



Mill Falls Charter School creates life-long learners by providing an intellectually rich and challenging experience delivered through the Montessori tradition. In a safe and peaceful setting, dedicated educators foster students' individuality, creativity and critical-thinking skills to fully prepare them for future scholastic, civic and personal success.

We cannot create observers by saying 'observe', but by giving them the power and the means for this observation and these means are procured through education of the senses.

-Dr. Maria Montessori

MFCS Meeting Minutes from October 21, 6:30pm

Mill Falls Charter School, 100 William Loeb Drive, Manchester, NH

Montessori Moment: Before the meeting officially began, Wrubleski shared a video of MFCS Upper El Lead Teacher, Laura Blouin, presenting this month's Montessori Moment about division of fractions.

1. CALL TO ORDER: 6:46pm

2. ROLL CALL:

Present: Champagne, Tellez, Roberge, Martin, Levin, Wrubleski;

Joining by phone: Johnson; Absent: Callahan

3. PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

4: Approval of Minutes from September 2015 meeting

Motion: Tellez moved to approve the minutes; Roberge seconded.

Vote: Unanimous approval.

5. SCHOOL UPDATE

a: Educational Program Director (Wrubleski)

Please also see attached report.

Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBAC). Wrubleski discussed the plans for releasing information on Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBAC). As per state guidelines, information will be released to our School community AFTER the state deadline of Nov 12th. Before that, Wrubleski plans to hold a parent information session about how to understand the data from the tests. Wrubleski explained that the data, and the way it is presented is not inherently clear. That information session will be general about how the test was given and how to read the reports each family will get about their child's results. Wrubleski will not present overall school data at that information session, as it will be prior to the date when we are allowed to share data as per state guidelines. Individual student results will be provided to parents/guardians before our Parent/Guardian Teacher Conferences in mid-November so parents/guardians have the data at that time, should they wish to review with the teachers.

Hiring: Wrubleski reported that she will be hiring a Math Interventionist; Paraprofessionals as per agreements with those districts which allow her to directly hire the paras for our students; Assistant Teacher to replace Joelle Gaona when she goes on maternity leave; and hopefully the Reading Support Assistant (discussed later in the meeting).

Scholastic Book Fair: Wrubleski noted the Fall Book Fair was a huge success. We raised about \$1200 more than we've ever done. In fact, on our Bring a Parent/Guardian to School Night, we sold \$2000 worth of books in 1.5 hours!

Parent/Guardian to School Night was a great event and very well attended this year.

Trustee Questions: Champagne asked about how the new 4th graders are doing. Wrubleski noted that the classrooms are both resilient and flexible, even with a few more 4th graders than our usual 8 per classroom.

Wrubleski added classrooms are stable, rocking and rolling. Wrubleski noted that the first big Upper Elementary (UE) event will be on October 29th when the UE students will present their Mystery History Wax Museum. They have been hard at work on that project.

b: Acting School Manager Report (Levin, 10 min)

Please also see attached report.

School-Based Fundraising: Beyond what is in the report, Levin took a few minutes to share figures from in-school fundraising projects. She announced the upcoming event - A Night of Community which is a parent-based fundraising event being organized in collaboration with students in the SNHU Hospitality Department.

Levin has been working with lead parent-organizer Rachel Marziano. Levin also shared the projections for the Pizza Friday Program – an expected \$4308 for the 9-month school year, based on the first month of participation.

Before/Kinder/AfterCare Projections: Levin reviewed current figures for the Child Care Program and shared revenue projections. She noted, while the Program is doing well, it will not be able to make what was budgeted by former Executive Director Bisson. That budgeted income of \$48,000 was based on full occupancy beginning on the first day of school and on only needing one teacher for the Aftercare Program. We did not start the year with a full program, and our AfterCare Program has required hiring a second person to work for 1.5 hours each day. The Child Care Program at its current size is expected to bring in about \$36,900 based on the average of the first two months of operation.

8. OFFICER/FOUNDATION/COMMITTEE/WORKING GROUP & RELATED Q+A

a. Search Committee: Update on Executive Director Search (Tellez)

Tellez noted that the Search Committee is being re-convened. There have been some changes in makeup of the Committee with the addition of Trustees Johnson and Champagne. The previous staff person has stepped down from the Committee given her time commitments now that the search has gone beyond the summer and into the busy school year. Wrubleski is talking with staff to find a replacement, and suggested that the meetings/interviews held during the day, or at the end of the school day rather than at night would be best for staff. Tellez asked if staff could be paid to serve on the Committee. Tellez added that the Committee is assessing the applications, most of which were received before the end of last month.

b: Finance Committee - Budget to Actual (Roberge)

Roberge noted that the Budget to Actual for the close of September is still considered draft, as we do not yet have a final audit. So though the expenses and income for this year are accurate, there are some funds that will be rolled over from FY15, which have not yet been finalized. She explained that we received our Differentiated Aid payment - a payment received by the school annually which reflects last year's Free & Reduced funds, English Language Learner funds and funds for 3rd graders reading below grade level. The payment, \$54,000, was about \$24,000 higher than what was budgeted. Finally, she also noted that the State passed the budget increase, so we get a \$36 more dollars per elementary student this year (kinders stay the same). Next year that increase will mean an additional \$1000 more per elementary pupil (again kinder funding remains the same). She also noted that the Before/Kinder/After Care Program is doing nicely, and all of this leads to a projection that we will be in good shape in relation to our budget this year.

c: Bylaws Working Group Update (Martin)

Martin shared that he's been working hard with Johnson and Levin on revising the Bylaws. That group is hoping to have a revision to share in the next weeks with the full Board with the goal of bringing the revisions to a vote in November.

d: Charter Committee: Legislative Update (Levin)

The Commission to review the way Special Education services are provided to public charter school students has been meeting since the summer. The last day for Legislators to submit new legislation is October 30th. There may be some news around this issue in the coming week. In broad strokes the NH charter community's position is that we believe a change in the existing legislation could introduce unintended consequences that could prove harmful for charter school health. The 2009 change to the law has improved services and outcomes for New Hampshire students. The current

system is working well for the vast majority of students, districts and charter schools. Charter leaders oppose any effort that could endanger student access or create new barriers for students with disabilities. We support HB536 as introduced.

Levin also noted that NHPR has done a weeklong series about charter schools, and while all press can be considered good press, there are some items that may generate questions, some of which may be directed toward those involved in NH charter schools and the school leadership. Levin suggested that any questions be addressed and that those with many questions be invited to come visit the school to see what we are doing up close and in person.

9. PROGRAM:

Finance Committee

a: Approval of Copier Purchase (Levin)

Motion: Tellez motioned to formally approve the purchase of the new photocopier machine to replace the old machine. Champagne seconded.

Vote: Unanimous approval.

b: Hiring of Reading Support Assistant for Lower Elementary (Levin)

Levin shared that the Lower Elementary classrooms have an unusually large number of reading groups because of the variety of reading levels. To support them, as they support their students, they require more people power in the form of an Assistant Reading Support Person. Levin and Wrubleski calculated that it would be about \$7500 (including payroll taxes). This could be paid out of the Differentiated Aid, as needed. The Board agreed to put a bit more toward the position.

Motion: Tellez motioned to approve \$8000 for the addition of the Reading Support Assistant Position; Roberge seconded.

Vote: Unanimous approval.

c: Increase in Facility/Cleaning Costs (Levin)

Levin shared that the approved budget includes a reduced cleaning line as it was based on hiring one Janitor. However, after researching this idea, and with further consideration, Levin and Wrubleski conclude that it is wisest to contract with a cleaning company. Levin asked that the Board return the cleaning budget to the previous years' level which were based on working with a cleaning company.

Motion: Tellez motioned that the Board approve an increase in the facility cleaning line item to \$17,500; Johnson seconded.

Vote: Unanimous approval.

d: Revision of Financial Policies (Roberge)

Roberge reminded the Board that we have worked update the current Financial Policies to better reflect our organization's needs and to further remove the Board from the day to day management areas. The changes have been reviewed and approved by our Auditor.

Motion: Tellez moved to accept the changed financial polices as presented; Champagne seconded.

Vote: Unanimous approval.

10: NEXT MEETING DATE: November 18, 2015 6:30pm (Martin)

11. PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

12: CLOSED SESSION:

Following the public comment section, the Board voted to go in to closed session.

Motion: Tellez motioned to go into closed session to discuss Officer Slate and Trustee Nominations. Champagne seconded.

Vote: Unanimous approval.

Actions taken during the closed session:

a: Trustee Nominations: The Board Unanimously approved the nominations of Mindy Kacavas & Greg Depasse to serve as MFCS Trustees.

b: Officer Slate: The Board Unanimously approved the following Officer Slate:

Kate Callahan – Chair (on maternity leave)

Roland Martin – Vice Chair (serving as Acting Chair given Callahan’s leave)

Michelle Roberge – Treasurer

The Secretary position will be voted on after the service of the new Trustees begins.

The Board voted to come out of closed session.

Motion: Champagne motioned to come out of closed session: Tellez seconded.

Vote: Unanimous approval.

13: MEETING ADJOURNMENT:

Motion: Tellez motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:55pm; Champagne seconded.

Vote: Unanimous approval.