



## MFCS Board Meeting Minutes, January 17, 2018

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

*An education capable of saving humanity is no small undertaking: it involves the spiritual development of man, the enhancement of his value as an individual, and the preparation of young people to times in which they live.*

– Dr. Maria Montessori

### 1: Call to Order, Roll Call & Welcome Public

*Present:* Roberge, Connors, Brough, Marr, Depasse, Wihelm, Wrubleski, Levin. *By phone:* Johnson. *Absent:* Kacavas, Butterfield.

2: **Public Comment:** No public present.

### 3: Meeting Business

a. **Approval of Minutes** from December 20 & January 11 meeting minutes.

**Motion:** Connors moved to approve, Brough 2nd, **Vote:** Unanimous

4. **Montessori Moment:** Presented by Lauren Kolbe, MFCS Lead Teacher, Upper Elementary demonstrated division using Montessori tools.

### 5. School Update

a. **Educational Program Director** (Wrubleski, *please also see attached report*) Wrubleski focused on the professional development day that the teachers and staff recently attended. The day was organized by the Admin Teams from MFCS and River Valley Charter School. Attendees were able to collaborate with other public Montessori teachers in the northern New England region. The time spent with these other professionals was validating in the fact that our school has many great things in place and the faculty of MFCS was able to offer insight to other faculty from different schools.

b. **Executive Director** (Levin, *please also see attached report*) Levin noted there are no updates on the lack of Manchester School District's Special Education reimbursements. Our lawyer is continuing to work on our behalf. Upcoming Calendar Raffle fundraiser is underway and will be rolling out in the next few weeks. The school is still taking donations for the raffle (\$25-\$50 in gifts certificates). The also noted that the Foundation's Annual Appeal reached \$20,000 raised.

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

**Finance Committee** (Roberge): Roberge discussed that there were no unexpected trends in the December budget to actual.

### 7. Program

**a: Brief Overview of Strategic Planning Session Day on Jan 27<sup>th</sup>**

**(Levin & DePasse)** Levin noted who will be attending. Depasse discussed the location and confirmed the start time and end time.

**b: Closed Session: Potential Growth & Lease Option (Levin/Wrubleski,)** **Motion:** Brough motioned to go into closed session to discuss proposed lease amendment; Connors seconded, **Vote:** Unanimous.

Action of Closed Session:

**Motion:** Brough motioned have the facility committee move forward with lease negotiation, which includes more space for the school. Marr seconded, **Vote:** Unanimous.

Come out of Closed Session:

**Motion:** Connors motioned to come out of closed session; Brough seconded. **Vote:** Unanimous.

**c: Accessing Full Day Kinder Funds (Levin/Wrubleski)**

Levin explained that the School has been told by the DOE that it can access a portion of the Full-Day Kindergarten funding because the length of our Kinder Day is 3.5 hours. (Our 3.5 hours are 45% of the full day).

**Motion:** Marr moved to approve accessing Full Day Kinder grant funds being made available next school year. Mill Falls will access the funds at a rate of .45 of the 1.0 (full time), for a total of \$495 additional funds per kinder student. Seconded: Brough seconded. **Vote:** Unanimous.

**8. Next Meeting:** Wednesday, February 21, 5:45pm (DePasse, 2 min).

**9. Adjournment: Motion:** Marr motioned to adjourn meeting at 7:25pm, Wihelm seconded. **Vote:** unanimous.



## **Educational Program Director Board Report January 17, 2018**

**January Professional Development:** Last June, the executive director of River Valley Charter School, Andy Willemson, reached out with an interest in forming a professional development day supporting public Montessori schools in the area. We agreed to attend and were able to organize our calendar to accommodate this date and time. We proceeded to help Andy develop ideas and organize thoughts for the big day. The day finally arrived on January 2nd and the majority of River Valley's staff as well as our MFCS staff attended, with additional smatterings of staff from Hill View Charter School in Haverhill and Tobin Montessori in located in Cambridge MA. The day included a speaker, Jacqueline Cossentino, from the National Center for Public Montessori in the Public Sector and round table discussions addressing topics that impacted each of our schools in varying degrees. The response from the staff has been positive and we hope this will become a annual tradition for our area schools.

**Afterschool Programing:** We have been busy this month with afterschool activities. The McIntyre Ski program began over December break and continues through the months of the January and February. So far, we have been lucky with cancellations and relatively smooth weather. We also began a Drama Club with two of our staff members Christine Bisson and Becca Tarr. Students are practicing the skills needed to perform rather than preparing for an actual performance. That task will follow suit in the next series of afterschool programing. We also have two other sessions of afterschool programs facilitated by Tana Gills, our reading teacher. She is a certified ASL teacher is running an ASL program for beginners once per week and she is also running a No Bake Cookies class for our upper elementary students.

**RTI process:** We have implemented a new aspect to our RTI (Response to Intervention) program through data analysis within a whole school glance. As a team, teachers and support personnel, met before break to discuss each student in a class to determine if further intervention may be necessary to ensure progress. If further discussion seemed warranted, we scheduled a secondary meeting to take a deeper dive into those student's needs and to discuss a plan to support the students going forward. This aspect of the program will occur 3 times per year.

**Access Testing:** Every January, we begin to prepare for ACCESS testing. This is the state mandated assessment that all English Language Learners must take. This standardized assessment determines if a student is eligible for continued English Language support for the 2018/2019 school year. For the first time this year, we have decided to take the test electronically, however given the adaptability of an electronic assessment, we hope to have a better report of our student's skill levels.



**Executive Director's Report  
For the January 2018  
MFCS School Board Meeting  
Submitted by Meryl Levin**

### **Required Reporting**

We recently submitted our quarterly **DOE-25** report for FY18 q1.

### **Charter Office Update**

The DOE has once again issued the job posting to fill this position; the previous interviews did not result in a hire.

### **Strategic Planning Related**

Since our last meeting, Maryclare Heffernan has led the staff in a second Visioning Session held on Jan 2<sup>nd</sup>. That time was spent discussing the staff/school's core values/practices related to Montessori. This week, Maryclare met with the paraprofessionals on staff to carry out the SWOT exercise with them. The Staff visioning information will be shared with you. With an assist from Roxanne, we are working through the responses submitted by parents to the SWOT survey sent out by email, and will present that material to you in a digestible form. We had 72 respondents to the survey.

A reminder that we have settled on **Saturday, January 27<sup>th</sup> (from about 9am-2pm) for our Initial Strategic Planning Session**. Please save the date and let Greg and I know if you won't be able to make it.

### **Facility**

The exterior work has halted and now that the snow has begun to melt, we can see the mess that has been left, mid-job, stalled because of the freeze/snow in late December. We are currently using the parking lot and some snow covered areas for recess and fitness, as we have for the last 2 years, and we are accessing other fields behind the building when weather allows.

A few weeks before the New Year, we sent a very rough sketch to the landlord's broker mapping 2 classrooms, bathrooms, and some other areas into the available space beside the front office. We have not yet heard back regarding that proposal.

### **MFCS ChildCare Program**

Here's how it looks as of this week: BeforeCare (7-8:15am) = 8 children; Kinder (12-3pm) full-time = 12 children, part-time=5 children, extended (12-5:45)=2 full-time; 2 part-time. AfterCare (3-5:45pm) = 11 full-time children, 7 part-time children. Many families have been taking advantage of the drop in option for all programs and we continue to offer Child Care on a first come/first served basis on our Early Release Days.

### **Financial**

**Special Education reimbursement payments:** Payment has been received for most of the sending districts. Concord was delayed as they awaited paper work from the family of the one SpEd student we have from that district, but that is now in order. And as you are aware, we are still awaiting payment from Manchester. They have not paid a penny this year toward reimbursement of services rendered since the first day of school; the total outstanding for Sept, Oct, Nov & December stands at \$81,872.

### **MFCS Community Building & Volunteerism**

Our **MFCS Food Pantry** sends food home with children 3 times per week whose families are food insecure. The food supply comes from our on going Food Drive, as well as a partnership with the NH Food Bank. Susanne manages the Pantry and also must report meals provided to the Food Bank. **As of December 31, 2017, total pantry meals = 297; total donated meals = 396 (1.2 pounds equal one meal). So we served almost 700 meals to 9 families! That's almost 26 meals per child, per month.**

Laura and I worked closely with the administration from River Valley Charter School, a public Montessori School in Newburyport, MA to organize a **Regional Public Montessori School Conference**. All MFCS staff attended that professional development day which featured a speaker from the National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector, and round table discussions revolving around the challenges related to creating and maintaining the core values of Montessori in our public settings.

Two Mill Falls Parents have been organizing regular MFCS Family Events since the fall. Due to the recent extreme weather, the planned community sledding event had to be postponed, but the next event will be the **MFCS Spaghetti Dinner**, which will take place at Mill Falls on Saturday, January 20<sup>th</sup> from 4-7pm. They will be serving dinner in shifts, and have been selling tickets for the last few weeks. All proceeds will go to Mill Falls, and while this isn't expected to raise a lot of money, the event should be a wonderful community gathering!

Work on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Night of Community will pick up now that the venue has been selected. If you have any ideas of strong raffle items, or connections you can share to help us attain some items, please be in touch with me directly!

Additionally, our **Annual Calendar Raffle** will soon kick off, and if you have or can secure any gift certificates to be included in the calendar (value between \$25-\$50) please be in touch with me directly!

### **Human Resources**

Laura will be interviewing **Music Teachers to finish out the year**. In the meantime, John Choinard has stepped in to sub; the kids and John have been having fun and re-focusing on our ukuleles, and of course, 60's music, Mr. John style!

### **Foundation Update**

Our **2017 Annual Appeal** was a real success. To date, we have received over \$20,000 in donations in response to our ask, which was mailed to community members (outside of our parent population) in mid-December. All donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. If you have not yet made your donation, please bring a check to the meeting, or send it to MFCS Foundation, 36 Salmon Street, Manchester, NH 03104. We do aim to have all school leadership contribute meaningfully to Mill Falls each year. Thank you!!!

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