



*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.*

*These words reveal the child's inner needs; 'Help me to do it alone'.*

-Dr. Maria Montessori

## **MFCS Meeting Minutes for Aug 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

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

### **1. Call to Order, Roll Call & Welcome Public**

Present: Brough, DePasse, Kacavas, Martin, Levin, Wrubleski, Johnson (remote)

Absent: Roberge, Champagne

### **2. Announcements/Updates - None**

### **3. Public Comment – no public present.**

### **4. Meeting Business**

#### **a. Approval of Minutes from June 2016 meeting**

**Motion:** Kacavas moved to accept the minutes; DePasse seconded.

**Vote:** Unanimous approval.

### **5. School Update**

#### **a. Educational Program Director (Wrubleski)**

Wrubleski reported that there hasn't been any curriculum to report on over the summer. Teachers and staff are getting ready for the 1<sup>st</sup> day of school (Sep 6, 2016). Training is going well, and new teachers are getting up to speed quickly. Special Education planning is ongoing and services are on track for all students. Kindercamp went very well and the kiddos were super cute and excited.

#### **b. Executive Director (Levin – pls see attached report)**

Levin started by stating enrollment is at 168 students but noted that there are zero 6<sup>th</sup> graders in Zion. 19 of 24 Kindergarten families are in the after school KinderCare Program. Financial documents are prepared and being submitted this week and our annual financial audit is scheduled for next week. The 5k /fun run signup is open and for those who can't run, volunteers are also needed to help at the event. Save the date – The second annual Night of Community is scheduled for the evening of Nov 18.

### **6. Officer/Foundation/Committee/Working Group & Related Q+A**

#### **a. Facility Committee – (Martin/Levin)**

Levin shared that the Facility Committee is making good progress on the lease and will bring it to the BOT when ready.

#### **b. Finance Committee – (Levin)**

Budget to actual from June looks very positive. Overall the school year ended well, namely due to lower than expected costs and a healthy child care program.

#### **c. Foundation Update – (Levin)**

Levin shared that the Foundation will be meeting soon, however, there has been great participation in planning the Night of Community event. The holdings were reported to be \$152k and there are a couple of multi-year donations that are in the planning stages.

**d. Governance Committee – (Martin)**

Martin expressed the need to hold a committee meeting taking into consideration any vacancies and upcoming terms. Brough, DePasse, Levin, and Martin volunteered to participate in the committee and a meeting is scheduled for Sep 12, 2016 at 3pm at the school. BOT will consider candidates that have experience with Montessori/education, business, finance, non-profit, legal, or a generalist with a willingness to participate.

**e. Annual Meeting Plan – (Martin)**

Martin conveyed that the BOT Annual Meeting will be held Sep 21, 2016 at 5:30pm at the school.

**7. Next Meeting Date:** Sep 21, 2016 5:30pm

**8. Public Comment**

No public. Johnson regretfully announced her resignation from the Board effective Sep1, 2016. She expressed thanks to the BOT for the opportunity, but won't be able to give the position the time it deserves due to a relocation.

**9. Adjournment:** Kacavas motioned to adjourn at 6:21pm. Brough seconded. Meeting adjourned.



Executive Director's Report For the  
August 30, 2016  
MFCS School Board Meeting  
Submitted by Meryl Levin

### **Required Reporting**

The End of Year Report (EOY) was filed in the days following the end of the school year in June. That report ties to our final Equitable Aid Payment, which was received from the DOE on June 21.

On July 27<sup>th</sup>, I filed our Annual Report, which is a required narrative summary that addresses 4 key questions posed by the DOE. Additional smaller reports have been filed since our last meeting, in keeping with DOE requirements. Next up is our end of year DOE-25 a (gigantic) financial spreadsheet that provides the DOE with an overview of FY16 and partners with the quarterly financial reports we supply them during each fiscal year.

On the first day of school, we will file our Enrollment Form which notes how many children are enrolled (this form is filed 3 times during the year) and required the Board Chair's signature. We also are required to file the student roster, as well as other reports related to staff, safety and such during the first months of the year.

### **MFCS ChildCare Program**

Over the summer, Susanne Hojlo – our Project Manager – finalized the enrollment of students into our ChildCare Program. A reminder that our KinderCare Program (12-3pm) will be run by our Kindergarten Teaching Team with Kristin Lang as the program's coordinator. That has bolstered interest in the KinderCare Program as expected. As of this writing we have 14 KinderCare enrollees (3 of whom are part-time-3 days per week; and 3 are enrolled in our Extended KinderCare – 12- 5:45pm). Currently we have 17 students enrolled in our AfterCare Program (3-5:45pm) 5 of whom are part time, 2 of whom are only for the first 3 weeks of school. As we did last year, we have hired one MFCS staffer to be the Coordinator (she is also working with us as an Assistant Teacher) and we will have other Assistants work with her for the first 1.5 hours of each AfterCare day. Finally, our BeforeCare Program (7-8:15am) has 7 children enrolled, one of whom is part-time. That is staffed by MFCS teaching staff as well.

### **Enrollment & Lottery**

This summer we saw a large number of students transfer out from our Upper Elementary Program to other schools - 15 in total. While some of this movement was based on changes in family circumstances (moving for new jobs, etc.), and some wanted to enroll their children in their neighborhood middle schools for socialization reasons, most of the departing students have migrated to Founders Academy with parents citing their wish to enroll their children in the charter school which is a 6-12<sup>th</sup> grade school, rather than risk not getting in to that charter. It was not until late summer when we had a number of 6<sup>th</sup> grade families inform us of their decision to move their children to a new school. This has deeply impacted our 6<sup>th</sup> grade, as we now only have eleven 6<sup>th</sup> grade students; the Zion classroom has only 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders. Three lower elementary students have transferred out as well.

We have been able to fill all but one spot, which were made vacant by these departures via our wait list. In the process, we have exhausted our 6<sup>th</sup> grade wait list. We expect the open spot to fill in the next days. Of interest: our 4<sup>th</sup> grade wait list is still pulling from our very first lottery - 2012.

### **Financial**

We did not require a bridge loan this summer from the Foundation, as our financial flow remained strong, providing for more than enough funds to get us through the summer and into the start of September; we will receive our first Equitable Aid Payment about 2-3 weeks

after the first day of school (following the filing of a brief enrollment form on day 1 as noted above).

### **Administrative**

A significant change in our **student information management system** – we have ended our agreement with Montessori Compass and signed on with Alma. During August, Susanne has led the change over on the admin side; on the student reporting side Laura and Shannon Helie have worked to revamp our progress reports. We look forward to utilizing this new powerful tool.

Susanne has partnered with the NH Food Bank – they will be providing us with free snacks for our **'Food Pantry'**. For the food insecure students who qualify for Free & Reduced, the Food Bank will supply food for them to take home over weekends and holidays distributed discretely in their backpacks. That program will kick off soon after school starts, as we finalize the paper work and required training for food handling. We are super excited about this and I thank Susanne for her leadership on this!

### **Human Resources**

Laura has done an outstanding job of **hiring** this spring and summer and we begin our year in a very strong place with a fantastic team! The Denali Classroom has a new Lead Teacher – Collette Fortin. Our Lead Teacher Lauren Kolbe is out on maternity leave, in her absence, Tana Gills (our reading coach and ELL Coordinator) will be the interim Lead. And in the Zion Classroom, Colleen Costa (formerly the Assistant in Everglades) will be the Lead. As for new Assistant Teachers – Acadia will welcome Erin Kelley who will also be our AfterCare Coordinator; Olympic will welcome Nicole Machado; Everglades will welcome Michelle Sundman; Zion will welcome Emily Johnson.

Parents in each classroom have received welcome letters, which introduce new staff.

Other hires are: Colleen Delaporta-Wells (last year a paraprofessional and SpEd Educator here) will be our Student Services Coordinator & part-time Special Educator. Sue Lambright will also serve as a part-time Special Educator. While Tana is in Everglades, Ashley Marchand will be our English Language Coordinator (ELL). Ashley will also be a para here in the morning. We also just hired Cara Roy who will be our new Art Instructor. Bios of all staff are posted on our website.

### **MFCs Community Building & Volunteerism**

We closed out the year with a lovely **Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast**, which was hosted by staff. Parents, grandparents and friends of Mill Falls gathered on the morning of June 10<sup>th</sup> to celebrate their commitment and our many accomplishments for the year.

Our **6<sup>th</sup> Grade Graduation**, held at the Derryfield School, was a tremendous success. The venue was perfect, the speakers fantastic – our own Roland Martin offered important words of wisdom. We arranged to have a cake baked by a MFCs aunt (who owns a cake business) and we provided each student with a yearbook and a flower to share with their parents/guardians. Smiles and few tears filled the room as we saw off our first cohort of graduating 6<sup>th</sup> graders.

Over the summer there are two fundraising projects that have been taking shape. The first is our upcoming **5K/Fun Run on Sept 25<sup>th</sup>**, which is being produced in partnership with SNHU. Amanda Gerardi has been the flag-bearer of that project. [PLEASE sign up for the run by clicking here](#). This event is open to the public, so please share word of the run/fun walk with friends & colleagues.

The second event is our **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Night of Community**. That will be held on November 18<sup>th</sup> and it is also in partnership with SNHU – this time with the School of Hospitality. Rachel Marziano and Mel Johansson both of whom serve on the MFCs Foundation have taken on the event and have been gathering raffle items and sponsorship all summer! Please save the date – both of these events should be fantastic community gatherings.

**Commission on Special Education in Charter Schools**

The Commission continues to meet monthly as it aims to compile its findings into a report, which is due in November. Despite a somewhat exhaustive research process, the Committee members still seem to have many disparate impressions of how services are being delivered and what changes should be made. The report, it is hoped, will reflect the differences of opinion held by Committee members.