

1.2 Founding Group and School Leadership

14 *Del. C.* § 512(1)

Founding Group Membership [14 *Del. C.* § 512(1)]

a. Key members of the Founding Group

Jesse Reeves, President

Mr. Reeves, who works with Barnes & Thornburg LLP as the Director of Lateral Recruiting is the Board President of Montessori Works. Mr. Reeves will be instrumental in building community relationships in Sussex County and state wide to support the school.

Linda Zankowsky, Ed.D., Vice President

Dr. Zankowsky, former Head of Wilmington Montessori School, and past Delaware school principal, is the associate director of the Delaware Center for Teacher Education at the University of Delaware. Dr. Zankowsky has the following Delaware certifications: Certified Central Office Personnel, Elementary Teacher, Teacher of Middle School English/Language Arts, Principal/Assistant Principal, Reading Specialist, Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent. Dr. Zankowsky will provide guidance in hiring Montessori teachers and leadership for the school and in curriculum and instructional practices.

E. McCrae Harrison, Secretary

Ms. Harrison, former director and teacher at the Elementary Workshop Montessori School, now oversees the Montessori Academy at Christina, Delaware's first public Montessori program. Certified Teacher of Elementary, Principal/Assistant Principal, Teacher of Middle Level English and Social Studies. Ms. Harrison will provide leadership related to the implementation of the Montessori approach and curriculum in a public school.

Mark Conces, Treasurer

Mr. Conces a senior vice president at Citizens Bank, has extensive finance, marketing, and management experience across a diverse set of industries. He is a Montessori parent and former treasurer of the board of Wilmington Montessori School.

Christine Carrino Gorowara, Ph.D.

Dr. Gorowara is the senior associate director at the Delaware Center for Teacher Education at the University of Delaware. Dr. Gorowara provides support for the teacher pipeline work of Montessori Works and is involved in development of a Montessori Training program. Her experience with certification and accreditation will ensure that SMS has well qualified Montessori certified teachers.

Scott Richardson, Ph.D.- Dr. Richardson has worked in private and public K-12/post-secondary schools in the U.S. and Japan. Certified in PA Elementary Education K-6 and Special Education K-12. Scott's special education background will assist the school leader in addressing the legal requirements of serving special education children.

Lori Smith, Ed.D.

Dr. Smith, a teacher in the Caesar Rodney School District, is certified by both the State of Delaware and the American Montessori Society. Dr. Smith is certified in Delaware for Teacher of Elementary, K-6, Teacher Middle Levels ELA and Social Studies grades 6-8, Principal and Assistant Principal and Central Office personnel. Dr. Smith’s combined Montessori and public school experience will be invaluable in curriculum development for SMS.

Sean Steward

Mr. Steward is a licensed Realtor with Home Team Realty and co-owner of Infiniti Transportation LLC in Bridgeville. He also serves as a board member of the Sussex County Association of Realtors and is past director of Delaware Association of Realtors. Mr. Steward was instrumental in securing Board members and helping Montessori Works build relationships in Sussex County. He will assist with locating the site for the school.

Trish Hermance

Ms. Hermance is currently the Director of the Delaware Teacher Institute at the University of Delaware. She has served as the Head of School for the Campus Community Charter School. Her experience in this role brings strength to our founding board around the charter application process and the running of a charter school. Ms. Hermance is certified in Delaware as a teacher of Elementary K-8, k-6, Teacher of Middle Level English and Social Studies, and a teacher of Nursery/Kindergarten. She will help to select the Sussex School Leader and provide guidance on charter law and policy.

Alonna Berry

Ms. Berry is the manager of teacher leadership development for Teach for America Delaware. A former fifth-grade math teacher and ninth-grade English teacher, Ms. Berry also served in the Delaware Department of Education as aide to the Chief Academic Officer and Associate Secretary of Education. Ms. Berry is certified in Delaware as an Elementary teacher grades K-6. She is a Sussex County community member supporting the Founding Board’s outreach efforts.

Founding Group Advisory Support

The following Montessori Works members will provide Advisory Support to the Founding Group:

Raymond Armstrong, Esq.

Mr. Armstrong, a former board member and parent of two children who attended Elementary Workshop Montessori School, is a public defender and an attorney with the firm of Giordano, DelCollo & Werb. He also serves as a member of the advisory board of First State Montessori Academy. He provides legal counsel to the founding board.

Carol Holzman

Ms. Holzman is the Executive Director for Cadbury Senior Lifestyles retirement community in Lewes. Prior to moving to Delaware, she worked at Washington Montessori School in

Washington, CT, where her son attended through 7th grade and daughter through 4th grade. Although her children are now in their 20’s, Ms. Holzman has an undying passion for Montessori education and is a community liaison for building parent interest in the school.

Letters of support in the attachments include additional advisors to the Founding Board.

b. Founding Group’s collective qualifications:

The chart below illustrates the Founding Board’s specific qualifications:

Required Experience	Founding Board Members
<p>K-12 Public Education - Six of our board members have experience working in K-12 public education in Delaware as teachers, school leaders, Delaware Department of Education employees, or in school district finance. Five of those listed are certified by the state of Delaware as school leaders or teachers. These are noted with an *.</p>	<p>*Linda Zankowsky *McCrae Harrison *Lori Smith *Trish Hermance *Alonna Berry Scott Richardson – PA cert</p>
<p>Design and Operation of a Charter School – Our members have provided charter school leaders and been involved in the application and reauthorization of charter schools in Delaware.</p>	<p>Trish Hermance McCrae Harrison Linda Zankowsky</p>
<p>School Leadership, Administration, Governance - All members have non-profit governance experience on various boards. Those listed have experience in school leadership and governance either in public schools or independent schools.</p>	<p>Linda Zankowsky Trish Hermance Mark Conces Jesse Reeves McCrae Harrison Christine Carrino Gorowara Scott Richardson</p>
<p>Research base curriculum/instructional strategies / Common Core – The members listed have been involved in the implementation of common core and research based instructional strategies in public schools and in Montessori schools both independent and public.</p>	<p>Trish Hermance Lori Smith Linda Zankowsky Alonna Berry McCrae Harrison Scott Richardson</p>
<p>Business management – Board members listed have run small businesses, provided financial oversight to independent school boards, and have experience in public school finance.</p>	<p>Jesse Reeves Mark Conces Sean Steward</p>
<p>Personnel management – Board members listed have managed small businesses, run recruiting businesses, or managed school personnel issues.</p>	<p>Jesse Reeves Mark Conces Sean Steward Linda Zankowsky Trish Hermance McCrae Harrison</p>

<p>Diversity Issues – outreach, instruction, enrollment – Board members listed have experience with meeting the needs of school communities dealing with cultural and economic diversity related to instruction, enrollment, and marketing schools.</p>	<p>Linda Zankowsky Trish Hermance McCrae Harrison Alonna Berry Scott Richardson Lori Smith</p>
<p>At-risk populations and children with disabilities, ELL, migrant/homeless – Board members listed have led or taught in schools serving at-risk populations. They understand the regulations and legalities involved in serving a diverse population.</p>	<p>Linda Zankowsky Trish Hermance McCrae Harrison Alonna Berry Scott Richardson Lori Smith</p>
<p>School operations – funding/finance, school lunch/breakfast, health and safety Listed members have direct experience with financials related to independent and public schools. Trish Hermance has direct experience with school operations in a Charter School.</p>	<p>Mark Conces Jesse Reeves Trish Hermance Linda Zankowsky McCrae Harrison</p>
<p>Parent and community engagement – While all founding board members are involved in parent and community engagement the listed members are particularly involved in Sussex County where they reside.</p>	<p>Sean Steward Carol Holzman Alonna Berry Lori Smith - Kent</p>

c. Describe the Founding Group’s ties to and knowledge of the proposed school community.
Jesse Reeves is a Montessori parent whose son attended First State Montessori Academy, Delaware’s first public Montessori school. Mr. Reeves’ daughter also attended the Elementary Workshop Montessori School, and both his son and daughter attended the Montessori Learning Centre. He will directly serve SMS through his experience in staffing, business operations, and board work. These together with his commitment to quality Montessori for under-served populations make him crucial to this board's endeavor.

Linda Zankowsky brings expertise in school leadership, curriculum design and implementation, Montessori education, and the public-school world. Dr. Zankowsky is the former head of school of Wilmington Montessori and a former principal of Mount Pleasant Elementary School and Townsend Elementary School. She is certified in Montessori school leadership by the Center for Montessori Teacher Education, a member of the American Montessori Society, the Montessori Teachers Association of Delaware and the advisory board of the First State Montessori Academy. She is affiliated with the Montessori Public Policy Initiative, National Association for Montessori in the Public Sector, the American Montessori Society, the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education, the University of Delaware, and is an advisory board member for First State Montessori School. She will support the curriculum development, identification of a school leader, and development of a Montessori teacher pipeline.

E. McCrae Harrison has been involved in Montessori education as a teacher and administrator for over 30 years in first private and now public Montessori schools in Delaware. A current advisory board member for First State Montessori Academy, Ms. Harrison was a founding board member for the school. In addition to her board role for Montessori Works, Ms. Harrison is a Board Member for the Montessori Teachers' Association of Delaware and a commissioner on the American Montessori Society's School Accreditation Commission. Ms. Harrison's Montessori knowledge of Montessori education and its implementation in many schools across the country will support the curriculum and instructional leadership of the school.

Ray Armstrong's legal acumen, experience as a teacher, and background as a founding board member for both First State Montessori Academy and Thomas Moyer Academy serve this board's needs. Mr. Armstrong provides legal guidance to the founding board.

Mark Conces' years as a board member at a large, private Montessori school have been helpful to this board as it works through founding a new Montessori school in Sussex County. His knowledge of financials and small business structures will ensure the financial stability of the school during the founding year. Mr. Conces will provide advisement to the operating board when established.

Christine Carrino Gorowara is committed to quality education beginning at the earliest levels and has guided this board's work all along. She was previously a vice president at the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). Her children attended Elementary Workshop Montessori School. Her affiliation with the University of Delaware, experience the CAEP, and commitment to Montessori will facilitate the development of a Montessori teacher training program to support the school with future teachers.

Carol Holzman brings both Montessori experience and connections within and knowledge of Sussex County to this work. She is an active member of the Sussex community engagement subcommittee and will assist in the building of an operating board.

Scott Richardson's deep interest in quality education for all types of learners (particularly those with special needs) and his experience in many facets of education make him an integral member of this charter team. He is a member of the American Montessori Society and a former board member of the New School of Lancaster, an AMS accredited Montessori school. He is an educator, author, advocate, and Montessori parent. He is a curriculum theorist who specializes in special education, international/comparative educational models, and various curricular approaches to schooling.

Lori Smith reinforces this board's strength in Montessori know-how. Her years as a Montessori teacher, Montessori certification, experience in traditional, public schools, and knowledge of at-risk populations have all been integral to the board's work in Sussex County thus far, and will be vitally important to helping the school address the implementation of the Montessori philosophy within the context of the public school and DDOE expectations.

Sean Steward has deep roots in Sussex County. He brings these connections and his real estate expertise to this work. He provides direct connections to business leaders and potential funders in Sussex County. Mr. Steward will be supporting the team in locating a facility for the school and in building the operating board.

Alonna Berry experiences with Teach for America brings an important outlook for diversity and at-risk youth to the school. In addition, her experience with the Delaware Leadership Program has created important relationships within Sussex County to help with outreach, parent engagement and community development issues in the area.

J. Brett Taylor has been instrumental in organizing the board through this work. His background in charter-writing, experience in school finance, and sheer drive have helped to focus the work thus far. Dr. Taylor will continue as a project manager for the founding year and as support to the operating board.

- **Explain how and why the Founding Group decided to form a school in Delaware.**

Montessori Works started as an idea grounded in fairness. As educators, parents, and community leaders who are aware of the benefits of the Montessori approach and how it prepares children to be innovative, creative, leaders in the world community, we believe that Montessori education should be accessible to all children in Delaware whose families seek it. Started in 2012, Montessori Works is a school development organization founded to increase accessible, authentic, quality Montessori education in Delaware. Montessori Works supports the replication of a proven model of education that serves children in over 400 public schools in the United States. The board includes Montessori experts, educators, parents, and others who are working to make Montessori programs a more broadly available option in the public arena. Montessori Works has close ties to the Montessori Academies at Christina (MAC), which operate on a Montessori school-within-a-school model in two buildings in the Christina School District, as well as to the public charter school First State Montessori Academy (FSMA). Many of the Montessori Works Board members participated as advisors to the development of the FSMA charter application and curriculum.

Provide, as **Attachment 1 (Founding Group Résumés and Biographies)**.