



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.

The secret of good teaching is to regard the child's intelligence as a fertile field in which seeds may be sown, to grow under the heat of flaming imagination.

-Dr. Maria Montessori

MFCS Minutes for April 17, 2019

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

1. **Call to Order, Roll Call & Welcome Public** (Butterfield)
2. **Announcements/Updates** (2 min)
3. **Public Comment*** (10 min)
(Members of the public may address the Board for 2 minutes each, and will be called upon in order by the Board Chair)
4. **Meeting Business**
 - a. **Approval of Minutes** from March 2019 meeting (2 min)
 - b. **Agenda Review** (2 min, ONLY if necessary due to emergent issue)
5. **Montessori Moment:**
Fractions on a Number Line presented by Shannon Helie, Lower Elementary Lead Teacher (5 min)
6. **School Update**
 - a. **Educational Program Director** (Wrubleski, 15 min)
Annual Leadership Breakfast Update
 - b. **Executive Director** (Levin, 15 min)
7. **Officer/Foundation/Committee/Working Group & Related Q+A**
 - a. **Finance Committee** (Levin) Review Budget-to-Actual
 - b. **Draft Budget Discussion** (Levin): a portion of this discussion will be in closed session
8. **Program**
 - a: **Approval of 2019/20 Calendar**
 - b: **Board Engagement:**
 - 1: **What does Engagement look like?**
Discussion
 - 2: **Strategic Plan Related** (Levin, 15 min)
Check in on Plan Work
9. **Next Meeting:** **To be discussed; new date to be determined** (Butterfield, 2 min).
10. **Public Comment*** (10 min)
(Members of the public may address the Board for 2 minutes each, and will be called upon in order by the Board Chair)
11. **Adjournment**



**Educational Program Director
Board Report
March 20, 2019**

SAS Testing: Over the past two weeks, teachers administered the NH SAS, which stands for NH State Assessment System. Over the course of the 2 weeks, students in grades 3-6 completed assessment in math, language and writing. On days that students participated in testing, we made sure to offer movement breaks to get their blood flowing. Two parents volunteered their time: Ramon Saloman taught Latin dance and Maura Barber taught exercise dance similar to Zumba. Additionally, Devon Venne our fitness teacher brought students outside for some group activities. Thank you to those volunteers that made standardized testing more fun!

After School Programing: We have quite a bit of afterschool programing taking place this month. Lego Your Mind is running two sessions this time, one for our younger crew and one for the older group of students. This club supports those interested in robotics and lego building. Girls on the Run(GOTR) is kicking off for another season working with girls in grades 3-6. Mindy Kacavas is running a cooking club for lower elementary students with the help of Kathleen Cline and a guest student support, Emma Blaisdell. And Lastly, Shannon Helie and Kristin Lang are running an Arts and crafts session for a few weeks focusing on making realistic art such as modge podge ice cream!

Spirit Week: Annually, we declare one week a year as a spirit week to get the kids excited about the long month of March! We pick daily themes such as multiplicity Monday or fancy Friday and students and staff come to school dressed up to the nines!

Paraprofessional Meeting: Monthly meetings have been going well addressing various topics. Most recently, the special education staff has designed a manual of sorts describing and explaining the various disabilities that students may have and how to best support those needs in the classroom. The feedback on these sessions has been very positive and teachers facilitating the training sessions have enjoyed the experience.

Homeless Liason Training: Last week, I attended the annual homeless liason training session in Concord NH. The NH DOE hosted this event in conjunction with Jocelyne Pinsonneault, Manchester School District's homeless liaison and an incredible resource in the field. Fortunately, the DOE received a grant, allowing them to bring in a speaker from the National Center for the Homeless Education. The speaker, Christina Endres, shared stats specific to NH, reviewed qualifying measures for identifying students as homeless as well as ways we can support these families. Within our community, we always have at least one family that qualifies as homeless and it's important that we always pay attention to the detail in student reporting so that we can help when necessary.



**Executive Director's Report
For the April 17, 2019
MFCs School Board Meeting
Submitted by Meryl Levin**

Foundation News:

I am kicking off this report with a most pressing piece of organizational planning for the coming weeks - the **2019 Leadership Fundraising Breakfast**, which will be held at the Puritan Conference Center on the **May 15th, 2019**. Each of you have received event information and the invitation from me to share with your friends, colleagues, neighbors and family members.

The Breakfast is our single largest day of fundraising each year and requires each of us to help out so that we fill the room with engaged guests – leaders in the areas of education, business, politics and community.

We will gather on the 15th to celebrate innovative education and to raise funds to support our school. Our **guest speaker – Eric Schwarz** – is a nationally recognized leader in the education field and has links to the region as well as to City Year and to social justice through educational opportunities both K-12 and higher ed.

I have been hard at work **securing YES! RSVP's** and I need to hear from each of you about how your inviting is going. Please email me with any updates. We will also discuss this at our meeting. Please know I really need your help – this is like producing a wedding each year and your participation is crucial for event success.

At this time, I have secured **\$12,500 in sponsorship**. If you, or your company (or someone else you know) is willing to be a sponsor please let me know. We will thank you/them at the event both in print in our program and on the screen. **Please contact me directly if you are able to assist with sponsorship or have any leads.**

This year the **Calendar Raffle** has raised \$10,373 gross in sales with no expenses other than the small PayPal fees (we netted \$10,326.04). So every dollar is a fundraised dollar! As per our 2018/19 plan, dollars raised via large fundraising efforts like the Calendar are being deposited in the Foundation account, rather than the school account.

The Foundation currently holding **\$318,479**. As I've mentioned, the Foundation's Sweep Account and the short-term CD's, which were arranged earlier this year, are interest generating.

Required Reporting

Since our last meeting, I completed our **Middle of the Year Report (MOY)**, which is quite similar to the BOY (Beginning of the Year) and EOY (End of the Year). I've also completed the **Annual Civil Rights Survey**. This year, the DOE has introduced some new reporting, along with the usual spring reporting which annually includes our average teacher salary survey as well as the list of Trustees. Following our meeting, I will need to upload our approved 2019/20 School Calendar to the DOE's site.

Board Related

The **Montessori Morning Tour on March 20th was extremely well attended – thanks our newest Trustee, Jeff**, for joining us and bringing a community member as his guest. Many in attendance were from the Manchester Chamber's Education Committee, there was also a Manchester School Board member and several others mainly from the business community. The Tours are such a great way to build community interest in and support of our program. There's really no better tool for that. I do not have any additional tours scheduled for the remainder of the year,

but should you have folks who are interested, please send them my way so that I can arrange to bring them in! Thank you!

Several weeks back I sent out the **draft of the Strategic Planning Document**. There is still a good deal of work to complete on that, including a mapping of the Board's plan for itself over the next three years. This item will be on our agenda for discussion and planning purposes.

Facility

Last week at our March Early Release / Professional Development Day our guest speaker was **Manchester Police Officer Nathan Linstad**. He spent nearly 3 hours with us discussing school safety and options for teamwork and empowerment in relation to keeping our students and ourselves safe. Staff found his training to be enormously productive and helpful. I have circulated a follow up questionnaire to attendees, which will be reviewed by our Safety Committee.

With funds from a **federal grant for safety improvements** we will soon be replacing the interior doors and installing a KNOX box. We await the arrival of these materials now on order.

2019 Enrollment Lottery & Enrollment Overview

All **Intent to Enroll** forms from students who obtained spots through the 2019 Lottery have been received. Additionally, their student information packets have been sent out and are expected to be returned on or before the Interview Day on May 3, 2019. Our **Lottery Official was Stacy Scarlett**. Stacy has long been a friend of MFCS – she helped design our first information flyer and has been our go-to design person ever since! This year we had 189 Applicants. They hailed from 22 towns, including Manchester and among them they speak 16 different languages (including Creole, Bosnian, Arabic and Cantonese).

At this time, we are turning our attention to the growing **watch list**. We use this tool to help us get a clearer sense of plans for next year, especially from the families of our current 5th year students. This list grows annually at this time of year, as families finalize their plans and begin to share those plans with us, even though nearly all of our families have told us they plan to return next year. We will continue to connect with our families about this, so that we are not caught off guard in terms of openings at the end of the year and into the summer, once school is out. As you know, it is much more difficult for prospective families to understand what we do and how it all works when they visit over the summer, when school is all closed up. I will be working with Susanne to lead some tours of those on wait lists before school comes to a close.

MFCS ChildCare Program

Enrollment in our Child Care Program remains at capacity. We have been working with our bookkeeper, Allison DeCesere, to develop a **simpler billing system** for the Program going forward. We also are researching the best plans for electronic payment of ChildCare bills for our participating families.

Financial

For the last several weeks, I've been developing the **2019/20 Draft Budget** for Board review. Variables this year include the fact that the only per-pupil increase we can count on at this time is a 2% annual increase. As you are likely aware, there is a big debate going on in Concord about the idea of finally providing public funding for full-day K, rather than the current 'Keno' gambling funding which only provides schools/districts with a portion of the full day costs. However, it is unclear if or when that will be passed and go into effect. Additionally, there is talk of funding for the first time in a long-time, building aid. But again, that is tied up in the legislative budget deliberation. This has made this budget process more complex than usual. We will be looking at the draft at our meeting this month, following the Finance Committee's review before the full Board meeting.

SpEd, Manchester: Manchester remains current in its reimbursements. We had a meeting with Mary Steady, the District's Director of Student Services. Following that meeting, I prepared an

Amendment to our existing 2018/19 Agreement with help from Naomi. That completed document was sent to Mary in late March; in a conversation with Mary yesterday, she assured me that the document was in line with her expectations and was now awaiting the signature of the business manager at the District. She expressed her satisfaction with this working model, which we also find to be strong, and told me that she has used it with other charter schools as well. I have reiterated that our contracts go out to staff this coming Friday, and hope to have the signed contract back from her before that time. At this time, **All Districts** are in good standing with regard to their reimbursement payments.

MFCS Community Building & Volunteerism

This spring, our parents have organized a number of Family Fun Events. These include: **Game Night** held earlier this month and organized by MFCS Parent, Lauren Doukas; our first-ever **Paint Night** organized by MFCS Parent, Kim Robinson, was held at school this past Thursday evening; and our upcoming **Spaghetti Dinner** which is being produced in partnership with the folks at Manchester School of Technology (MST). The lead on this event, MFCS parent, Amanda Gerardi, made contact with the hospitality program at MST. They will be cooking, serving and hosting the spaghetti dinner! The 2019 Spaghetti Dinner on Thursday, April 18th at MST; all proceeds will benefit MFCS. Visit Spaghettilforall.bpt.me for ticket info.

Amanda and I were guests at WMNH 95.3 FM Radio on a recent morning show. The hosts were great and gave us time to talk about our program as well as the upcoming event at MST.

In late March, Mindy K hosted a **Cabi Clothing Party** with salesperson Kay Mulchahy, a long time friend of Mill Falls. A portion of the proceeds went to Mill Falls. Thank you Mindy and Kay!!

This spring my Student Newspaper Team will be putting out their second 2018/19 issue of Roots. This will be the paper's 6th issue since it began in 2016/17.

Earlier this week, I attended the Thursday meeting of the **Queen City Rotary**. I was there as the guest of Sara Bee, a new friend to Mill Falls who recently attended a Montessori Morning Tour and will be attending our Breakfast. We discussed my speaking to the club in the near future about our public Montessori model.

Our **Annual Night of Community** celebration will once again be hosted by the Palace Theatre, and held at their new(ish) space beside the theater on Hannover Street in Manchester. Please put that date in your calendars – **Saturday, May 1**. Last year's event was really a lovely community gathering. The lead organizers working on this are, MFCS parents and MFCS Foundation Members, Rachel Marziano and Kim Robinson. There will be food, a cash bar, entertainment and an art auction.

This coming week, I will once again be part of an interview team for **Leadership of New Hampshire**. I have participated in the organizational interview process to identify new class members since completing the program back in 2013. This coming week's interviews will be for members of LNH's Class of 2020.

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