



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.

No adult can bear a child's burden or grow up in his stead.

– Dr. Maria Montessori

MFCS Minutes for February 21, 2018, 4:45pm

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

1. Call to Order, Roll Call & Welcome Public: 4:53pm

Present: Marr, Kacavas, Connors, Brough, Wilhelm, Levin, Butterfield

Absent: Johnson, Wrubleski, Roberge, DePasse

2: Meeting Business

a. Approval of Minutes from January 17 meeting minutes (2 min)

Motion: Connors motioned to approve the January minutes; Kacavas seconded. **Vote:** Unanimous.

3: Montessori Moment: Presented by Sherry Humphrey, MFCS Reading Interventionist

Sherry shared information about the work she does in support of our struggling readers.

6. School Update

a. Educational Program Director (*Wrubleski, please see report*)

b. Executive Director (*Levin, please see report*)

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

a. Finance Committee: Review of Budget-to-Actual (Levin)

Levin reported there are no new trends. She is working on new aspects within this report for the Board to track MFCS SpEd income and expenses.

8. Program: Potential Growth & Lease Option (Levin)

Motion to enter non-public session: Butterfield moved to go into non-public session under 91-a3 II paragraph L for the purpose of considering advice from counsel. Marr seconded. **Vote:** Unanimous.

Motion to come out of non-public session: Butterfield moved to come out of closed session; Kacavas seconded. **Vote:** Unanimous.

No Actions were taken during the closed session.

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

10. Adjournment:

Motion: 5:39 Butterfield moved, Marr seconded. **Vote:** Unanimous.



**Educational Program Director
Board Report
February 21, 2018**

Africa Culminating Event: Annually, teachers choose two continents to do an in depth study on for about three months of the school year. Africa was chosen as the fall focus from October through January. On Wednesday, January 31st, students in all 7 classrooms presented their research and projects to family and friends. Projects focused on the fundamental needs of humans throughout all regions of the continent and were presented in various forms of maps, trifold presentations, slideshows, songs and dances. The upper elementary presented two plays and a group dance to the entire school community as a group project. These events are always loved by all!

Afterschool Programing: In March, we will begin three new afterschool programs. The Girls on the Run program will return for a 3rd season coached by 3 parent volunteers and will run through May. Additionally we will have a brand new session of Coding. The coding program will be facilitated by two community middle schoolers with additional supervision by two staff members. Starting mid-march, we will have our annual session of Lego you mind for students grades K-3.

100th Day Celebration: Yearly, this landmark celebration lends itself to see the application of the base ten number system that we use to teach math. Students, from kindergarten to sixth grade, participated in activities that celebrated 100 days of schools and its subsequent smaller groups such as 10 groups of 10 equal 100!

Assessments: This time of year, teachers begin their 2nd formal benchmark assessment of students in the areas of math, reading, reading fluency and writing. In conjunction with classroom work samples and observations, this assessment data will be used by teachers to inform parents of progress through the March progress reports.

New Music Teacher: On Thursday, February 22nd we will be welcoming a new music teacher, Cassandra Pepler. She comes to us with experience working at all levels of music instruction, however, most recently Cassie has operated her own business working with preschool school age children providing music and movement opportunities in the private sector.

Upper Elementary Dance: The upper elementary student base planned and organized their first dance of the year on Friday, February 16th. Students chose the theme of Glow in the Dark and we had a return of our resident DJ, Ron DMC! Students always love these nights of dancing and hanging with their friends outside of the classroom.

Lower Elementary Field Trip: The entire lower elementary level traveled together to Concord to see the play *Clementine* at the Capital Center for the Arts. Taking an outing such as this with their peers connects the classroom curriculum to real life situations.



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

Required Reporting

On Feb 1, we reported our student count (168) and soon after received our 3rd installment of Per Pupil Aid.

We recently submitted our Student Roster in preparation for the SBAC tests which are conducted on line and require an accurate student roster filed digitally with the DOE.

DOE Related

Last week, I participated in the interviewing process for the director of the NH DOE Charter Office as the member of the charter community on the interviewing team. We met with 4 candidates during interviews held at the DOE. As of this writing, the decision-making is still in progress.

We welcomed the NH Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner of Education to MFCS on January 31st, the day of our All-School Africa Study Open House. They visited our classrooms, spoke with students and met with members of our staff and Board.

Strategic Planning Related

Maryclare Heffernan has led the staff in a third Visioning Session held on February 14th during our Professional Development Day. That time was spent discussing the 'Why'...what drives staff commitment to the program and students here at Mill Falls. There was also some time spent working on a visioning statement. That will be shared with the Board.

Facility

Last week, members Will Kanteres and I met with Dennis Mires regarding the possible expansion space. The original sketch which Dennis drew has been tightened up a bit and we are awaiting his final drawing which will send to Peter Levine.

MFCS ChildCare Program

Here's how it looks as of this week: BeforeCare (7-8:15am) = 9 children; Kinder (12-3pm) full-time = 13 children, part-time=4 children, extended (12-5:45)=1 full-time; 3 part-time. AfterCare (3-5:45pm) = 10 full-time children, 6 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 initially delayed as they awaited paper work from the family of the one SpEd student we have from that district, and despite communication, we have not yet received payment. Maryclare and I are working on this. 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 fist day of school; the total outstanding for Sept, Oct, Nov & Dec stands at over \$95,000. I have just sent the January Invoices to them. I will provide you with an update at the meeting.

MFCS Community Building & Volunteerism

Laura and I are already working with the administration from River Valley Charter School, a public Montessori School in Newburyport, MA, to organize the 2nd Annual **Regional Public Montessori School Conference**. It is scheduled for early January 2019.

In March, staff will be attending the Annual Charter School Best Practice Conference. Laura and Shannon will present one workshop and I will also be presenting. Trustees are welcome to attend, so please let me know if you'd like to join us on March 16th, you will need to register ASAP. The event will be held at Founders Academy in Manchester and includes lunch.

The **MFCS Spaghetti Dinner**, was a great success. Organized by two MFCS parents, this pop-up restaurant idea was enjoyed by many MFCS families. We look forward to their next event!

Another MFCS parent, Lauren Doukas, will begin work on our annual **Family Game Night** – likely scheduled for March.

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!

Work on the **3rd Annual Night of Community** is picking up. I'm working closely with parent-organizers to make this late spring event a great one. Please mark your calendars – June 9th from 6-9 at the space beside the Palace Theater on Hannover Street.

Human Resources

Laura has hired a music teacher – Cassie Pepler. We have also hired a new Assistant Teacher – Kristin Ross - for the Zion Room, having learned last month that Jo Gaona would not be able to finish out the year due to family circumstances. Please join us in welcoming Cassie and welcoming back Kristin (she worked in the Kinder room and as a para last year before completing her teaching degree this past December).

Foundation Update

The Foundation's focus is now moving to the **Annual Leadership Breakfast**, and working to identify our guest speaker. We will be looking to identify table captains and sponsorship for the Breakfast, which has become a regular and well-attended spring event in our community. I will be speaking more about the details at next month's meeting as Trustees will be asked to act as table captains to help fill the room with those willing and able to help us meet our fundraising goal. If you are interested in helping with organizing the event, or have some ideas you can share with me about potential sponsors or speakers, please be in touch with me directly as soon as possible. Thank you!

Currently, the Foundation's bank account has \$254,303.

* * *