



## ASSOCIATION MONTESSORI INTERNATIONALE ELEMENTARY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

AMI-EAA, a member-run professional association of AMI elementary teachers and trainers, provides a supportive community for the exchange of ideas and promotes the principles of Montessori education.

### **AMI-EAA Board Meeting Minutes Friday, July 5, 2019—Summer Conference, Tustin, Michigan**

**Attending:** Amanda Cade (Membership Coordinator/Secretary), Rachel Eberhard (Conference Coordinator), Rachel Kimboko (Treasurer/Vice Chair), Melinda Nielsen (Chair), Regina Sokolowski (Outreach Coordinator)

**Absent:** Yvonne Froehlich (Publications Coordinator)

### **Minutes and Officers' Reports**

#### **April 2019 Minutes**

April 27, 2019 minutes were received and approved.

#### **Agenda**

July 2019 agenda was received and approved. Agenda items are needed no later than the week prior to a meeting.

#### **Officer Reports**

Officer reports were approved after general discussion and questions. Officer reports should be in at least a week prior to the meeting.

### **Organizational**

#### **Refresher Course 2020**

##### **Speaker Update**

The speaker is close to being finalized. EAA is able to pay the speaker an amount the speaker and EAA agrees on, but it is important to use caution in how we move forward because it will impact future Refresher Course (RC) contracts and be updated in the Policies and Procedures. There was discussion on increasing the stipend and/or funding the production of the presentation. Melinda has checked with Adam Lewis on the flexibility of working outside of the RC handbook.

There was discussion on raising the Speaker Honorarium Scale. The next step to move toward in finalizing a contract is for the RC 2020 Elementary Speaker to write up a proposal for what her expenses are and rough out travel and expenses for research and keep EAA abreast of the cost. There was discussion on paying per diem for the people traveling to do the video in a classroom. While this does increase the cost of presenters, it is another investment with our EAA budget.



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### **Welcome Speech**

For the welcome speech, Melinda and Debby Riordan (AMI/USA Executive Director) will get up and welcome people, introduce themselves, Philip O'Brien (AMI President), and someone to introduce the keynote.

### **Issues arising within AMI/USA and Attendance Options**

Melinda is working with AMI/USA on the title of the RC—The Montessori Experience: A Refresher Course and Workshops. The RC portion will remain open to diploma holders of the level they are attending, and the workshops are open to all.

### **Conference Coordinator**

With Rachel E transitioning off of the board, Gayle Waner, previous Treasurer/Vice Chair is starting the preparation work as interim Conference Coordinator for the RC 2020, and Rachel E is continuing for the UK 2019 SC.

### **Refresher Course 2021**

#### **Speaker**

Following the calendar of previous RC presenters, there was discussion on who might present for 2021. There was also discussion on using a theme and then using that theme when considering speakers. There was discussion on approaching the PAs with a topic to see if there were presenters who might be knowledgeable. Possible topics of interest are physical sciences beyond the geography album (chemistry, physics). Amanda will update the RC presenters record in Dropbox.

### **Summer Conference 2019**

#### **Evaluation**

The feedback was generally positive. The most critical feedback was the timing of the conference with it being over the Fourth of July.

### **Update on Summer Conference 2019 (England)**

Currently, there are about 25 people signed up with most from the European Union. Amanda and Rachel K will be running the conference. Amy Eshelby and Maryse Lepoutre-Postlewaite don't need much for their presentations, and Rob Gueterbock (UK SC On-Site Coordinator) has ideas for outings and has set up transportation. Prior to the event, Amanda and Rachel need to go over the SC Handbook. They are responsible for registration, opening gathering, and sharing sessions by introducing the sharing guidelines.

There are three presenters who have each committed to a full day of presentations, three hour-long sharing sessions, and a day for an outing. Rachel K and Amanda will organize the closing with first-time attendees, solicit for articles, take photos, and at the sign in, have a board for signing up to write articles, introduce speakers, take notes during sharing, and type book/resources recommendations. Attendees could also write about their schools for



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the newsletter. Rachel E will write an email including all of the details to Amanda, Rachel K, and the organizers. Rob will need to figure out how he will be reimbursed. Rob will send The Montessori Place policy handbook to attendees. There was discussion on their alcohol policy. Since this is the first European conference, we won't offer EWU credits. Prior to the SC UK, Rachel and Amanda can get the details for social media for posting. Amanda and Rachel K will do a brief presentation on EAA-Talk and the website.

### **Summer Conference 2020**

#### **Updates, Topic, Location**

Plans are moving forward for SC 2020. The prices aren't available yet for finalizing the contract. The past few years, EAA has collected proposals and then created a theme. There was discussion on how to reach out for proposals: general call or a specific theme. There could also be an inspiring pitch to invite people to create presentations. Rachel E will send Amanda previous conference proposals for archiving in Dropbox. Rachel E will also create a call for proposals to include in the newsletter and send to Yvonne and Amanda. Amanda will update the SC location, presenters, etc., in Dropbox. Melinda will also reach out to the PAs for suggestions on strong presenters.

### **Summer Conference 2021**

#### **Theme, Location, On-Site Coordinator**

There was discussion on a suggestion for SC 2021.

### **Affiliates Conference (Baltimore)**

#### **Update, Responsibilities**

For the people involved in organizing the affiliates conference, there is an application and website called Monday with a timeline, priorities, and who is in responsible for the task. EAA's responsibility is staffing and goody bags. Rachel K is the point person and has contacted people to support her. Melinda will try to attend depending on her schedule. Melinda will check with Debby on giving Rachel K access to Monday.

### **Update Summer Conference Handbook**

There was discussion on the responsibilities of the on-site coordinator in creating the registration form, tracking attendees, organizing transportation as well as possible platforms for online registration that could be used instead of Formstack. The Conference Coordinator will continue to create the registration form and will do so using the information the on-site coordinator has collected. The on-site coordinator could track more options to have available for room arrangements (single, double, family), transportation, etc. Rachel E will create a list of things for the on-site coordinator to get information on and then the Conference Coordinator will add these to the registration form. Rachel E will create a timeline for the on-site coordinator for introducing self, connecting with local schools, transportation options, etc. For the registration fields, offer an option for a deposit rather than full payment required, include all the other details that are on the membership form. Rachel E and Amanda will connect on the registration form. Another point to add to



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the calendar would be to send the flyer to the Outreach Coordinator for sending to AMI, Publications Coordinator to add to social media, and Membership Coordinator to share in membership emails. Rachel E will update the Summer Conference handbook and send to Amanda for Dropbox.

### **Bylaws: “Supporting elementary teachers in the United States”**

There was discussion around the purpose in the II. Purpose and Services section of the bylaws. The bylaws support the work of EAA in the United States and internationally.

### **Schedule 2019 – 2020**

Current event and proposed and dates include:

October 6, 2019 12:00 pm CST EAA board meeting

October 11, 12, 2019 Baltimore, MD Affiliate Conference Rachel K is EAA point person and Melinda is trying to go

January 25, 2020 10:00 am CST EAA board meeting

February 13-17, 2020 RC in Seattle, WA, arrive Thursday early afternoon, fly out Monday evening, Gayle and Melinda will arrive Wednesday afternoon, Regina is not planning on attending. We will debrief and meet following the event on Monday depending on flights February 17, 2020. If possible for those leaving on Monday, schedule a late afternoon/early evening flight on Monday.

April 16-20, 2020, Amsterdam AGM, Melinda is working on going and Rachel K is already going to be in London. Thursday is the day to arrive and events start on Friday. The conference is Saturday and Sunday. Monday is the research day. Melinda and Rachel K are planning to go. Regina will connect with Melinda and Rachel K ahead of the AGM.

May 2, 2020 10:00 am CST EAA board meeting

Summer meeting TBD EAA board meeting

### **RC 2019 Pedagogical Advisor (PA) rotation – Allyn Travis replaced Greg: What is the next rotation?**

Current PAs: Alison Awes, Carol Hicks, Ann Dunne, Allyn Travis, Phyllis Pottish Lewis (PA Emeritus). Alison rotates off at the RC 2020. There was discussion on possible PAs to transition on at the RC 2020. The PA rotation schedule needs to be reconfigured.

### **RC 2020 Board transitions – Conference coordinator and discuss transition**

There was discussion on how to let more people know about how to get involved on EAA's board and if there is more transparency on how board members are chosen and the bylaws. Rachel K is considering writing an article about how to become involved on the board, what the process is, and making a call to people to get involved.

For board transitions, the slate of candidates is published no later than three months prior to the Annual Business Meeting, which is November 16, 2019. Nominations can be submitted at least one month prior to February 16, 2020.



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After reviewing the bylaws, voting members include current members, ETOTs, trainers, new graduates, but not trainees or general courtesy members. There was discussion on those who have opted out of MailChimp who would need a special email with just the slate of candidates. The slate will be published in September and closed a month later in October. Amanda will send the slate in MailChimp and contact members opting out of MailChimp as well.

### **Financial**

#### **RC financials**

From the 2019 RC EAA Income Statement there was discussion on hotel room costs. The room cost for EAA board members was unclear. There was a lot spent on gift bags. Looking at the total cost with the number of gift bags purchased, each gift bag was ~\$38. Track hours for the RC and send them to Melinda. For the RC 2020, begin tracking when you work on RC tasks. The details for the AMI/USA labor were not delineated on the EAA Income Summary. There was a discussion on having EAA's volunteer labor reflected in the final bill. Melinda will contact Debby about the hotel expenses, Appreciation Dinner cost with microphone, CEU credits and how they work and if EAA pays and if they are in the total or not, gift bag cost, labor, and moving forward for 2020. Regina will send the list of people who volunteered and the number of hours they volunteered. With the travel expenses, EAA is not paying expenses for AMI/USA staff just speakers.

### **Publicity/Communications**

Review April's minutes for action items, agenda items. There had been discussion on a retractable banner. For future business cards, include what EAA stands for, social media, tagline (Supporting our global community—updated to Supporting our global elementary community). AMI might have stock photos for us to use for the banner. Regina will create some business cards for us to give feedback on. Using the colors of AMI's logo could be a way to unify the look.

Regina will contact the people from the Summer Conference who volunteered to write the articles for the newsletter and have them submit them to her. For the books and resources, Regina will ask for photos, books, and other resources before she creates a final list. Regina recorded the closing ceremony and will work with Rachel K to create it. There was discussion on including the UK SC in the newsletter and that will be the place for the article encouraging people to get involved in the board by Rachel K, this could also be a place to invite people to join committees. The idea is to have two fall newsletters or a fall and winter newsletter.

### **Outreach**

#### **Training centers contacting up front**

AMI has sent the list of courses starting and ending in the next year. One idea is to send an initial mailing when courses begin. Regina will contact each trainer and have them



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distribute the details about elementary training. She will also include a link to the online membership form. She will also update the congratulations letter and send to Amanda to add to Dropbox.

### **International mailing**

It is difficult and expensive to mail the crowns to some of the locations. Regina is considering a third party mailing option. Melinda suggested partnering with a material-making company that might ship and include our crowns as a complimentary option, which could include a postcard for the company. There was discussion on the cost and the impact of the mailings. We could also try to have an “agent” to send packages to and have them distributed from there. Regina would also like a video or photo montage to share.

## **Membership**

### **EAA-Talk activity and responsibilities**

Amanda will work to get Rachel K access to be an admin on EAA-Talk. Sparking interest on EAA-Talk could be a role on a membership support committee. Yvonne could also post some of the same articles, ideas, posts on EAA-Talk that she does on Facebook.

### **EAA-Talk Alternatives**

There was general discussion around possible alternatives because Yahoo Groups can feel outdated, be difficult to get into, and sometimes unreliable. Google Groups, Facebook both have challenges to them. Before we move forward, we want to make sure that if we transition to a new system, it's a better system. This could be another opportunity for a committee to work on. Features to consider are archiving, translating, ability to moderate, add/remove members frequently, easy to access, etc.

### **Grants to cover membership for public school members**

Indaba might be a possibility to look into. Regina and Amanda will work on this together. Regina will reach out to Carol Hicks first. Amanda will look into some other options as well.

### **Membership Form**

There was an idea to have a section on the website to ask members if they would like to sponsor a member or gift a membership whether they knew who they were or not. There could be specific people to sponsor a membership for, or an international member, charter school teacher, etc. There could also be a field for donating to the PPL Scholarship Fund. Other fields on the form to change include a non-specific email service.

## **General**

### **Board position responsibilities considering work load, goals, committees**

For on-boarding, having one day at the RC was helpful but it is not enough. It could be helpful to connect ahead of joining the board, to have more time to meet at the RC, and to have continued mentorship from the previous board member. It's important to be mindful of what aspect of our work a committee could help support and have those in mind for the



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October meeting. Some of the positions have more opportunity to have committee support. Amanda will create a Google Doc and share it to add ideas. We could start with the people who have volunteered for board positions. Reflecting on the usefulness and impact of our tasks is important to reflect on how we spend our time. Amanda will check on how often things are accessed and the statistics in MailChimp.

### **Action Items**

Ideas for how to move forward on your action items: add them to the top of the agenda after minutes and officers' reports (Revisit Action Items from [Date of Previous Meeting](#)). Amanda will send action items at the beginning of months when she's updating memberships.

### **Dropbox**

For storage of organizational information, is Dropbox the best option? At this point, it is. Rachel K shared steps for how to only have folders necessary to your position on your computer Dropbox folder to limit the number of people needing to pay for a Dropbox subscription.

### **Survey**

The survey will open with something about how EAA is a member-run board/organization and membership feedback is part of the work. The AMI survey is a great place to start for ideas. Some ideas: how long have you been a member, how many years have you taught Montessori elementary, what year did you finish your elementary training, how long have been an EAA member (0-5, 6-10, etc.), what part of your membership benefits do you actively use, how could EAA better serve you in your practice, general comments, how have you been involved in EAA, how would you like to support EAA (serve on the board, be on a committee, etc.). Rachel E will create the survey in SurveyMonkey. Amanda will get the login information to her.