KHALSA MONTESSORI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

II. SUSTAINABILITY

B. Strength and Stability of the Governing Board

PART 1: Current Members

The following is the list of current KMES Board of Directors followed by their role (parent representative, teacher representative, community representative, or school administration) and their area of expertise. For your information we have included biographical information on each member.

Thomas Caglio - Community Representative

Education; Technology; School Operations

Thomas Caglio is a former school parent and currently a Community Representative and Vice-President of the KMES Board. Tom is a Systems Analyst in the Curriculum Division of the Phoenix Union High School District and has expertise with regard to computer programming and statistics. Two of Tom's children have attended the Khalsa School.

Keerat Giordano – Teacher Representative

Education

Keerat Giordano is a Grade 4-6 instructor at the Khalsa charter elementary school. Keerat joined Khalsa School in October 2000 assisting in the Lower Elementary classroom and working with students of all age groups ranging from primary to middle school. In the spring of 2001, Keerat joined Jaswant Kaur Khalsa as her Upper Elementary assistant and she subsequently assumed responsibility as Upper Elementary Directress. Keerat has a Master's Degree in Microbiology and Biochemistry from St. Xavier's College, Bombay, India and a Master's degree in Biomedical Sciences from the University of Connecticut. Keerat completed her Montessori Assistant training through the Arizona Consortium of Montessori Charter Schools. She completed her lower and upper elementary Montessori training in 2004 through CMTE/NY, and is pursuing her Masters in Montessori Elementary Education through Ottawa University.

Jaswant Kaur Khalsa – Teacher representative

Education

Jaswant Kaur Khalsa is the KMES Education Coordinator and also serves on the Board of Directors of KMES. Her duties include staff support, class and student observation, parent education, and collaborating with teachers in maintaining the quality and consistency of our curriculum and educational environments. Jaswant graduated from the University of the State of New York with a B.S. in Psychology and a M. Ed. from Ottawa University, specializing in Montessori. She has also received her AMS Montessori 6-12 Elementary Certification from the Center for Montessori Teacher Education in New York (CMTE). Jaswant has been affiliated with Khalsa school for over twenty-five years as a parent, substitute teacher, elementary summer program teacher, and after school staff member at the Coronado campus.

Satwant Singh Khalsa – School Administration

Education; Financial; School Management

Satwant Singh Khalsa is the Director of KMES and President of the Board of Directors of KMES. His job duties include overall supervision of all affairs and activities of the school. Satwant received his B.A. in History and Child Development, graduating Phi Beta Kappa with honors from Stanford University. After teaching preschool children in Mountain View, California, he came to the Khalsa School in 1973. Satwant directed either the Toddler or Primary Program from 1973 to 1976 and was the school administrator from 1974 to 1976. After four years of building his own business, Satwant Singh rejoined the Khalsa School in June of 1980 as the Director and he has been the school director ever since. He received his M.A. in Educational Psychology from Arizona State University in 1987. He completed all the course work towards his Doctorate degree and taught in the Department of Educational Psychology at ASU for three years. His research study on the development of ordering skills in children was presented at the 1988 Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association. In 1996, Satwant was one of the charter founders of the Khalsa Montessori Elementary School.

Bryan Murphy – Parent Representative

Legal; Financial

Bryan Murphy has a B.A. from Yale University and received his J.D. from the University of California, Berkeley. He has practiced law with a Phoenix firm since his admission to the Arizona Bar in 1980. His two children have both attended the Khalsa School.

Karen Paxton – Administration

School and Business Management; Education

Karen is the Director of Admissions for KMES and serves as Secretary of the Board of Directors of KMES. She coordinates the KMS application and registration process and is the primary contact for communicating information about Khalsa School to prospective parents as well as maintaining effective contact with them throughout the year. She also conducts tours of the school. Karen graduated with a Bachelor's degree from Millsaps College in 1977 and worked as a VISTA volunteer before moving to Arizona in 1979. She worked in the medical field and administered a multi-site primary care practice for eleven years. She has completed graduate courses in business and education. In 2002, Karen completed her AMS certification as a Montessori Middle School teacher at the Houston Montessori Center. Her three daughters have all graduated from Khalsa School.

Donna Waters – Administration

School and Business Management; Education

Donna Waters has been the Director of the Khalsa Primary School which includes KMES kindergarten students, since September of 2001. Donna has a BS degree in Early Childhood Education and Psychology from Texas Women's University and an Associates degree in Child Development from McLennan Community College, Waco, Texas. Donna also has a Masters in Education and School Administration. Her background includes years as a retail sales manager and several years of teaching children from the age of toddlers to kindergarten. She spent three years teaching at the Montessori School of Flagstaff, Arizona; two years with Campus Children's Center in Tempe, Arizona; as well as First Baptist School in Pomona California, Mi Casa Preschool, and Cornerstone in Flagstaff, Arizona.

Janet Wilson – Parent Representative

Financial; Business Management

Janet Wilson is a parent representative on the KMES Board and a Board member and officer of Khalsa Montessori School Parent/Teacher Organization, Inc., which is a separate Sec. 501(c)(3) supporting organization. Janet received her B.S. in Interdisciplinary Studies and her Master's degree in Geography from SUNY at Albany. Her two children have both attended the Khalsa School. She currently works for the State Compensation Fund of Arizona and has two children who attend Khalsa.

PART 2: Board Member Recruitment, Selection and Development

KMES Board Members are recruited and selected by the current Board members from the school community based on areas of expertise and their dedication to the educational philosophy and standard of excellence of KMES. Membership is also based on the representation of parents, teachers, school administration and the community.

It is the responsibility of the school director to continually evaluate potential new board members and, when positions become open, discuss potential selection with the KMES Site Council and KMES administration and present an evaluation of candidates to KMES Board of Directors. New members may be proposed to the board by any current Board members.

New members are elected according to Board member vote. Member term is for one year and eligible for renewal at the yearly annual KMES Board meeting in June. Once elected, a new member is given an orientation by the current Board and the Board President regarding areas of Board responsibility, procedures, and Open Meeting Laws. Open Meeting Law training includes detailed review of the Arizona Open Meting Law statutes, a review of historical examples of school boards breaking open meeting laws, and a review of a document *Basics of Open Meeting Law* by Roger Hall (Renaud, Cook and Drury. P.A.) presented at a Arizona Charter School Association Conference.

PART 3: Governance Structure and Organization

As stated in Section I, the Khalsa Montessori Elementary School is a non-profit 501(c)3 corporation overseen by the KMES Board of Directors and run by the KMES administration in partnership with KMES teachers and parents. As stated in the KMES Bylaws, "The property and business of the Corporation shall be managed and controlled by a Board of Directors". The Board delegates day to day operation of the school to the KMES Education Administration led by the KMES Director. The KMES Education Administration led by the School Director manage the school in coordination with the KMES Operational Administration and KMES Site Council, teams whose roles, along with that of the Board, are described below.

The **KMS Board of Directors** approves all major KMES decisions including, but not limited to, budgets, state reporting, contracts, staffing, and financial and educational procedures and policies. The board provides a final Board of Review for issues brought to the Board that have been presented to, but not resolved by, the school staff or administration. The Board is responsible for fulfilling all requirements and mandated obligations as the KMES charter holder including approving and signing all state charter agreements. The Board is responsible for fulfilling all requirements and mandated obligations to the Arizona Department of Education, the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools, the Arizona Department of Health Services, the United States Department of

Education, and any other governmental agency that monitors activities of charter schools and non-profit Arizona corporations.

Any Board member may place an item on the Board meeting agenda by informing the Board President of the item 72 hours, not including weekends and holidays, before the next Board meeting. Interested parties may place items on the agenda by requesting that any Board member place the item on the agenda on their behalf. Only items placed on the agenda and posted at least 24 hours before the meeting are discussed by the Board. Only Action Items on the agenda are voted on by the board. Consensus is sought on all votes. Lacking consensus items are approved by majority vote. All meetings are open to the public and time is allotted in each meeting for community input.

The KMES Board reviews and signs all school expenditure vouchers. The KMES Board reviews and approves all major KMES expenditures. Any KMES expenditure over $25,000 is brought to the KMES Board of Directors for approval of method of bidding (i.e. sealed) and approval of final expenditure. The KMES Board of Directors has authorized the School Director to make emergency approvals of expenditures over $25,000 that are necessary for the wellbeing and continued operation of school programs. When an emergency expenditure is made, each board member will be informed immediately and the expenditure will be brought for Board of Directors formal approval at the next meeting.

The KMES Board approves all staff hiring and contracts with outside consultants and persons and entities providing student and administrative services. Before the start of each school year the Board reviews and approves all KMES staff and sole providers. The Boards approval of the KMES annual budget includes approval of staff salaries.

The KMES Board has the final authority in approving school policies and procedures. As described below, there are channels of communication and decision making that encourage input from teachers and staff members through the KMES Site Council and KMES Operational Administration. Any suggested changes in school policy and procedures from these teams are then brought to the KMES Educational Administration who will determine if the change should be made. These decisions may then be brought to the KMES Board for final approval. As described below, consensus is sought in each decision of the KMES Education Administration, but if consensus is not reached the KMES School Director has the authority to make the final decision.

The KMES Board of Directors strictly adheres to the Open Meeting Laws of the state of Arizona. Meeting announcements, agendas, and minutes are posted on the bulletin board in the office hallway. New board members are trained in the Arizona Open Meeting Law including detailed review of the Arizona Open Meting Law statutes, a review of historical examples of school boards breaking open meeting laws, and a review of a document *Basics of Open Meeting Law* by Roger Hall (Renaud, Cook and Drury. P.A.) presented at a Arizona Charter School Association Conference. These documents are also reviewed yearly by the entire KMES Board and adherence to the Arizona Open Meeting law is approved by the Board.

The Board is not involved in day-to-day management of KMES. The Board empowers the KMES School Director and the KMES Education Administration team to oversee and manage the day to day operations of the school in direct coordination with the KMES Site Council and the KMES Operational Administration teams. Monthly, the School Director gives a report to the KMES Board on all aspects of school operations and staff and student performance. Monthly, the KMS School Financial Consultant presents the Board with a detailed budget report and analysis.

The **KMES Education Administration** is a team of KMES educational and operational administrators who meet weekly to discuss all major educational, procedural and policy decisions. It is responsible for all KMES policies and operational decisions including staffing, admissions, finances, property, and program development. Policy decisions are referred to the KMES Board for final review and approval. The KMES Education Administration reviews Site Council input and approves, or refers back for more discussion and direction, Site Council decisions. Consensus is sought in all Education Administration decision making. The School Director has ultimate decision making authority if consensus is not reached.

The **KMES Site Council** consists of KMES administrators and KMES Lead Teachers. This body meets weekly to discuss and resolve school policy and procedural questions, assist individual teachers in student educational areas, and collaborate as a team in developing KMES educational philosophy and future classroom planning. All administrative decisions that effect classrooms are discussed in this forum and input is used in the final administration decision. Consensus is sought in decision making. If consensus is not reached, the discussion and final decision is referred to the KMES Educational Administration and the School Director.

All Site Council decisions are reviewed for final approval by the KMES Education Administration and, when appropriate, by the KMES Board. Information and issues brought to the Site Council regarding individual students is referred to the Student Study Team (SST), Education Director and/or SPED Director. SST may bring student issues that are affected by school or classroom procedures or policies to the Site Council for review.

The **KMES Operational Administration** is responsible for the daily operations of KMES including enrollment, attendance, financial accountability, scheduling, program operations, parent communication, state reporting, record keeping, and for fulfilling all state and federal requirements of the school's charter. The KMES Director reports to KMES Education Administration regarding KMES Operational Administration meeting information and issues. The Director brings Educational Administration directives and Site Council input to Operational Administration meetings.

PART 4: Monitoring Academic Performance

The KMS Board of Directors reviews student academic performance when standardized test results are available. The Board has empowered the KMES Site Council, School Director and Education Director to regularly review student academic performance and classroom development. The KMES Director and Education Director report monthly to the Board the results of their ongoing classroom, teacher and student academic performance evaluation.