Letter from the Board of Directors

Dear Kennebec Montessori School Community,

In the words of Maria Montessori, “Growth is not merely a harmonious increase in size, but a transformation.” The past two years have been a time of tremendous growth and change at Kennebec Montessori School (KMS). We are entering our second full school year in the newly expanded building, and we are also entering a new phase of transformation – a time for strengthening our community, refocusing on our Montessori mission, and remembering the love of learning that brings us all together at this special school. KMS remains dedicated to providing a high-quality independent Montessori education to students in central Maine in both our Primary and Elementary Programs.

This Annual Report, the first of its kind for KMS, summarizes our milestones and financials for the 2018-19 fiscal year, which ended August 31, 2019. In May of 2019, KMS held its first ever school-wide election for the Board of Directors, and in August 2019 we welcomed Erika Verrier as our Interim Head of School. We are grateful to be serving on your leadership team, and we view this Annual Report as the beginning of an ongoing conversation about crafting a vibrant future for KMS. We have much to celebrate about this past year, and many exciting initiatives on the horizon.

The Annual Report is an opportunity to share with our community both our strengths and our opportunities for improvement. Our strengths may already be evident to you, as your children are learning from dedicated teachers, developing lifelong friendships, and blossoming both academically and socially. This report will underscore these strengths, but also shed light on areas that the Board is working to address. The financial data reported here is based on preliminary data, pending our annual audit. As you will see, our recent period of physical growth has increased our operating costs, and we have not yet grown our fundraising or enrollment efforts to follow suit. The new Board of Directors and Head of School are working diligently to execute prudent financial management, increase enrollment, promote community-building, enhance communication, and diversify our fundraising efforts. In the year ahead, we will continue to provide high-quality academic and enrichment opportunities while closely monitoring expenses.

We hope that you will join us in celebrating our amazing teachers and students and commit to working together to build and strengthen our community. Without the engagement and support of our families, KMS could not do all that it does. The 32nd Annual Auction and our new Annual Fund (coming in 2020) are just some of the ways that you can partner with us to ensure the gift of a KMS education continues to be affordable and accessible.

Sincerely,

The KMS Board of Directors

"The greatest gifts we can give our children are roots of responsibility and wings of independence."
-Maria Montessori

Board of Directors

Until June 2019
Kelli McCannell* (Chair)
Loi Santiago* (Vice Chair)
Chris Batson (Treasurer)
Margi Browne* (until April 2019)
Lisa Desautels-Poliquin
Pamela Thompson

Beginning June 2019
Lindsey Bumil* (Chair)
Josh Martin* (Vice Chair)
Katie Clark* (Secretary)
Samara Gunter* (Treasurer)
Margi Browne*
Darci Grotton
Mary-Lou Ogden

*KMS Parent
Note: Erika Verrier was elected to the Board in June 2019, and is on a leave of absence to serve as Interim Head of School.
Letter from the Head of School

Dear KMS Community,

Inspired by the growth in recent years at KMS, I am honored to work alongside talented teachers and staff, collaborate with a generous parent community, and feel support from committed Board members. At KMS, we uphold a strong mission and have much to be thankful for. I welcome you to gather and reflect on this as well as the rapid growth and milestones we have experienced in recent years. Furthermore, I invite you to experience the pride in supporting the future at KMS as we continue to thrive and carry forth our important mission.

“Providing children with an educational program rooted in Dr. Maria Montessori’s philosophy that nurtures a love of learning and fosters respect for self, others and the environment.”

During my time as Acting and Interim Head of School, I have recognized the “big work” in embracing this transformative period as an opportunity to continue thriving as a vibrant institution in our community. In partnership with the KMS Board, the past months have been devoted to understanding the financial position, operations, culture, and need for enhancing program sustainability at KMS. My daily focus has been on supporting and growing with the team of teachers and staff at KMS while immersing myself in understanding the operations to promote efficiencies. I aspire to protect the value of our programs and to support opportunities that enhance the student experience and promote the uniqueness of KMS. Beyond the philosophy, your students and your family’s commitment to KMS is what fuels my passion for serving our school.

Dr. Maria Montessori inspires us to appreciate the patterns and challenges that children experience when mastering new endeavors. She embraces challenges as a natural part of the growing process; as opportunities to cultivate a love of learning and thereby facilitate growth and development. Watching KMS navigate through the introduction of new programs, projects, and opportunities reminds me of the parallels we see while watching our children grow and experience new opportunity. Through this development there is inevitable challenge.

The Annual Meeting is an exciting opportunity to promote transparency regarding challenges and opportunities, and invite collaboration which we know can lead to success. Looking at our beautiful school, seeing the dedication by our team of educators, and realizing the impact that KMS has on the lives of our children is a common ground from which we are all deeply rooted. Recent evidence of our devoted community can be seen from the new art space and elementary wing to the added play spaces, solar shed, gardens, and labyrinth. These recent milestones serve to remind us of the strength we have as a community and the hope we share for the future at KMS. We are thankful for your continued support and dedication to KMS and look forward to cultivating impactful opportunities to keep our school thriving!

Best Regards,

Erika Verrier
Interim Head of School
Milestones

- Seven sixth-year students completed their programs at KMS in the Spring of 2019. These students were our first group to complete a 3-year cycle in the Upper Elementary program.
- KMS grew the Outdoor Classroom Program and expanded enrichment opportunities in 2018-19.
- KMS fulfilled the goal of making KMS a school that educates students from Primary through Upper Elementary grades and held a Ribbon Cutting and Celebration of Growth in May 2019 recognizing the culmination of our expanded building.
- Last year, we added three new playsets, a solar shed, a labyrinth, a rock wall, and a soccer field to our campus.
- Native Notions installed beautiful gardens around the new building, connecting the outdoor space to the new playground and solar shed.
- KMS launched a new Garden Club, which worked hard to move the hoop house and grow beautiful gardens. Many families supported the Garden Club over the summer by tending to the garden.
- KMS held its first ever school-wide election for the Board of Directors in May 2019.
Staff Facts & Figures

- In 2018 - 19, KMS expanded its staff, adding valuable skills in Before / After Care and Outdoor Education with the addition of Kyle Ravana and Maegan Conway. We also welcomed Michelle Cronau and Sonia Fan to the ranks of our Assistant Teachers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Data</th>
<th>2018-19</th>
<th>2019-20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Staff</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-Time Teaching Staff</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-Time Teaching/Support Staff</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Staff</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- In 2018 - 2019, David Holinger served as our Head of School.
- For 2019 - 2020, we welcome Erika Verrier to KMS as our Interim Head of School.
- Curricular work at KMS is overseen by Education Coordinators Katie Gilley (Primary) and Elizabeth Hoffman (Elementary).

Professional Development

- KMS teachers hold more than 100 combined years of teaching experience. Our Head Teachers average more than 15 years of teaching experience.
- Our dedicated teachers are lifelong learners themselves, each participating in at least 40 hours of professional development annually.
- In 2018-19, administrative and teaching staff visited and observed other Montessori schools, attended Maine Montessori Association trainings, participated in the American Montessori Society (AMS) National Conference, and took AMS webinars.
- Teachers used the AMS Virtual Pass for the National Conference to earn up to 11 hours of professional development each.
- Eva Guolette provided teachers with a lesson about how to use the labyrinth.
- We would like to recognize recent professional milestones for several of our teachers. Congratulations!
  - Head Teacher Elizabeth Hoffman completed her M.Ed. in Special Education (K-8) from the University of Maine in 2018.
  - Head Teacher Bridget Christen completed her Montessori training in August 2018.
  - Head Teacher Katie Gilley obtained “professional” status for her State of Maine teaching credential in 2018.
- Peace education is another fundamental aspect of Montessori education. In 2018, KMS was awarded an American Montessori Society Peace Grant that supported peace education training for teachers.
Our KMS Staff
Curricular Highlights

- In the 2018-2019 school year, Montessori curriculum continued to provide a steady hum of work and interest during daily work cycles. Children not only became readers, authors, poets, and mathematicians by exploring the materials and working collaboratively, but also explored several key cultural themes.
  - In primary, children loved learning about the continents, with focus on the animals, and landforms.
  - In Lower Elementary, children learned about the scientific process by completing a series of experiments in Nature of the Elements, and applied their scientific study skills to learn about Composition of the Earth and the Rock Cycle.
  - Upper Elementary applied their skills to study the History of Museums, the History of Maine, and Chemistry, and Advanced Classification of Plants and Animals.
- Students celebrated large academic gains at the end of the year with Primary students proudly sharing completed number rolls, beautiful maps and reading charts while third years presented year-long research reports, and our first group of Upper El students completed, memorized and presented Expert reports on topics ranging from Ballet to the History of Technology.
- It is a joy to watch the Montessori curriculum not only cultivate students with strong academic skills, but students who work collaboratively, share their passions, communicate clearly, and care deeply about the world we all share.
- Field trips and visiting speakers are an important part of the Montessori curriculum. Below are highlights from our curriculum in 2018-19.

### 2018-19 Program Highlights

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Lower El</th>
<th>Upper El</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lemieux’s Apple Orchard</td>
<td>Tanglewood Overnight Trip</td>
<td>Sixth-year trip to the bear den with Kyle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.C. Bates Museum</td>
<td>Third-year student Year Long Presentations</td>
<td>Sixth-year Expert Presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterville Opera House</td>
<td>Cross-country skiing at Lakewood Golf Course</td>
<td>Washburn-Norlands Living History Center trip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dew Haven (Extended Day)</td>
<td>Contra dancing at the Vassalboro Grange</td>
<td>Visit to the Maine Veterans Home with Cynthia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misty Acres Alpaca Farm</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Parent volunteers generously shared their skills with students in support of our curriculum.
  - Melissa Sullivan taught quilting with Upper Elementary students.
  - Ian Glasspool gave talks about fossils and paleontology.
  - Vaughan Woodruff presented about the Solar Shed and Solar Electricity.
  - Margi Browne presented about Santa Lucia’s Day.
- Sean Landry spoke to elementary students about relationships and feelings.
- Deb Rich from KVCC spoke to Primary students about Personal Body Safety.
- The Frogtown Mountain Puppeteers performed and shared their incredible story at the Teddy Bear Picnic.
• In Montessori education the rich curriculum extends beyond the classroom. We have expanded these opportunities over the past several years. Our curriculum includes special instruction in Art, Fitness, Language, Music, and Outdoor Classroom.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Highlights</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>▪ Open Art Studio was a favorite addition for Primary students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ During Youth Art Month (YAM) we participated in a Square 1 Art fundraiser and the annual Common Street Art Show.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Holly created fun and engaging murals with students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitness</td>
<td>▪ Tiffany led Extended Day &amp; Elementary students in Fitness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Primary students participated in Open Gym.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languages</td>
<td>▪ Elementary students participated in weekly Japanese lessons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ In 2019-20, KMS will add Mandarin to the Lower Elementary curriculum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>▪ Music education includes singing, tin whistles, and hand bells.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Upper El students had their first hand bells performance in Spring 2019.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor Classroom</td>
<td>▪ Children worked in the garden and beautified the grounds with new plants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Students learned ecology and biology concepts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ 2018-19 was the first year that Extended Day was offered Outdoor Classroom as a special.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Elementary students worked on a Hügelkultur project (garden bed built atop wood that feeds the garden with nutrients as the wood degrades).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• The 2019 KMS Summer Program served approximately 30 students, who enjoyed activities centered around weekly themes including Wildlife, Space, Insects, Color, and Art.
• Before / Aftercare continues to be a valuable aspect of the KMS program offerings. In 2018-19, Kyle incorporated more educational activities in Before / Aftercare.
Enrollment Facts & Figures

- 2018-19 enrollment was the highest in school history.
- 2018-19 was the third year of the Upper Elementary Program, and saw the completion of our first 3-year cycle of Upper Elementary Students. It was the second year that KMS offered two Lower Elementary classes, and the first full year in the new Lower Elementary classrooms.
- Primary enrollment remains at capacity in 2019-20.
- For 2019-20, we have a large Extended Day class (17).

- More families than in recent years chose not to reenroll their students following the 2018-19 year.
  - From 2018-19 to 2019-20, fewer Extended Day Students who completed the Primary Program enrolled in the Lower Elementary Program than in prior years.
  - At the end of 2018-19, more students in Lower Elementary left before completing than had done so the prior year, creating an unanticipated drop in enrollment in the middle of a program cycle.
- When KMS decided to pursue an expansion in 2016, demand for a Lower Elementary program was at an all-time high. Enrollment patterns tend to fluctuate over time, and it is natural to expect a period of adjustment after substantial growth.
- KMS will conduct a detailed enrollment analysis and modeling process to identify recruitment goals and strategies for 2020-21. Members of the Board have professional experience in enrollment management and data-based decision making.

Parent Education & Community Building 2018-19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent Workshops</th>
<th>Hosted Events</th>
<th>Community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bridging School and Home</td>
<td>Practicing Mindfulness with Children: ‘Wise Minds, Big Hearts</td>
<td>School Welcome Picnic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Language and Elementary Curriculum</td>
<td>Saturday Family Yoga</td>
<td>Bring Your Parent to School Night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math Across the Ages</td>
<td>Spirit Camp Sampler class</td>
<td>Teddy Bear Picnic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montessori in the Home</td>
<td></td>
<td>Special Person’s Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mother’s Day / Father’s Day Events</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Parent Education is off to a strong start in 2019-20; our September workshop titled “Montessori and Your Developing Child” drew forty parent participants.
Financials

### Revenue
- KMS is a tuition-dependent nonprofit institution. 97% of our annual revenue is from academic year tuition and our summer program.
- KMS has worked hard to maintain affordable tuition rates in order to promote accessibility.
- Our campus has grown, but our tuition rates and revenue have not grown at a comparable rate.
- The Annual Auction has been our primary fundraiser for many years. Leadership is pursuing multiple paths to generate new revenue, starting with adding new fundraising projects.

### Expenses
- Wages & Benefits (71%) are the major driver of expenses. KMS strives to offer competitive salaries and retain highly qualified educators.
- Facilities & Utilities and Mortgage Payments are larger for the new school footprint.
- Replacing light fixtures in the original building and adding the solar shed will help offset increased energy costs over time.
- Other program expenses include Montessori materials, equipment, classroom supplies, teacher training / professional development, speakers and field trips, student financial aid, and dues and publications.
Key Contributors to 2018-19 Shortfall

- Departure of the long-time bookkeeper in 2017, head of school in 2018, and Board members who completed their terms over the past several years resulted in loss of institutional knowledge.
- Delays in bookkeeping and budget information led to above-budget operations spending in 2018-19. Ownership of these tasks changed hands multiple times during leadership and front-office transitions which weakened oversight of financial processes.
- Tight labor markets and planned increases in the minimum wage increased staffing costs.
- Changes in staffing resulted in higher-than-budgeted wage bills.
  - In an effort to attract and retain qualified staff, some part-time positions were consolidated to create full-time job opportunities with benefits, which had associated costs for KMS. This decision has decreased staff turnover.
- The first full year of operating with our expanded footprint resulted in higher-than-expected facilities expenses.

Financial Analysis

- Following a period of significant construction and growth, in 2018-19, KMS experienced higher than anticipated expenses, leading to a deficit.
- KMS's long history of prudent budgeting means that we have substantial reserve funds and we will use these funds to cover the 2018-19 and 2019-20 operating deficits.

### KMS Budget 2018-19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenue</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Actual</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuition &amp; Program Revenue</td>
<td>906,583</td>
<td>901,092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising, Donations &amp; Other</td>
<td>27,500</td>
<td>36,169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5,599</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Revenue</td>
<td>934,083</td>
<td>942,860</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wages and Benefits</td>
<td>668,122</td>
<td>715,343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Program Expenses</td>
<td>53,080</td>
<td>75,932</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facility &amp; Utilities</td>
<td>60,340</td>
<td>85,330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortgage Payments</td>
<td>76,104</td>
<td>66,944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance, Legal &amp; Financial Services</td>
<td>31,900</td>
<td>27,343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>12,550</td>
<td>29,688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Expenses</td>
<td>902,096</td>
<td>1,000,581</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deficit/Surplus</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31,987</td>
<td>-57,721</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: All 2018-19 "Actual" figures are preliminary, pending completion of the annual audit.
Board of Directors Priorities for 2019-2020 and Beyond

- Our primary goal is to maintain the high-quality educational experience at KMS.
- The current Board began intensive information gathering in Summer 2019 and has reviewed or is in the process of reviewing all accounts, expenses, and financial agreements.
- The current leadership is undergoing a careful review of business processes, seeking expert guidance, and implementing best practices.
- The Board’s information-gathering process resulted in passage of an amended budget in September 2019 based on updated data. Loss of revenue from lower enrollment, combined with updated bookkeeping information, prompted the Board to revise the budget to reflect realistic expectations given current tuition revenue and existing commitments. The Board anticipates a deficit in 2019-20 due to these adjustments.

Strategies for Addressing the 2019-2020 Shortfall

Managing Expenses

- With Board support, the Interim Head of School has re-established internal control policies and procedures and implemented strategies to reduce expenses while maintaining the quality of our programs.
  - The Board and Interim Head of School have already implemented savings in contractor agreements, supplies and equipment, and technology costs.
- The Board has sought advice from our Certified Professional Accountant and employs a professional accounting firm to conduct annual financial audits. The Board is drawing on resources from the Maine Association of Nonprofits to strengthen our internal capacity in these areas. The leadership team continues to analyze our financial processes, update them for accuracy and efficiency, and assess the need for additional resources.

Diversifying Revenue Streams

- Diverse revenue streams, including an expanded focus on fundraising, are also critical to the financial health of the institution. KMS is considered a large nonprofit in the state of Maine, but our development operation does not include an Annual Fund, which is common at similarly sized nonprofits.
- Strong enrollment is key to a sound financial footing. We believe that strong retention and new enrollment require a warm and welcoming school climate and outreach that showcases the exceptional quality of our staff and the strength of our programs.
  - We will continue to focus on the quality of our rich programs, supporting our teachers to do the amazing work that they do in the classroom.
  - KMS will focus on student retention around the three key transition points of Elementary enrollment (Extended Day to Lower El, Within Lower El, and Lower El to Upper El).
  - The Board will conduct a detailed analysis of historical enrollment trends and use this data to guide decisions that reflect the more nuanced structure of our expanded school.
  - The Development Committee is planning a screening of a documentary about Montessori education in 2020 to align with the enrollment cycle for 2020-21 as a recruitment tool.
  - The school will be expanding in-person outreach efforts through local libraries and other partners to raise awareness of KMS as a local independent school option offering programming for children ages 3-12.
Development / Fundraising

Fundraising Details: 2018-19

- In 2018-19, KMS raised a total of $36,169 dollars. The majority of this fundraising (75%) came from our keystone event, the Annual Auction, which raised just over $27,000.
  - A big thank you to Nicole Holden, our 2018-19 Auction Chair, and the Auction Committee.
- KMS raised $4,852.60 for the musical hand bells, further expanding our rich musical education program.
  - A donor-advised fund from The Maine Community Foundation partially funded the hand bell project.
- Wish List donations totaled $2,386 dollars.
- Other donations and fundraisers included Box Tops, Amazon Smile, CLYNK, and For Small Hands.

Fundraising in 2019-20

- Fundraising is a major opportunity for KMS.
- We need to be more active fundraisers and expand grant writing efforts. We are calling on you as our parent community to help us set and achieve high fundraising goals. We also need to fundraise beyond our immediate community.
  - Please come out to support KMS at our Annual Auction on November 9, 2019, or through the online auction if you are unable to attend the event. We need to aim high this year!
  - Fundraising can be more than just a donation from your own resources.
  - You can help identify new donors or reach out to your network of family and friends.
  - KMS will launch an Annual Fund in 2020. Look for more information to come.
- In 2019-20, we have expanded our fundraisers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Past Fundraisers</th>
<th>New Fundraisers in 2019-20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual Auction</td>
<td>Semi-Annual Bottle Drive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For Small Hands</td>
<td>Dutch Mill Bulb Sale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLYNK Bags</td>
<td>Oliver’s Labels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box Tops</td>
<td>Annual Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amazon Smile</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- At KMS, we believe that development is about more than just dollars and cents. We are also focusing on growing our connections within the school community and in the broader community. Look for news on more ways to support and engage with the KMS community in the coming months.
Volunteer Hours

- Thank you to all who volunteered their time, skills, and energy to KMS last year. The support of our community is a vital resource in the continued success of our school.
- Members of the KMS community reported more than 1,400 volunteer hours in 2018-19. This amounts to $21,000 worth of in-kind support, when time is valued at a $15 hourly rate.
- We would also like to recognize the many additional hours that our parents, grandparents, and friends of KMS have shared with us anonymously.
- In 2019-20, we are aiming higher in terms of volunteer hours. Remember to log your time in the participation log or let the office staff know so the hours are recorded. Collecting reliable volunteer data helps us plan resources, apply for grants, and grow our community connections.
- Our Auction Committee is a major source of volunteer hours. Thank you to everyone who helps make the auction such a special event and a successful fundraiser.
The Year Ahead

- The American Montessori Society (AMS) accreditation visit for the Elementary Program will be held November 4th and 5th, 2019.
- The Annual KMS Auction is November 9, 2019. Come out to support our school on this important night!
  - In 2019-20, Casey and Drew Dingley are leading the Auction Committee.
- The school will implement new strategies for recruiting and retaining students across the grade levels.
- KMS is developing a new website, which will be completed during the 2019-20 academic year.
- KMS will launch a new Annual Fund in 2020.
- We will conduct a search for a permanent Head of School. The goal is for this leader to begin in the summer of 2020, in advance of the 2020-21 academic year.
  - The search process will invite parent, staff, and teacher input. We invite you to provide confidential recommendations for Head of School candidates, and will provide opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the interview process.
  - If you are interested in assisting with the search process, please reach out to the Board.
- KMS will develop a new Strategic Plan, as our current plan runs through 2020.
  - We will have an inclusive strategic planning process that incorporates feedback from all of our major stakeholders: teachers, staff, parents, and the Board of Directors.
  - The next open Board Meeting (February 12, 2020) will provide an opportunity for parents, teachers, and staff to participate in the strategic planning process.

How to Get Involved

- All members of our community can help us with enrollment, retention, and fundraising goals. Here are some ways that you can make KMS a stronger, more vibrant school.
- Serve on a committee!
  - The Board is expanding committees to better engage our talented pool of parents and supporters.
- Engage with other parents and students to help foster community.
  - Attend a Monday Morning Coffee, organize a community activity, participate in the Open House as an ambassador, and attend Parent Workshops.
- Help raise awareness of KMS in your community. Awareness and visibility are tied to enrollment.
- Volunteer to support your child’s classroom by reading with children, helping teachers prepare materials, giving a presentation, or driving on field trips.
- Assist with the permanent Head of School Search process by making a recommendation or participating in interviews with candidates.
- Help with grant writing.
- Help with fundraising.
- Attend an open Board Meeting. There will be four open meetings per year. The remaining open meetings for the 2019-20 academic year will be held on February 12, 2020, May 13, 2020, and July 8, 2020.
- Engage in community conversations and participate in our strategic planning process moving forward.
## Get to Know the 2019-2020 Board of Directors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Biography</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Lindsey Burrill (Chair) | - Membership Type: Parent  
- Lindsey Burrill is co-owner at Brown House Properties and President of the Central Maine Apartment Owners Association. As Chair of the KMS Board and Executive Committee, she brings to her role significant experience with human resources, business process, and compliance. She is also a member of the Governance Committee. |
| Josh Martin (Vice Chair) | - Membership Type: Parent  
- Josh Martin is Assistant Professor of Biology at Colby College and has experience in grant writing and staff recruitment. As Chair of the Governance Committee, he takes a leadership role in review of Board documents. This fall, he is leading a project to update staff job descriptions. |
| Katie Clark (Secretary) | - Membership Type: Parent  
- Katie Clark is a social scientist (MA University of Chicago, doctoral work at Loyola University Chicago School of Education) with experience in education research, enrollment management, and consulting. As Secretary, she is responsible for maintaining official board documents. Katie led the Interim Head of School Search. This fall, her projects include the Annual Report, the long-term Head of School search, and the enrollment analysis. She is a member of the Finance Committee, and the KMS Development and Auction Committees. |
| Samara Gunter (Treasurer) | - Membership Type: Parent  
- Samara Gunter is Associate Professor of Economics at Colby College, where her scholarly work focuses on quantitative analysis of effects of taxes and other government policies. As Treasurer and Chair of the Finance Committee, her Board work has concentrated on review of the school's financial situation. This fall, the Finance Committee's special projects include a review of KMS insurance coverage, accounting systems, and USDA loan management. |
| Margi Browne | - Membership Type: Parent  
- Margi Browne is a former KMS teacher, having served as a Lower Elementary Assistant Teacher and Lead teacher, and as a specials yoga teacher. The mother of two KMS students, one in primary and one in elementary, she especially values the emphasis on peace education and lifelong learning of the Montessori philosophy. She holds a Masters of Arts in teaching from the University of Maine. Margi leads the Development Committee. |
| Darci Grotton | - Membership Type: Community  
- Darci Grotton is a certified Montessori elementary teacher with a masters degree in education. She taught in Montessori settings for 13 years, including three years at KMS from 2005-2008. She contributes to the Board her knowledge of other Montessori schools’ best practices around teacher training and parent communication. In August, she worked with Erika to plan special teacher experiences for staff set-up week. |
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| Mary-Lou Ogden   | • Membership Type: Community  
• Mary-Lou’s relationship with KMS began in 1989. In June 2015 she retired from her position as Primary classroom teacher and Education Coordinator. Mary-Lou first joined the Board in 1996, a few months after the move to KMS’ new home on Sheridan Drive. She served as Secretary/Clerk until September 2015 and as a member through May 2018. While she enjoyed her pre-Montessori career in the world of business and retail accounting, Mary-Lou describes her years of experience with the KMS community as tremendously gratifying. Her unending commitment to the continued success of the school brought her back to the Board in June 2019. |
| Erika Verrier    | • Membership Type: Parent  
• On a leave of Absence from the Board of Directors while serving as Interim Head of School for 2019-20.                                                                                                  |

**Kennebec Montessori School Mission Statement**

At Kennebec Montessori School, we provide children with an educational program, rooted in the philosophy of Maria Montessori, that nurtures a love of learning and fosters respect for self, others, and the environment.