



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.

MFCS Meeting Minutes for November 14, 2018

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

1. Call to Order at 5:50pm (Butterfield)

Roll Call Present: Butterfield, DePasse, Roberge, Kacavas, Connors, Levin, Wrubleski. **Absent:** Johnson, Brough, Marr. **Guest,** Jeff Trombley.

2. Public Comment: No public present.

4. Meeting Business

a. Approval of Minutes from October 2018 meeting. **Motion:** Kacavas motioned to approve the minutes; Connors seconded. **Vote:** Unanimous.

5. Montessori Moment: Colleen Lacroix, MFCS Math Interventionist

The video presented showed Lacroix's work with some of our students. It began with her daily method of walking down the hall with students and engaging their math minds, literally, every step of the way as they move from their classrooms to her work space. She then showed the ways in which the children are introduced to Color Bars. The bars represent numbers, and are color-coded in the same way other Montessori materials are. This tool and her hallway exercises help them establish their number sense.

6. School Update

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

Wrubleski highlighted the first-ever Upper Elementary Science Showcase. This new display of science work being done in the classroom took place in the fall and provided the opportunity for families and friends to see some of the experiments that the children have been doing in their classrooms. It was very well received and attended.

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

Levin highlighted the fact that this year we have many more students who are qualifying for "free" in the free and reduced reporting we are required to provide the DOE. She also noted that the Fire Marshall came for his annual review of our facility and will be issuing the required annual report shortly. Levin also noted that the fence has once again been repaired. She also spoke a bit about election results, in regard to what she understands will be one of the early education-related areas of focus by the House – that being NH per pupil aid.

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

a. Finance Committee (Roberge/Levin) The Board reviewed the budget to actual. Roberge reported there are no surprising trends in this month's report.

8. Program

Strategic Planning: Moving Forward with Plan Design: The Board discussed that the Governance Committee will meet to review some sample plans and then begin to put pen to paper.

9. Next Meeting: Wednesday, December 19, 5:45pm (Butterfield).

11. Adjournment: Kacavas moved to adjourn at 7pm; Connors seconded. **Vote:** Unanimous.



Educational Program Director Board Report November 14, 2018

Afterschool Programs: This month we have 2 different afterschool programs. Tana Gills and Kristin Lang are running an in-house chorus program. Their goal is to learn enough songs that they will perform at a local nursing home and for an in-house assembly. Additionally, we have the very first crochet club taught by Laura Blouin. This hobby aligns nicely with the peaceful approach students take to deal with stress within the classroom. On Tuesdays in the afternoon, our very own music teacher Cassie Pepler is working with the kindergarteners on music and movement. They LOVE the opportunity to sing and dance!

Assessments and Progress Reports: This year teachers embarked on the same path of assessment as past years. Teachers administered the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark assessment for reading, the Scholastic Math Inventory for math, DIBELS for reading fluency and a writing prompt that was scored using the 6 Traits rubrics. Teachers then will take this information in conjunction with their observations and work samples to analyze a student's performance within the Montessori continuum. This data is input into ALMA, our in-house online reporting service and parents received official reports on Friday, November 9th. Parents and teachers will meet on November 15th to discuss these reports.

Science Showcase: For the first time this year, the upper elementary team chose to organize a science showcase for one of the Montessori science units the students studied this fall. The Work of Air is a series of lessons developed to study all properties of air. Some of these properties include air has weight, air occupies space, air exerts pressure and air expansion by heat. Students then observed experiments on these properties, followed by the opportunity to practice additional experiments within a group as a showcase. Students created posters to describe their experiments and were available to showcase the experiment first hand to visiting parents and friends afterschool on November 8th.

Book Bonanza and Amazing Authors: Another new activity for the upper elementary this year was Book Bonanza. Students picked a newly read chapter book and completed a book review on that book. Students summarized the storyline, wrote a recommendation and presented this project to their peers. To present, students dressed up like their favorite character of the book and participated in the parade at the end of the day. Kindergarten and lower elementary also did studies on characters and participated in the parade.

Upper Elementary outing: The Derryfield School invited our upper elementary students to attend a student-acted and produced play, *Bye Bye Birdie*. This opportunity is always a fantastic community event and a chance for students to soak in culture and practice their grace, courtesy and respect outside of our setting.



**Executive Director's Report
For the November 14, 2018
MFCS School Board Meeting
Submitted by Meryl Levin**

Required Reporting

Our Auditor has completed our **FY18 Audit**, which will be made available to you for review at the meeting. Thereafter, we will post the audit to our website, as is our practice, and file a copy with the DOE as is required. This week we expect to complete the new reporting requirements put forth by the NH Attorney General's Office – those consist of excerpts of the 990 Form used for 501(c)3 organizations.

Immunization Report and the **Free & Reduced Report** have been filed with the DOE as is required. The **English Language Learner Report** is ready for upload (the DOE is having some problems on their end, so we await the ok to upload). There also have been a number of small surveys and reports filed, as per DOE requirements, over the last few weeks.

Board Related

We will be discussing resource mapping this coming Wednesday when we are together, as part of the prep work for the **Strategic Plan writing**. Last week, I shared with the Board the letter that Naomi and I sent to our community (on paper and via the newsletter) - an update of where we are in the strategic planning process.

Facility

I am THRILLED to report that we have leased a new printer/copier and everyone at school is SO appreciative. We worked with a rep from Toshiba who was able to get us a new machine for about the same monthly nut we've been paying to upkeep our failing machine (from 2012). We also have a backup machine as part of the agreement that is a much smaller one located toward the rear of our space and is intended for small jobs only.

Last week, the Staff Safety Committee including Mindy, met with members of the **NH Homeland Security Department** for a workshop about our space, and an initial analysis of our current Emergency Response Plan and the unique elements of our space. It prompted a great discussion and we will be moving forward with a full assessment in early January which will include local fire and police, followed by an expected table top exercise in the late spring. It is likely we will now be able to apply for federal funds to support some facility improvements (those funds cover 80% of the cost and the school would need to put in the other 20%).

The Fire Marshal will be coming to school this coming week for our **Annual Fire Inspection**, as per the DOE requirement.

For the second time since the school year started, the fence around the far field has been damaged by a truck turning too close to the corner. The first repair was quickly taken care of by the trucking company who also rents at 100 WLD. I only noticed the damage when leaving the premises late on Friday evening, so as of this writing, I'm not sure what the plan will be for it to be repaired.

I have been told that the landlord plans to replace the shrubs that are now the 'natural fence' with shorter plants. But that work has not yet begun, and I have not heard any additional updates.

MFCS ChildCare Program

Enrollment in our Child Care Program is extremely high this year. In fact, we have a significant waiting list for the AfterCare Program and on most days do not have space for drop-ins. Here's a breakdown of all programs as of this week:

BeforeCare (7-8:15am) = 10 full time; KinderCare (12-3pm) = 8 full time, 5 part time;
AfterCare (3-5:45pm) = 13 full time, 5 part time, plus extended kinders (3-5:45) = 1 full-time, 3 part time.

HR

The week before last was the final week of work for one of our paraprofessionals who took a job at another school. We have hired her replacement who begins this coming week.

This month also marked the start of our new part-time **Office Assistant**. Kristin Ross began the year with us, but was offered a long-term substitute position at her neighborhood school. These days, twice-a-week you will now be greeted by Melissa Fortin who has worked as a para and sub with us for years and continues to sub as needed when not at the Front Desk.

Financial

SpEd in relation to Manchester: I have sent Manchester the second invoice for services rendered (October). That billing packet reflects the details mapped out in our agreement with the District. We have not yet received payment for September. Additionally, the **Concord School District** has not signed the contract for one of our students nor have they paid the related billing. The issue for them revolves around the child's homeless status, but we have confirmed with the DOE that Concord remains responsible. Maryclare and I are trying to work this out with the District. Most other sending districts we are providing SpEd services for are paying in a timely manner and with good, clear communication in regard to financial issues.

MFCS Community Building & Volunteerism

Earlier this month we had a VERY well attended, first-ever **Pancake Breakfast held on November 3rd**. The program was moved from our venue to the Sweeney Post and accommodated over 200 guests. This fun/friend-raiser organized by parents, turned into a fundraiser with so many in attendance, and raised close to \$1000!

This coming weekend, families will be participating in 'Take a Hike Day' – another family event being organized by parents. It will take place at Lake Massabesic with some guidance from the Audobon Center.

This week I will be the third member of the **Charter Renewal Team** visiting the Next Charter School in Derry. I volunteered to do this work, following an ask by Jane Waterhouse, the Charter Office Director at the NH-DOE.

My work with the **Manchester Proud initiative**, continues, and our selection of the team to lead the analysis of the Manchester School District and create the community-based strategic plan is fast coming to conclusion. [To learn more about Manchester Proud, please click here.](#)

Foundation News:

The Foundation currently has \$295,503 in its account.