



*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 child is both a hope and a promise for mankind.*

-Dr. Maria Montessori

## **MFCS Meeting Minutes for August 27, 2019**

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

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

**Present:** DePasse, Kacavas, Roberge, Wrubleski, Connors, Trombley, Marr, Butterfield, Levin.

**Absent:** Brough, Johnson.

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

### **3. Meeting Business**

#### **a. Approval of Minutes** from June 2019 meeting

**Motion:** Marr moved to approve the June 2019 meeting minutes; Trombley seconded. **Vote:** Unanimous.

### **4. School Update**

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

Wrubleski shared some highlights from the Staff Opening Day Schedule which included collaboration time, culture/tone setting, curricular work such as Math Talks, Wellness and Montessori Work Cycle.

#### **b. Executive Director** *Please see attached report.*

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

**a. Governance Committee:** Butterfield spoke about the Governance Committee's August get together with Donna Talbot, and reviewed her various professional experiences and the strengths she brings to the Board. She shared that the Governance Committee unanimously supports Donna's nomination, and Butterfield then moved to bring the nomination forward; Kacavas seconded. **Vote:** Unanimous.

### **6. Next Meeting: Wednesday, September 18<sup>th</sup>, 5:45pm**

### **7. Adjournment:**

**Motion:** Marr moved to adjourn at 6:03pm; DePasse seconded. **Vote:** Unanimous.



**Executive Director's Report  
For the August 27, 2019  
MFCS School Board Meeting  
Submitted by Meryl Levin**

### **Required Reporting**

The **End of Year (EOY) Report** was filed in June, immediately following the end of the school year. After that report was reviewed and processed, the final FY19 Pupil Aid funds were deposited in our bank account in July.

**DOE-25 Quarterly Forms: Q1-3** have been filed with the state; Q4 will be completed at the end of August. The final year-end DOE-25 report will be completed in early September, so that it can include all expenses related to the FY19 year.

There were also a small number of smaller reports and surveys, which have been filed, as per requirements, in the late spring and over summer.

The Field Work for our **FY19 Audit** is scheduled for mid-September. Our auditor will once again complete the a new series of reports as required for the first time last year by the New Hampshire **AG's office**.

**The 2018/19 Annual Report** will be filed this coming week, and a copy will be sent to the Board, as well as the DOE.

As is now an annual requirement, we will also submit our 2019/20 **Emergency Response Plan** to the DOE in partnership with the Homeland Security Office at the end of this month. As is my annual task, I have reviewed and updated our existing plan, and will send that in by the Sept 1 deadline. Most of the Response Plan is public, but there are some specifics to our response planning which will remain confidential and will only be sent to the Police and Fire Departments. The entire plan is available to any Board member to review and is sent annually to our Chair to sign off on. Her signature, along with mine, Laura's and our new Project Manager, Grace Eaton, as well as those of the Fire Marshall and the Police Chief are required. Laura and I are also hoping to arrange some more practice drills with Staff to be lead by the Manchester Safety Officer as we move toward a hybrid A.L.I.C.E. approach should life-threatening emergency situations occur at our facility. I will continue to work with our School Safety Committee, and our Board's Facility Committee as needed, as we continue to evaluate our current Plan.

### **Board Related**

The Governance Committee met in August with a prospective Board Member, Donna Talbot, and will be bringing her nomination forward at the August Meeting. Our August Meeting Agenda will be brief. Following that we will move into our Strategic Plan Writing Work.

### **Facility**

Beyond the usual carpet cleaning, school has gotten a bit of a facelift this summer. Our cleaning crew from Stearns took the magic erasers to every wall, and cleaned the windows. I've hung the Montessori quote in the front office - it's been in my office since the spring! Many staff members took part by touching up your classroom/workspace walls with fresh paint. Some went above and beyond...please join me in offering our **HUGE thanks to Melissa Fortin** who took on organizing the specials room and large sections of the storage closet, as well as various wall painting projects. Thanks also to **Jen Avery** who lovingly painted the common areas and bathrooms in early August. Thanks also to **Mindy** who has weeded, prepped planters, and is working on our entryway to give all of us and our guests a warmer welcome as we enter our school. MFCS Parents **Nick and Rachel Marziano** came in last weekend to repair the furniture

that needed attention, and we are grateful for that. There is still more to do, and we will complete the last bits when staff is together next week.

This month our **fire extinguishers** were inspected (an annual requirement), and we refurbished a small number of them, based on their age (6 years old).

When next you come to school, you will notice there are new gadgets (flying saucer like things) in the ceiling throughout our space. Huge thanks to Board member (and former MFCS dad), **Greg DePasse** for the donation of time, expertise and equipment!

### **MFCS ChildCare Program**

Enrollment in our Child Care Program is strong out of the gate this year. By the end of June, we were already on wait list for the AfterCare Program. We expect that enrollment for KinderCare will pickup this week when Laura and I discuss it with parents at Kinder Camp – the first day of school for our Kinders. We get to sit with parents as a group that day to talk about various school-related items. Grace Eaton, our new, full-time Project Manager, has been trained by Susanne Hojlo who is no longer on staff, about the details large and small related to our program. This year we have moved to a far simpler billing method, which will reduce the administrative oversight of that, and is the norm in most childcare programs.

The AfterCare Program Coordinator this year is a new employee, Jordan Gambale. She is also a full-time paraprofessional on our staff. The program will be supervised by Shannon Helie. Jordan will have shift assistance from other staff members. Our BeforeCare will be staffed by Upper El Assistant Teacher, Christine Bisson, and Office Manager, Jen Avery, as well as additional staff members who may sub as needed; and our KinderCare will be staffed as it has been for the last three years - by our Kindergarten Lead and Assistant Teacher, Kristin Lang and Kayla Messana.

### **Enrollment & Prep for the New School Year**

We completed the year with a pretty clear picture of which students would be coming back, and who would be moving to other school/educational environments. But as always happens, August brought some surprises and we only learned of plans of several students to un-enroll in the last week or so. It's interesting to look at the movement, as a data point for considering our organization's growth and related challenges.

**Kinder:** This year our Kinder class again has a large number of siblings of currently enrolled students – 13. We also have the child of one staff member.

**Lower Elementary:** We had an unusual amount of movement in our Lower El this summer.

- Before the summer, 1 Lower El student un-enrolled from MFCS.
- In mid-late August, we had a few late breaking notifications from families – another 4 Lower Elementary students un-enrolled for various reasons. As of this writing, these spots are now filled.

**Upper Elementary:** At the time of the Lottery there were no openings in Upper El. Here's a recap of

what has transpired:

- Before the summer, seven (8) rising 6<sup>th</sup> grade students un-enrolled from MFCS in order to attend various schools to begin their middle school experience.
- Remember we had just twenty-four (24) 5<sup>th</sup> graders, so their departure did impact the size of this year's 6<sup>th</sup> grade (see below)
- Before the summer, 2 rising 4<sup>th</sup> graders moved to their neighborhood school.
- In late August, we learned that 2 more Upper El students un-enrolled from MFCS – one 4<sup>th</sup> year student moved; one 5<sup>th</sup> year to be homeschooled, As of this writing, those spots have (finally!) been filled.

Here's a snapshot of our 168 kiddos as broken down by grade for the start of the school year (as of today):

**Kinder:** 24; **Lower El:** 1<sup>st</sup> = 25; 2<sup>nd</sup> = 24; 3<sup>rd</sup> = 23; **Upper El:** 4<sup>th</sup> = 28; 5<sup>th</sup> = 30; 6<sup>th</sup> = 14

This means we have a small 6<sup>th</sup> Year Cohort; we projected this outcome this time last year, as our rising 6<sup>th</sup> grade group was small.

All of our **Handbooks** – Staff, Family, ChildCare and Volunteer – have been updated as needed, and posted on our website.

### **Financial**

**Special Education reimbursement payments:** In early summer, all outstanding payments from FY19 were made, and all needed contracts (for students known to us at this time) for FY20 are in place, including Manchester. We proposed and have arranged a sharing of the costs of one of the paras who will be in a classroom servicing students who are from the 2 different districts. The costs are based on the contract costs we have with Manchester. Both districts were very pleased to share the costs and work together.

### **Legislative Update**

It is down to the wire as the state awaits the final budget approval. Though people expect that the plan for paying full-day K will be part of the final budget, that remains unknown. We will not be offering full day K this year. As you know Full-Day Kindergarten is being funded partially by KINO gambling. In this second year of KINO funding, the state will continue to provide an additional \$1100 per student for schools with full-day programs. That was not sufficient to cover all-day costs for us. However, as you will recall from our budget process, since we are more than a ½ day program (our schedule far surpassed the number of ½ day hours for the year), we are able to access a portion (pro-rated) of those funds for this school year.

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

Over the summer I've worked closely with the parent organizer, Amanda Gerardi, on our **4<sup>th</sup> Annual Road Race & Family Fun Run scheduled for September 22<sup>nd</sup> at SNHU's new Penmen Stadium**. Here are the details about how you can sign up and how you can help.

We are nearing the deadline for securing sponsorship for the event, which is a key element to the financial success of the event. Sponsorship provides some visibility for sponsor on Race Day and beyond – sponsors' family name or business name/ logo will appear on the race day t-shirts and there are a few more benefits, too!. Please let me know ASAP if you would like to be a Race Day Sponsor (deadline is Sept 4).

Either way, please plan to come and run, walk or just cheer us on! **There is also a link on our website's homepage, <http://www.millfalls.org>.**

#### **Race Day Schedule:**

**8:30am:** Registration begins; **8:45am:** Warm Up begins

**9:00am:** Kids Fun Run steps off; **9:30am:** Road Race steps off

**Where:** The NEW Penmen Stadium, Southern New Hampshire University, 80 Victory Lane, Hooksett, NH. East side of the SNHU Campus. *Easiest access via W. Alice Avenue, the new back entry to the campus. Stadium is the first right after you enter campus.*

**Who:** Mill Falls Families & Friends, SNHU Students & Staff, Community Members from near and far who love to walk, run, and have some fun!

**\* Register for the Race, [click here!](#)**

*Space is limited, so please register to reserve your spot today!*

**\* Help Build Sponsorship!** Secure a spot on the Race Day T-Shirts with your family or business name or a friend's family or business name and be celebrated during the race! We urgently need sponsors at the \$100, \$250 and \$500 level. Can you pitch in? **Please let me know!!!**

Many of you were able to join us at the **Night of Community** event in June. Thank you!

Our **third MFCS Summer Art Camp week** ran the week of July 30th and by all accounts was a big hit! The teachers had a blast, along with their students. Ms. Shannon (Lower El) and Ms. Kristin (Kinder) lead campers in the creation of a number of engaging projects.

As I've shared in the past, MFCS is part of a **consortium** of school districts and one other charter in support of our English Language Learners (ELL). Together, these many schools & districts have enough students to apply as a group for federal funds that support these learners. Last year we were able to provide professional development and acquire materials for our ELL students. We look forward to accessing this year's funds (approximately \$1000) for additional supports.

Additionally, this year we are accessing Title IIa funds for professional development (around \$5000 available to us), as well as Title IV funds, which is newly available to all charter schools this year (\$10,000 each school for this year and again next).

Please consider joining us on **Wednesday, August 28th for our Annual Popsicle Party**, which is held here at school from **6:30-7:30pm**. It is a great way for you to introduce yourselves to the parent and student community, and give them the chance to thank you for your service!

### **Human Resources**

Looking forward to next week when we welcome new and returning staff during our **Opening Days** (M-Th). During the week, our Retirement and Aflac brokers will meet with staff.

In preparation for the year, we have met with Shannon Helie who will once again serve as our Assistant Educational Program Director. She will step out of her classroom for about 3 hours a week this year, to perform the majority of these duties. Laura will be working 4 day-weeks again this year; As our **Assistant EPD**, Shannon will also be available to fill many of the roles of the EPD on those days when Laura is not in. We also have a new mentor position – Assistant Teacher Mentor, which this year will be held by Mel Decowski. We have updated and tweaked a clear flow **Chart of Roles and Responsibilities** so that staff understands who is working on what, and who to speak to, about the various project, ideas, issues and concerns as they arise.

As noted above, our long-time employee Susanne Hojlo is no longer with us. Over the summer, our new Project Manager stepped in. Please join me in welcoming **Grace Eaton**.

Laura will speak to some of the specifics on **hiring for our education program staff**, but we are happy to report we are a full house. We have hired 3 new assistant teachers, 4 new paraprofessionals (this year we will have 6 paras in total), and 1 new art teacher.

Please take a moment to review our Faculty/Staff Page here:

<http://millfalls.org/education/administration-faculty/>

### **Foundation News:**

The Foundation hopes to meet in the early fall to focus on its work this coming School Year. The Foundation currently has \$372,548 in its accounts.