



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 Minutes for September 18, 2019**

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

### **1. Call to Order: 6pm Roll Call**

**Roll Call:** Butterfield, Roberge, Talbot, Levin, Marr, Tromley, Connors; Wrubleski & Johnson (by tel). Absent: DePasse

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

### **3. Meeting Business**

#### **a. Approval of Minutes** from August 2019

**Motion:** Connors moved to approve the August 2019 meeting minutes; Talbot Seconded. **Vote:** Unanimous.

### **4. School Update**

#### **a. Educational Program Director** (*please also see attached report*).

Wrubleski noted that it's just been 2 weeks since we last met, and the school year has just begun. The year is off to a great start. The Professional Development we offered during our Staff Opening Days was very well received. We used that time to help frame things well for the start of the school year in terms of systems and Montessori practice. Wrubleski also shared that our new Art Teacher, Melissa Fortin, who has been with us doing many different roles over the past years, has pulled the Integrated Arts Team together, which has been wonderful. They are now doing lots of co-planning both for the specials class times and classroom work.

#### **b. Executive Director** (*please also see attached report*)

Levin reminded the Board that the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Fun Run & Road Race will be held this Sunday. It's a great event, which stresses health and community, and provides a great opportunity to partner with SNHU, and many businesses large and small for sponsorship and in-kind donations. She then shared information gleaned at the September Charter Leader Meetings held earlier this week:

#### **Federal Grant for Expansion and Replication of existing NH charter schools:**

Levin reviewed what is known about this newly awarded grant, which first must be accepted by the NH Legislature. It is a very large grant, which mentioned Mill Falls as one of the high-performing NH charters that COULD qualify for funding from the grant. However, Levin clarified that there are no funds earmarked for those schools mentioned. Any school wanting to access those funds would have to apply for them through the NH DOE. The department will need to hire project/grant managers and additional staff once the grant is accepted.

**New Suicide Prevention Law** requires that public schools have prevention/education policies in place. The Charter Office will be sending us sample policies. These are to include suicide prevention and training for staff, volunteers and education for students. We will be looking at the sample policy, and exploring training resources including but not limited to local health care/mental health care non profits (Making It Happen, Child Health Services, DOE Wellness Department), as well as training resources offered as part of the Fred T. Church Insurance 'Safe Schools Program'.

**Safe School Law: Bias & Discrimination Law** amends existing law to say that each school shall add to their stated anti-discrimination policy, procedures of how to identify, prevent and address discrimination when/if it occurs. The Alliance meeting participants discussed the Safe Schools training videos available, as one possible resource.

**Data Protection Law** was also discussed at the Alliance meeting. Levin learned that one school is doing a

technology audit to identify areas of weakness and develop protocol. Mill Falls will look into this process. Levin reminded the Board of the work we have been doing to add additional protections to our technology for students and the organization overall, which include, but are not limited to our firewall, password protocol changes, and review of vendors. The school will also review the current technology agreements signed by students and parents with this new law in mind, and expect to make some amendments/adjustments to the current agreement language.

**6. Montessori Moment:** Colleen Costa, Lead Teacher shared a lesson in adding positive and negative integers, using the Montessori material called 'Snake Game.'

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

**a. Finance Committee (Levin)** Discussion of Budget-to-Actual: Levin shared that there are no unexpected trends in this first budget to actual that includes July and August of FY20.

**8. Program**

**a: Review of Current Trustee Terms**

The Board discussed the current terms for those Board members who are due for renewal.

**Motion:** Marr motioned to vote on 3-year term renewal for Butterfield, Connors and DePasse; Trombley seconded.

**Vote:** Unanimous.

**b: Annual Meeting: Officer Slate & Committee Assignments**

**Officer Slate:** The Board discussed the Officer Slate.

**Motion:** Connors motioned to approve the 2019 Office Slate:

**Chair,** Naomi Butterfield

**Vice Chair,** Pete Marr

**Treasurer,** Jeff Trombley

**Secretary,** Donna Talbot

Roberge seconded. **Vote:** Unanimous.

**2019-20 Committee Assignments:** The Board discussed Committee Assignments, and decided upon:

- **Finance Committee:**  
*Connors, DePasse, Trombley, Levin (ex-officio), Butterfield (ex-officio),*
- **Committee on Trustees/Governance Committee:**  
*Connors, Johnson, Butterfield, Levin*
- **Development & Communication Committee:** *(chair), Levin, Fdn Chair.*
- **Facility Committee:** *Levin, DePasse, Trombley, Talbot, Marr, with Kanteres & Martin as needed*
- **Charter Committee:** *Butterfield, Levin, Connors, Talbot, Marr, Johnson, Wrubleski*

Further, the Committees will work on developing topics of focus, which will be discussed at the next meeting.

**c: Review of Strategic Plan Status** – moved to next meeting.

**9. Next Meeting: Wednesday, October 16, 5:45pm** (Butterfield) *(note, this meeting was later changed to 10/23/19)*

**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:**

**Motion:** Marr motioned to adjourn at 7:46pm; Connors seconded. **Vote:** Unanimous.



**Executive Director's Report  
For the September 18, 2019  
MFCS School Board Meeting  
Submitted by Meryl Levin**

### **Required Reporting**

Our first **2019/20 Per Pupil Aid Form** was filed on the first day of school. This form reflects the enrollment numbers and is filed 3x per year, day 1 and again in November and February. Today, we received our first per pupil payment from the state; this is based on the reported enrollment.

**DOE-25 Quarterly Forms:** Both the final **year-end DOE-25** as well as the **Q4** have been completed, and turned in to the DOE, as required.

The Field Work for our **FY19 Audit** will begin next Monday. Once the full audit is finished, our auditor will work with us complete the new (last year) requirements put for by the New Hampshire **AG's office**.

Grace will begin on the **Immunization Report** along side her current data collection from our families for our **Free & Reduced Report**. Additionally, language surveys have been assessed to identify our English Language Learners. The next large report will be our BOY. The Beginning of the Year report is the large report that lists information about each individual student enrolled with us as of October 1 of each year. Annually, we are required to complete the BOY, M(middle)OY and the E(end)OY.

**The 2019/20 Emergency Response Plan** had been filed as required annually (beginning last year). The Signature pages were returned from both the Fire and Police Departments and have been filed with the NH Homeland Security Office, as required. The Staff Safety Committee met the first week of school, and will continue to meet regularly.

### **Board Related**

On the agenda for this month's Board Meeting is our **Annual Meeting**, which includes Officer Slate and Committee Assignments. Last week I forwarded the Board Grid for each of you to review and fill in. Also sent out with this report are notes related to our **Strategic Plan**.

### **Facility**

Earlier today, a MFCS Dad, Frank Rosano, oversaw the delivery of new lateral files to house our important school files. Frank purchased the equipment, and assisted in the delivery. We are deeply grateful for his kindness and generosity! And these new locking cabinets!

### **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. We have 26 children almost every day in the AfterCare Program. That is likely the largest crew we've ever had. Here's a breakdown of all programs as of this week:

**BeforeCare** (7-8:15am) = 12 full time; 0 part time; **KinderCare** (12-3pm) = 8 full time; 4 part time, **AfterCare** (3-5:45pm) = 15 full time; 7 part time; plus **Extended Kinders** (3-5:45) = 5 full time; 1 part time,

We are finding the kids are staying later this year, than in past years, so we are adjusting our Assistant hours as needed – some days they stay until 5pm rather than the usual 4:30 if there are a large number of kids still with us. Shannon is doing a great job of overseeing the programs functionality, while Grace continues to manage enrollment and Allison our bookkeeper is now handling billing which has been streamlined.

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

We begin the year with a full house – 24 kinders and 144 Lower and Upper Elementary students for a total of our usual 168. While beginning of the year assessments are conducted with all returning students in reading and math, the teaching staff is taking extra care to quickly get to know the academic levels of our newest enrollees. Any of the new students who have IEPs are also seen by our Special Education Team who have begun observing and working with the students and communicating with their home districts and families to be sure they have appropriate supports in place.

Each year, ALL MFCS families are expected to read our Family Handbook and return their sign off sheets. All Staff members are also expected to review both the Family and the Staff Handbooks annually.

### **Financial**

**SpEd:** We have established contracts with all of the current sending districts who have resident students enrolled at Mill Falls.

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

Hoping you are planning to lace up your running/ walking shoes and join us at our **4<sup>th</sup> Annual Road Race & Family Fun Run scheduled for September 22<sup>nd</sup> at SNHU's new Penmen Stadium**. The fun starts at 8:45am and will run to about 11! We have a great crew of sponsors and partners for this event. A number of families and local businesses have helped us raise over \$2500 in sponsorship so far. We will do a big final push to get folks registered this week. [Click here to sign up!](#) Or you can go to our website's homepage ([www.millfalls.org](http://www.millfalls.org)) and that will lead you to the link!

We have also revised our '**Count Me In**' Form for the new year. This form highlights the variety of ways families can get involved including, but not limited to, helping with events that have been planned for the entire year. The Family Events and engagement efforts overall relate to three areas – **Community, Service and Fundraising**. Additionally, Room Parents will be selected by teachers, to help parents connect to our program and to one another.

We are already at work to pin down the date for our Annual Night of Community, which we plan to hold at the **Palace Theatre**, again in June.

Later this month, we will have our **annual all-school service day at the NH Food Bank**. Students will walk over the Food Bank in groups of 3 to work together to pack mac n cheese dinners for food insecure NH residents.

### **Human Resources**

Our **2019/20 Staff Opening Days** were a huge success. Laura did an amazing job of welcoming new and returning staff to campus this year. As per our work on our Montessori Audit, and our general work on school culture, we had a keen focus on programming. We also finished the week with a fun group project – building benches for the library, which we did together at Spark Studio in Bedford.

On the housekeeping front, all HR details have been attended to by me, from new files and related paperwork for our new staff members, to meetings with our Retirement and Aflac Representatives. I ran our first payroll of FY19 on Aug 30, and our second this past week.

Please take a moment to familiarize yourselves with our staff by visiting our website:

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

### **Foundation News:**

The Foundation currently has \$373,520.74 in its account.

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**Educational Program Director  
Board Report  
September 18, 2019**

**Start of the School Year:** Classrooms have been working on developing community through *getting to know you* games, lessons in meditation and kindness. The upper elementary program has started Growth Mindset work as entire level. This coming Friday is a culminating event with International Peace Day. By the start of week 3, students are completing full work cycles and getting back into the swing of lessons.

**Staff Professional Development:** The opening days offered quite a few opportunities for professional development for our staff including Fountas and Pinnell review, math talk discussions, CPR, and Montessori general overview specifically for assistants. For the early release day, we focused on a Sharma overview for new and returning assistants while the lead teachers met with special education teachers to discuss the delivery of special education services.

**Afterschool programs:** We are in the process of organizing afterschool programming for the coming 3 months. Our 5K running program began last week for kinder, lower and upper elementary programs, and we anticipate a series of programs to begin the first week in October. Stay tuned!

**Integrated Arts (Specials)-** This year we had 3 returning Integrated Arts Teachers and added Melissa Fortin as our Art teacher. We have focused on developing curriculum for these specials that will coincide with classroom instruction. This coming fall, the focus of instruction will be linked to the continent South America. As an example, in art, students will learn about street style murals and in Music students will be exposed to different drumming styles used in Latin music all while learning about soccer in fitness.