. Otherwise, the Board will not immediately respond.

2.3.6 Required Approvals

The Board will attend to consent agenda items (those items delegated to the Head of School yet required by law or contract to be Board-approved) as expeditiously as possible.

2.4 Officer's Roles

The Board Officers of GMA shall be a Board President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer, all of whom shall be chosen annually by, and serve at the pleasure of, the Board of Directors. Each Board Officer shall have the authority and shall perform the duties set forth in the GMA bylaws or by resolution of the Board. The Board may also appoint a Co-President and other Officers as it deems expedient for the proper conduct of the business of GMA, each of whom shall have such authority and shall perform such duties as the Board of Directors may determine.

2.4.1 Board President's Role and Authority

The President of the Board provides leadership to the Board, assures that the Board's conduct is consistent with its own rules and those legitimately imposed upon it from outside the organization, exercises interpretive responsibilities, and normally serves as the Board's official spokesperson.

The President may delegate this authority, but remains accountable for its use.

2.4.1.1 The President is empowered to chair Board meetings with all the commonly accepted authority of that position, such as ruling and recognizing.

- On behalf of the Board, the President will develop proposed Board meeting agendas consistent with the Board's annual agenda calendar.
- The President will ensure that meeting discussion content will be on issues that, according to Board policy, clearly belong to the Board to decide or to monitor.
- The President will ensure that deliberation will be fair, open, and thorough, but also timely, orderly, and focused.
- The President will ensure that Board meeting debriefings are timely and periodic self-assessments ensure process improvement.

2.4.1.2 The President is responsible to compile and facilitate the Board's annual summative evaluation of the Head of School.

2.4.1.3 The President will execute all documents authorized by the Board, except as otherwise provided by law.

2.4.1.4. The President will oversee Board response to written community complaints to the Board via a Board approved grievance procedure.

2.4.1.5 The President may represent the Board to outside parties in announcing Board approved policies, resolutions, positions, and decisions.

2.4.1.6 The President is authorized to immediately confront individual Board members whose actions or statements are in conflict with Board policies, and to ensure that compliance is reestablished. The President is further authorized to call for a vote to further discipline an individual member of the Board (up to and including removal from the Board) whose conduct is repeatedly out of compliance with Board policy.

2.4.1.7 The President has no authority to make decisions about policies created by the Board within Ends and Executive Limitations policy areas. Therefore, the President has no authority to individually supervise or direct the Head of School.

2.4.2 Vice President's Role and Authority

The Vice President provides support and assistance to the Board President and assumes whatever duties delegated by the President. The Vice President chairs Board meetings in the absence of the President. In the event that the Board President position is left vacant, the Vice President will assume the duties and authority of the office of the President.

2.4.3 Secretary's Role and Authority

The Secretary shall be the record-keeper and communications coordinator for the Board.

2.4.3.1 The Secretary shall cause notice to be given of all meetings as required by Indiana's Open Door Law, primarily by means of the GMA web site.

2.4.3.2 The Secretary shall keep or cause to be kept a record of minutes of all meetings and actions of the Board. The minutes of each meeting shall state the time and place that it was held and such other information as shall be necessary to determine the actions taken and whether the meeting was held in accordance with the law and GMA bylaws.

2.4.3.3 The Secretary will ensure all Board documents required by the charter authorizer are submitted in a complete and timely manner.

2.4.3.4 The Secretary is authorized to respond to email communications from the public via the Board email address when the response can be based upon established Board policy or the established Board grievance procedure. Otherwise, the secretary is to defer to the Board.

2.4.3.5 The Secretary shall coordinate with the Head of School to ensure Board access to the school building for purposes of conducting Board business.

2.4.3.6 The Secretary shall ensure that Board members have a means to submit and review financial documents, minutes, monitoring reports, etc., in preparation for monthly meetings.

2.4.4 Treasurer's Role and Authority

The Treasurer shall be the lead Director for oversight of the financial condition and affairs of GMA.

2.4.3.1 The Treasurer shall keep the Board informed of the current financial condition of GMA and of audit or financial review results.

2.4.3.2 The Treasurer shall ensure that appropriate financial reports, including an account of major transactions, are made available to the Board of Directors on a timely (typically monthly) basis or as may be required by the Board of Directors.

2.4.3.3 The Treasurer shall oversee budget preparation in conjunction with the Head of School or other staff with responsibility for maintaining the financial records of GMA.

2.4.3.4 The Treasurer shall provide the Board and Head of School with a reasonable financial forecast as required by the Board of Directors.

2.4.3.5 The Treasurer shall provide the Secretary or the Head of School with financial documents required by the charter authorizer or other legitimate reporting agencies in a timely and complete manner.

2.4.3.6 The Treasurer may appoint, with approval of the Board, a qualified fiscal agent or member of the staff to assist in performance of all or part of the duties of the Treasurer.

2.5 Grievance Procedure

The Board will outline a grievance procedure and will make the procedure available to the public via the school web site.

2.6 Board Member Code of Conduct

The Board commits itself and its members to ethical, professional, and lawful conduct, including proper use of authority and appropriate decorum when acting as Board members. Board members are accountable for discharging their duties honestly and in good faith. Board members shall exercise the degree of care, diligence and skill that a reasonably prudent person would exercise in comparable circumstances.

2.6.1 Conflict of Interest

Board members must demonstrate loyalty to the interests of the ownership, unconflicted by loyalties to staff, other organizations, or any personal interests.

2.6.1.1 Board members must avoid conflict of interest with respect to their fiduciary responsibility.

2.6.1.2 There must be no self-dealing or any conduct of private business or personal services between any Board member or member of his or her immediate family and the organization,

except as procedurally controlled to assure openness, competitive opportunity, and equal access to inside information.

2.6.1.3 When the Board is to decide upon an issue about which a member has an actual or apparent conflict of interest, that member shall immediately disclose the conflict to the Board and absent herself or himself without comment from not only the vote but also from the deliberation. The minutes of meetings will reflect any disclosures of conflicts of interest.

2.6.1.4 Board members must not use their Board positions to obtain staff employment for themselves, family members or close associates. Should a Board member apply for staff employment, he or she must first resign from the Board.

2.6.2 Lack of Individual Authority

Board members hold no individual authority unless so authorized for a specific task by the Board.

2.6.2.1 Board members must not attempt to exercise individual authority over the organization.

2.6.2.2 Board members' interaction with the Head of School or with faculty/staff must reflect the lack of authority vested in individuals except when explicitly Board authorized.

2.6.2.3 Board members' interaction with public, media or other entities must reflect the above limitations and Board members are not to speak for the Head of School, or to speak for the Board except to repeat established Board policy or Board decisions established by Board approved motions.

2.6.2.4 Except for participation in Board deliberation about whether the Head of School has achieved any reasonable interpretation of Board policies, Board members will not publicly express individual judgments of performance of employees or the Head of School.

2.6.2.5 A Board member aware of credible information that suggests that a Board policy has been violated, by either the Board or the Head of School, has an affirmative obligation to bring the concern to the Board's agenda for monitoring.

2.6.2.6 Board members will speak with one voice. Expressions of individual thoughts, ideas and points of view are to be respected and encouraged as integral to the Board's ability to forge its collective values. However, each Board member is to support the legitimacy and authority of the final determination of the Board on any matter, irrespective of the member's personal position on the issue.

2.6.3 Confidentiality

Board members must respect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature.

2.6.4 Responsibilities

Board members are expected to attend all scheduled meetings of the full board and be properly prepared for board deliberation. Board members are expected to provide advance communication to the Board President before missing any board meeting.

2.7 Board Committees

This policy applies to any group which is formed by board action, whether or not it is called a committee and regardless whether the group includes board members. It does not apply to committees formed under the authority of the Head of School. Unless otherwise stated, a committee ceases to exist as soon as its task is complete. **(There are no standing committees at this time)**

2.7.1 Board Committee Principles

- Board committees, when used, have one essential role -- to strengthen and support the work of the Board as a whole. Board committees are not to interfere with delegation from Board to the Head of School, or from the Head of School to other staff.
- Board committees are to avoid over-identification with organizational parts rather than the whole. Therefore, a board committee which has helped the board create policy on some topic will not be used to monitor organizational performance on that same subject.
- Committees will be used sparingly and ordinarily in an ad hoc capacity.

2.7.2 Board Committee Authority

- Board committees are to help the Board do its job, not to help, advise or exercise authority over staff.
- Board committees most commonly assist the Board by undertaking activities not delegated to the Head of School, by preparing policy alternatives and implications for Board deliberation, or by performing specific monitoring functions. Board committees will normally not have direct involvement with current staff operations.
- Board committees may not speak or act for the Board except when formally given such authority for specific and/or time-limited purposes. The Board will carefully state its expectations and committee authority in order not to conflict with authority delegated to the Head of School.

2.8 Cost of Governance

Because poor governance costs more than learning to govern well, the board will invest in its governance capacity.

2.8.1 Direct Expenses

Board skills, methods, and supports will be sufficient to assure governing with excellence.

2.8.1.1 The Board will annually establish its cost of governance budget and submit the budget to the Head of School for inclusion in the organizational budget.

2.8.1.2 Training and retraining will be used to orient new members and candidates for membership, as well as to maintain and increase existing member skills and understanding.

2.8.1.3 Outside monitoring assistance will be arranged so that the Board can exercise confident control over organizational performance. This includes, but is not limited to, fiscal audits.

2.8.1.4 Outreach mechanisms will be used as needed to assure the Board's ability to listen to owner viewpoints and values.

2.8.1.5 Costs will be prudently incurred, though not at the expense of endangering the development and maintenance of superior Board capability.

2.8.2 Expense Reimbursement

The Board will abide by organizationally established expense reimbursement procedures by providing appropriate supporting documentation, etc.

2.8.2.1 The President of the Board must authorize all expense reimbursement requests submitted to the school treasurer for costs incurred by the Board as a whole (eg., training costs).

2.8.2.2 Requests for reimbursement to individual Board members submitted to the school treasurer must have the approval of the Board President and the Board Treasurer.

2.8.2.3 Reimbursement to individual board members will only be approved for unusual and non-customary expenses. Customary expenses such as mileage to and from board meetings will not be approved for reimbursement.

3.0 Board-Management Delegation Policies

The board's sole official connection to the operations of GMA, both its achievements and conduct, will be through a chief executive officer, titled the Head of School.

3.1 Unity of Control

Only decisions of the Board acting as a body are binding on the Head of School. These decisions will be expressed in the form of an officially passed motion.

3.1.1 Decisions or instructions of individual board members, officers, or committees are not binding on the Head of School, except in instances when the Board has specifically authorized such exercise of authority.

3.1.2 If a Board member or committee requests information or assistance without Board authorization, the Head of School can refuse such requests that require, in the Head of School's opinion, a material amount of staff time or funds, or are disruptive.

3.1.3 When addressing official business, the Head of School will deal with the Board as a whole except when:

- Fulfilling reasonable individual requests for information
- Responding to Board members or committees duly charged by the Board as a whole for a particular task.

3.2 Accountability of the Head of School

The Head of School is the Board's only link to the conduct and achievement of the GMA staff, so all authority and accountability of the staff, as far as the Board is concerned, is considered the authority and accountability of the Head of School.

3.2.1 The Board will view the performance of the Head of School as identical to organizational performance. Consequently, organizational accomplishment of the Board-stated *Ends Policies* and avoidance of Board-proscribed means (*Executive Limitations*) will be viewed as successful performance by the Head of School.

3.2.2 The Board will not evaluate any staff other than the Head of School.

3.2.3 The Board will never give instructions to staff members other than the Head of School.

3.3 Delegation to the Head of School

The Board will instruct the Head of School through written policies that prescribe the organizational ends to be achieved (*Ends Policies*) and describe organizational situations and actions to be avoided (*Executive Limitations*), allowing the Head of School to use any reasonable interpretation of these policies.

3.3.1 The Board will develop policies instructing the Head of School to achieve certain results, for certain recipients, at a specified cost. These policies will be developed systematically from the broadest, most general level, to more defined levels, and will be called *Ends Policies*.

3.3.2 The Board will develop policies that limit the latitude the Head of School may exercise in choosing the organizational means. These policies will be developed systematically from the broadest, most general level, to more defined levels, and will be called *Executive Limitations Policies*.

3.3.3 As long as the Head of School uses any reasonable interpretation of the Board's *Ends Policies* and *Executive Limitations Policies*, the Head of School is authorized to establish all further policies, make all decisions, take all actions, establish all practices, and pursue all activities.

3.3.4 The Board may change its *Ends Policies* and *Executive Limitations Policies*, thereby shifting the boundaries of what is expected or allowed. By doing so, the Board expands or decreases that latitude of choice given the Head of School. As long as any particular delegation is in place, however, the Board will respect and support the Head of School's choices.

3.3.5 When a situation arises where the Board has not adopted a policy to guide administrative action, the Head of School is directed to proceed as follows:

- When possible, postpone a decision or action until the next Board meeting and submit the question to the Board for policy development.
- If a decision or action is necessary prior to the next Board meeting, consult with the Board President and with existing policy from area districts, then take action according to the Head of School's best judgment.
- Inform the Board President of the decision or action taken. The Board President will then inform the Board and add the policy development question to the upcoming Board agenda.

3.4 Monitoring Head of School Performance

The Head of School's job performance will be solely monitored against the expected job outcomes, which are organizational accomplishment of Board policies on *Ends* and organization operation within the boundaries established in the Board policies on *Executive Limitations*.

3.4.1 Monitoring simply determines the degree to which Board policies are being met. Information that does not address the achievement of *Ends* or the avoidance of *Executive Limitations* is not monitoring data.

3.4.2 The Board will acquire monitoring data by one or more of three methods:

- Internal report, by which the Head of School discloses compliance information to the Board.
- External report, by which an external, disinterested third party selected by the Board, assesses compliance with Board policies.
- Direct Board inspection, by which a designated member or members of the Board assess compliance.

3.4.3 The standard for compliance shall be any reasonable interpretation by the Head of School of the Board policy being monitored. The Board will judge whether data demonstrate accomplishment of the interpretation.

3.4.4 All policies that instruct the Head of School will be monitored at a frequency and by a method chosen by the Board. The Board can monitor any policy at any time by any method, but will ordinarily depend on a routine schedule. The schedule and method of monitoring will be listed with each *Ends* and *Executive Limitations* policy.

3.4.5 Monitoring reports will include the policy, a statement describing the Head of School's interpretation of the policy, a statement of compliance or noncompliance, and supporting evidence for that statement.

3.4.6 Head of School performance will be evaluated by ongoing review of monitoring data and performance feedback will be communicated to the HOS at least annually by a written summary review. A compensation review will be conducted concurrent to the summary review.

3.5 Executive Compensation

In order to attract and retain the most competent and qualified Head of School, the Board will maintain a total compensation plan for the Head of School

3.5.1 Total Compensation will be defined as a base salary, retirement or other benefits, and discretionary incentive compensation.

3.5.2 Base Salary "target ranges" will be established by the Board utilizing appropriate database surveys of comparable US charter or public schools conducted by a recognized expert in the area of charter or public schools or utilizing national surveys conducted by the United States Department of Education (Indiana Department of Education is acceptable) or some similar organization.

Additionally, the Board will use empirical data from nationally recognized publications (such as the Wall Street Journal) on relevant existing labor conditions.

3.5.3 New Head of School salaries will be set within the base salary range based on experience and recruitment requirements.

3.5.4 Annual base salary adjustments may have the following components:

- A market structure adjustment to maintain the desired ratio relationship to the position rate.
- A performance-based merit adjustment.

3.5.5 Discretionary incentive compensation may be awarded and is designed to reward significant individual and organizational accomplishment. Actual payments will be awarded solely at the discretion of the Board. Head of School compensation levels are set competitively within market range.

3.5.6 In determining total compensation, retirement and other supplemental benefits will be considered. The Head of School will be provided retirement and other supplemental benefits equal (but not beyond) those established for the entire organizational staff.

4.0 Executive Limitations Policies

The Head of School shall not cause or allow any organizational practice, activity, or decision that is unlawful, unethical, or imprudent.

4.1 Compliance

The Head of School shall not allow the organization to be out of compliance 1) with operational standards and reporting requirements of either the Indiana Dept of Education (IDOE) or the Ball State University Office of Charter Schools (OCS) (as outlined in the GMA charter) or, 2) with GMA policies (as outlined in the Board policy manual or GMA's operational policy manual).

- 4.1.1 The Head of School shall not fail to promptly report any actual or anticipated noncompliance with any of the aforementioned policies or requirements.
- 4.1.2 The Head of School shall not fail to provide the Board annually with a list of reports required by the IDOE and the OCS.
- 4.1.3 The Head of School shall not fail to provide the Board with current login and password access to the Head of School's IDOE and OCS compliance dashboards.

4.2 Board Interaction

The Head of School shall not fail to keep the Board informed of material news, data and information pertinent to the role of the board in oversight and governance, and shall not inhibit the board from completion of its duties.

- 4.2.1 The Head of School shall not fail to submit monitoring data required by the board in Board-Management Delegation Policies in a timely, accurate, and understandable fashion.
- 4.2.2 The Head of School shall not fail to immediately report to the Board and appropriate authorities, any areas of policy noncompliance, reporting noncompliance, or unethical or illegal activity that comes to light in the daily operations of the school.
- 4.2.3 The Head of School shall not allow the board to be unaware of anticipated media coverage (positive or negative), known threatened or pending lawsuits, or known security breaches.
- 4.2.4 The Head of School shall not fail to provide the board with a means of official board or committee communication.
- 4.2.5 The Head of School shall not fail to advise the Board if, in the Head of School's opinion, board behavior occurs that is detrimental to the work relationship between the board and the Head of School.

4.3 Employment of Staff

The Head of School shall not fail to ensure that necessary staff members are in place to continuously deliver the administrative and educational services expected of GMA.

4.4 Methodological Integrity

The Head of School must not fail to protect the integrity of the Montessori methodology in practice at GMA.

- 4.4.1 The Head of School shall not fail to employ at least one Montessori certified educator to be responsible to ensure the integrity of the Montessori methodology.
- 4.4.2 The Head of School shall not fail to ensure the following are in place:
 - Multi-age classrooms
 - Presence of a FT lead and at least a PT assistant teacher in each classroom
 - Uninterrupted work periods of 90mins – 3 hrs in each classroom
 - A full complement of Montessori materials in each classroom

- State mandated assessment, implemented in such a way that the character of the Montessori program is not compromised.
- Attempts to employ Montessori certified staff. In the absence of certification, employ staff who express and demonstrate a commitment to the Montessori philosophy and who show promise as Montessori professionals.
- An enrollment plan (that adheres to legal standards for open enrollment) that limits admission of students above the 2nd grade without Montessori background.
- An admission process that informs parents about the nature of Montessori education and encourages the necessary commitment to the program.

4.5 Supervision and Treatment of Staff, Volunteers, and Contractors

The Head of School shall not treat staff, volunteers, or contractors in a manner that could reasonably be considered disrespectful, unfair, or unprofessional, and shall not fail to follow reasonable and legal human resource guidelines in all interactions with such persons.

4.5.1 The Head of School shall not alter the Head of School's own compensation or benefits.

4.5.2 The Head of School shall not fail to maintain current and legal agreements for staff services.

4.5.3 The Head of School shall not fail to maintain legally mandated employee files and documents and to ensure the security and privacy of such.

4.5.4 The Head of School shall not fail to ensure that employees and contractors receive reasonable and adequate compensation and benefits that also protect the financial integrity of the school.

4.5.5 The Head of School shall not fail to ensure that all staff and contractors are fully informed of benefit options available to them.

4.5.6 The Head of School shall not fail to maintain a written staff policy and procedure manual that clearly outlines 1) employee rules and expectations, and 2) employee grievance procedures, and shall not fail to provide said manual to staff upon hiring.

4.5.7 The Head of School shall not fail to maintain written policies and expectations for volunteers to ensure staff and student safety and privacy, and to ensure best use of volunteer skills to meet student needs.

4.5.8 The Head of School shall not fail to respond in a timely manner to staff concerns, questions or grievances.

4.6 Treatment of Customers or Clients

The Head of School shall not treat parents, students, community members, or staff of support organizations in a manner that could reasonably be considered disrespectful or unprofessional.

4.6.1 The Head of School shall not fail to maintain legally mandated student and family records and to ensure the security and privacy of such.

4.6.2 The Head of School shall not fail to maintain a student-parent handbook outlining operational policies and procedures, and shall not fail to provide said handbook to enrolled families. The handbook must not fail to inform parents and students of a grievance procedure.

4.6.3 The Head of School shall not fail to respond in a timely manner to concerns, complaints, or grievances brought to his/her attention from any such persons.

4.7 Staff Professional Development

Without prior approval of the board, the Head of School shall not authorize or arrange professional development opportunities that 1) fail to help staff better achieve the board established mission of the school, or 2) violate the following limitations:

4.7.1 Head of School shall not allow staff to be unprepared to deal with emergency situations.

4.7.2 Professional development expenses may not exceed available funds.

4.7.3 Actual professional development expenses may not vary more than 5% from budgeted professional development expenses.

4.7.4 Head of School professional development events cannot exceed \$500 and/or two days away from school per event.

4.7.5 Head of School may not schedule professional development events outside the continental United States, and Midwest opportunities must be prioritized when available.

4.7.6 Head of School shall not fail to ensure that materials purchased as part of professional development events are protected and retained as property of GMA.

4.8 Public Image Protection

The Head of School shall not endanger the school's public image or its credibility.

4.8.1 The Head of School shall not alter the organization's name.

4.8.2 The Head of School shall not fail to ensure that all communication and means of communication reflect truthfully and positively the programs and aims of the school.

4.8.3 The Head of School shall not allow the use of the Geist Montessori Academy name, logo, or facility to be associated with any community organization or activity that is illegal, unethical, or could reasonably be considered inconsistent with the goals and mission of GMA.

4.8.4 The Head of School shall not allow GMA staff to participate as representatives of GMA in any community activity that is in potential conflict with the goals or mission of GMA.

4.9 Asset Acquisition

The Head of School shall not acquire assets that 1) fail to assist GMA in achieving the board's ends goals, 2) put the school's financial viability at risk, or 3) may cause damage to GMA's public image.

4.9.1 The Head of School shall not purchase or authorize the purchase of assets that exceed \$5000 in value without prior board approval. Splitting orders or making payments via installments to avoid this limit is not acceptable.

4.9.2 The Head of School shall not engage in business transactions that would constitute an undisclosed conflict of interest.

4.9.3 The Head of School shall not purchase significant assets without completion of a reasonable and fair bidding process.

4.9.4 The HOS shall not purchase assets that would cause the school undue exposure to liability claims.

4.10 Asset Protection

The Head of School shall not cause or allow corporate assets to be unprotected, inadequately maintained, or unnecessarily risked.

4.10.1 The Head of School shall not fail to ensure that all corporate assets are adequately inventoried and insured.

4.10.2 The Head of School shall not fail to ensure necessary and appropriate upkeep and maintenance of school equipment, the school building, and school grounds.

4.10.3 The Head of School shall not fail to ensure the presence, maintenance, and activation of a school security system to protect students, staff, and school property, and to comply with city mandates.

4.10.4. The Head of School shall not fail to limit building and electronic access (ie, keys, security codes, and passwords) to persons covered by corporate insurance policies.

4.10.5 The Head of School shall not fail to ensure safekeeping of documents as required by law or by the charter authorizer.

4.10.6 The Head of School shall not fail to design and implement facility use and request procedures that 1) prioritize student and staff use of the building, 2) protect students and staff from unnecessary work disruption, and 3) prohibit illegal, unethical, or imprudent use of the building.

(Alcohol, gambling, and the possession and/or use of harmful substances or objects on school property is specifically prohibited.)

4.10.7 The Head of School shall not fail to be bonded and to ensure that the school treasurer be bonded.

4.10.8 The Head of School shall not fail to have in place procedures for the safeguarding of cash and checks.

4.11 Financial Planning/Budgeting

The Head of School shall not cause or allow financial planning for any fiscal year or the remaining part of any fiscal year to deviate materially from the board's Ends priorities, risk financial jeopardy, or fail to be derived from a multiyear plan.

4.11.1 The Head of School shall not fail to maintain a financial projection that is regularly updated.

4.11.2 The Head of School shall not fail to be knowledgeable of our current cash position in order to ensure that large non-recurring expenditures can be funded.

4.11.3 The Head of School shall not operate the school in such a manner that accumulated deficits increase.

4.12 Financial Conditions and Activities

With respect to actual, ongoing financial conditions and activities, the Head of School shall not cause or allow the development of financial jeopardy, compromised ethics, or material deviation from board priorities established in Ends policies.

4.12.1 The Head of School shall not establish bank accounts without prior approval of the Board.

4.12.2 The Head of School shall not acquire debt on behalf of the school without prior approval of the Board.

4.12.3 The Head of School shall not open any investment accounts without prior approval of the Board, nor shall the HOS invest school funds in investment vehicles that risk loss of principle.

4.12.4 The Head of School shall not deposit fundraising proceeds into any account other than accounts previously established for ongoing operations.

4.12.5 The Head of School shall not fail to ensure debts are paid as per established schedules, or sooner.

4.12.6 The Head of School shall not fail to implement strategies for the collection of outstanding debts.

4.12.7 The Head of School shall not prepare expense checks.

4.12.8 The Head of School shall not fail to submit to the Board treasurer (or his/her designee) reimbursement claims that will be paid to the Head of School.

4.12.9 The Head of School may maintain a petty cash fund of \$300. Reimbursements from said fund shall only be made with appropriate documentation and shall be for appropriate school purchases. The Head of School shall not spend more than \$3600 in petty cash in a year.

4.12.10 The Head of School shall not fail to reasonably substantiate annual parent fees (eg., textbook rental fees and field trip expenses) that adhere to legal restrictions relevant to public schools.

4.12.10.1 The Head of School shall not require or lead parents to believe that they are required to pay for students to participate in optional activities (clubs, service projects, fundraisers).

4.12.11 The Head of School shall not fail to implement and abide by operational policies with regard to parent and community gifts and donations.

4.12.11.1 The Head of School shall not fail to follow any tax law regarding donations.

4.12.11.2 The Head of School shall not accept and shall prohibit staff from accepting gifts (financial or in-kind) that:

- Were collected by an organization or in a manner that conflicts with the goals or positive public image of GMA.
- Begin an ongoing program that the school would be unwilling or unable to continue when the gift or grant funds are exhausted.
- Interfere with staff accomplishment of board established End Policies.
- Add to the staff workload or otherwise bring undesirable or hidden costs to the organization.
- Imply endorsement of any product or business
- Conflict with any laws.

4.12.12 Should an audit beyond the scope of the bi-annual SBOA audit be required, the HOS is not authorized to select the auditor(s)/auditing firm.