



Southern Ute Indian Montessori Academy
Updated on 05/18/2022

On April 18, 2000, the Southern Ute Indian Tribal Council ("Tribal Council") designated education as one of its top priorities and adopted a motion establishing the Southern Ute Indian Family Center as the Southern Ute Indian Academy, now known as the Southern Ute Indian Montessori Academy ("the SUIMA" or "SUIMA").

On February 19, 2002, via Resolution No. 2002-29, the Tribal Council established the School Board of the SUIMA ("School Board" and "Board") and designated the Tribal Council to serve as the School Board.

On October 13, 2020, via Resolution No. 2020-142 The Tribal Council found that it is in the best interests of the Southern Ute Indian Tribe and SUIMA to clarify the governance of SUIMA by designating and appointing a School Board for SUIMA, separate from the Tribal Council, to ensure the continued success of SUIMA through additional autonomy, and direction with guidance from Tribal Council coming through the Tribal Council representative. The SUIMA School Board will review SUIMA's strategic plans, ensure that the American Montessori Society's Pathway for Improvement Accreditation Requirements are intact, oversee that the Montessori Curriculum is being followed, and support the academic testing for SUIMA.

Southern Ute Indian Montessori Academy School Board Bylaws

I. Introduction and Purpose

- A. SUIMA is and shall remain a division of the Southern Ute Indian Tribe ("Tribe") Education Department, unless and until the Tribal Council authorizes any change in the organization or structure of SUIMA.
- B. SUIMA's mission is, "To provide a strong educational foundation to preserve and share the Southern Ute Indian culture within a Montessori environment."
- C. SUIMA's vision is, "To provide an environment that creates future tribal and world leaders who appreciate and support their culture, family, and lifelong learning."
- D. The School Board's purpose is to act in accordance with these Bylaws to (1) establish and support the strategic direction for SUIMA; (2) oversee the school's operations and administration; (3) work with the Tribal Council to ensure that SUIMA has sufficient resources; and (4) regularly update the Tribal Council via the Education Department director.

II. Authority

- A. SUIMA is generally subject to Tribal Council's supervision and submits annual budget proposals to be included in the Tribe's budget and to receive funding accordingly. However, to assist the Tribal Council in overseeing the SUIMA operations while providing flexibility for fundraising and increasing efficiency, the Tribal Council authorizes the School Board to take certain actions without requiring additional Tribal Council approval. Therefore, the School Board shall have the authority to do the following without specific Tribal Council approval:



1. Provide direction to, and evaluate, the SUIMA Principal in day-to-day activities and the SUIMA's mission, in accordance with the Tribe's Personnel Policies & Procedures, and in conjunction with the Tribe's Executive Officer, who is solely responsible for administratively overseeing the Education Department director and the SUIMA principal.
2. Engage in appropriate fundraising activities for SUIMA.
3. In cooperation with the Education Department Director and/or SUIMA Principal, appoint sub-committees as needed.
4. Develop, implement, and revise Board operating procedures as needed.
5. Plan, sponsor, support, or participate in events that cost SUIMA less than \$10,000 and are in accordance with the SUIMA's approved annual budget.
6. Regarding budget procurement, submit to the SUIMA Principal, final approval for expenses less than \$5,000.
7. Regarding budget procurement, submit to the Education Department Director final approval for expenses less than \$10,000.
8. Should the Board look for funding beyond the approved Tribal budget, the Board may request the Contracts and Grants Program to research funding opportunities for projects, activities, STEM materials, etc. The Contracts and Grants Program will work with the SUIMA School Board to research and review funding opportunities.
9. The Board will follow the guidelines of the Contracts and Grants Program which will review and submit grant applications for approval through the grant review work group (less than \$100,000) and/or Tribal Council (more than \$100,000).

II. Membership of the School Board

- A. The School Board is intended to represent the Southern Ute Indian Reservation and the surrounding Southern Ute community, which are the primary areas served by the SUIMA. Therefore, the School Board shall be comprised of 5 members from the community; however, no less than one half of the Board's membership shall consist of enrolled members of the Southern Ute Indian Tribe; plus, one representative from Tribal Council who shall serve as a non-voting, ex-officio member of the Board.
- B. The Tribal Council member shall be appointed by Tribal Council to assist the Board with any feasible request for information, assistance, input, guidance, and advice on all matters relevant to the purpose of the Board. The ex-officio Tribal Council member will act as a liaison, communicating to and from Tribal Council between regular School Board meetings.
- C. The School Board should also consider seeking representatives from the following occupations and backgrounds to ensure that the Board has a variety of expertise: financial or other relevant expertise; experience in the local schools, city, or county government; parents; and others who have relevant skills to assist the Board.



- D. Individuals seeking to serve on the School Board must demonstrate an interest in, and support for, the well-being and positive development of students enrolled in SUIMA and must be familiar with, and follow, the general principles of the Montessori Philosophy which are found in the SUIMA Staff Policies and Procedures Handbook.
- E. Individuals seeking to serve on the School Board must also pass a criminal background check. An individual shall not be eligible to serve on the School Board if a background check reveals that an individual has been found guilty of or entered a plea of nolo contendere or guilty to, any offense, or any of two or more misdemeanor offenses, under Federal, State, or Tribal law involving crimes of violence, sexual assault, sexual molestation, sexual exploitation, sexual contact or prostitution, crimes against persons; or offenses committed against children.
- F. The current School Board shall appoint eligible members following advertisement of any vacant positions and receipt of a recommendation from the current Board, the SUIMA principal, and the Education Department Director via a majority vote.

III. Terms

- A. Each regular (i.e., non-ex-officio) member of the School Board shall serve a three-year term following his/her appointment and the terms of the members of the Board shall be staggered such that no more than one-third of such terms end each year. In the event of multiple vacancies, new Board member's terms will be assigned through a random assignment. If a Board member has been appointed due to the resignation or removal of a Board member, the newly appointed Board member's term shall be the remainder of the term of the Board member who resigned or was removed.
- B. There shall be no limit on the number of terms a School Board member may serve; however, each regular Board member must apply to be reappointed to their position on the Board at the end of their term.
- C. The term of the Tribal Council member serving as an ex-officio member of the School Board shall correspond to that Tribal Council member's term on the Tribal Council.
- D. School Board members shall not be compensated. The Education Department may pay for certain expenses associated with School Board business (e.g., conferences, training, necessary travel), with the approval of the Education Department Director and/or the SUIMA principal.
- E. With guidance from the School Board and/or Principal, the SUIMA Administrative Assistant will schedule meetings and send information of said meeting to the Tribal Council office Administrative Assistant. The notification will be sent out in a timely manner and no less than two weeks before said meeting.

IV. Resignation and Removal

- A. A School Board member may resign from the Board at any time by submitting a written notice of resignation to the Board. Also, a Board member may be considered to have voluntarily resigned his/her position if he/she misses three consecutive meetings without notification to, and being excused by, the President of the Board.



- B. A School Board member may be removed by a vote of a majority of the remaining Board members upon a showing that the member is no longer eligible to serve on the Board or has consistently failed to carry out his/her responsibilities as a Board member. Before acting to remove a member, the Board shall ensure that the member has an opportunity and a reasonable amount of time to respond to any allegations regarding eligibility or failure to carry out Board responsibilities.

V. Vacancies

- A. When a vacancy occurs among the regular members of the School Board, it shall be advertised in local and regional media outlets, including but not limited to newspapers, radio stations, and social media for a minimum of 30 days. Should the vacancy not be filled, the advertisement will be posted for an additional 30 days. This will continue until the vacancy is filled.
- B. Any individual seeking to serve on the School Board must submit a letter of intent to the Board. The Board shall then ensure that the applicant is eligible and if eligible, make a recommendation to the Education Department Director. All applications for School Board positions will be kept on file for six months from the date the application was submitted.

VI. Officers

- A. The School Board shall select from among its appointed members a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The ex-officio Board member shall not be eligible to serve as an officer of the Board. Appointments shall be made annually at the first meeting of the calendar year. If an officer's term ends prior to the first meeting of the calendar year, another officer may step into that office upon approval of the remaining Board members.
- B. The School Board President shall preside over all meetings of the School Board and shall ensure that such meetings are properly advertised and recorded. The President shall ensure that the Board's meetings are conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order.
- C. The School Board Vice President shall, in the absence or inability of the President to exercise his/her office, act as President with all the rights, privileges, and powers, as if duly elected President.
- D. The School Board Secretary shall keep the minutes and records of the School Board and shall make those minutes available to other members of the Board, the SUIMA Principal, the Director of Education, the Tribal Council, appropriate tribal staff, and, upon request, the general public. In the absence or inability of the President or Vice-President to exercise their duties, the Secretary will act as President with all the rights, privileges, and powers, as if duly elected president.
- E. The School Board Treasurer shall review the tribally approved SUIMA annual budget and expenditures for the School Board to ensure that expenditures are consistent with the annual approved budget. The Treasurer shall also ensure that donations, grants, or other fundraising activities are accounted for in cooperation and consultation with the Education Department Director, the School Principal, and/or guidance from the Contracts and Grants Program.



- F. The SUIMA Administrative Assistant will send out notices of meetings at least two weeks prior to the meeting via the local newspaper, the Tribal Information Services department, SUIMA's parent communication app., and placed on the SUIMA's website. Follow up notification will occur at least one week from the meeting using aforementioned communication/information sites and a reminder on the day of the meeting through the aforementioned sites that are applicable at the time.
- G. Upon an officer's position being vacated, a replacement will be selected by a majority vote of the School Board.

VII. Duties of the School Board

- A. The School Board shall, in cooperation and consultation with the Tribal Council through the ex-officio council liaison, carry out the following duties:
 - 1. Develop short, medium, and long-term strategic plans for the SUIMA. The School Board shall ensure that at least annual and three-year strategic plans are established, which set forth goals and objectives for the SUIMA over those time periods, subject to review and approval by the Education Department Director and/or Tribal Council. The School Board shall also ensure that, on an annual basis, the strategic plans are evaluated and updated to reflect accomplishments and any necessary revisions.
 - 2. Ensure that the SUIMA's operational policies and procedures match the overarching goals and strategies established by the School Board and the Tribal Council, including the philosophy, principles, and procedures of the American Montessori Society to maintain accreditation with the American Montessori Society.
 - 3. Establish fund raising priorities and objectives by identifying needed resources, including, without limitation, facilities, and other physical resources, and establish plans for attaining such resources.
 - 4. In cooperation with the SUIMA Principal and Education Department Director, give quarterly updates to the Tribal Council about the SUIMA's operations at a date and time established through the Tribal Council meeting request site.
 - 5. Hold monthly regular meetings and additional special meetings, as necessary.
 - 6. Review SUIMA financials and make recommendations to the SUIMA principal and/or the Education Department Director to be included in the annual SUIMA budget for approval by the Tribal Council.
 - 7. Seek and receive input from interested community members, parents and others regarding the operations, identity, and strategic vision of the SUIMA, including the accreditation requirements of the American Montessori Society.
 - 8. Meet with the SUIMA Principal on a monthly basis to collaborate on topics which are in the best interest of the school.



VIII. Meeting Schedule/ Attendance

- A. The School Board shall hold, at a minimum, monthly regular meetings at a regular time and place to be determined by the Board. To ensure involvement from interested members of the community and parents, the Board shall ensure that it provides public notice by radio, newspaper, and other available media, of its regular meetings and attempt to provide public notice of meeting cancellations.
- B. The School Board may conduct meetings, or portions of them, in executive session to protect confidential or sensitive information.
- C. Each School Board member must notify the President of their anticipated absence by 5 p.m. the day before a scheduled Board meeting.
- D. Special meetings may be held as necessary to accomplish the goals and objectives of the School Board and, to the extent practicable and necessary, these additional meetings shall also be publicly advertised.
- E. If a School Board member is physically unable to attend a meeting, that Board member may participate in the meeting by conference call or via a virtual platform (Zoom, Google Meets, WebEx, etc.) as a voting member.

IX. Quorum/ Voting

- A. A majority of the School Board shall constitute a quorum and must be present in-person, by conference call, or via a virtual platform in order for a Board meeting to take place. A majority of the Board members present must vote in favor of a proposal in order for the action to become an official Board action.

X. Amendments

- A. These Bylaws may be amended at any time by a vote of the SUIMA School Board and upon the Tribal Council's approval.

These Bylaws, having been developed by the SUIMA School Board and set for review by the Southern Ute Indian Tribal Council are hereby PRESENTED on this 3rd day of May 2022.

SIGNED,

Name *Dominika Ay*
SUIMA School Board member
Southern Ute Indian Montessori Academy

Name *Rhuan Velazquez*
SUIMA School Board member
Southern Ute Indian Montessori Academy

Name *John*
SUIMA School Board member
Southern Ute Indian Montessori Academy

Name *Nathan Strong edk*
SUIMA School Board member
Southern Ute Indian Montessori Academy

Name *Daphne Washington*
SUIMA School Board member
Southern Ute Indian Montessori Academy

These Bylaws, having been presented by the SUIMA School Board and reviewed by the Southern Ute Indian Tribal Council, are hereby ADOPTED on this 7th day of June 2022.

SIGNED,

Melvin J. Baker

Mr. Melvin J. Baker, Chairman
Southern Ute Indian Tribal Council