



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 October 23, 2019

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

1. Call to Order, Roll Call & Welcome Public (Butterfield) 5:55 PM

Present: Butterfield, Depasse, Roberge, Talbot, Levin, Marr (left at 7PM), Trombley, Wrubleski, Johnson (by tel). **Absent:** Connors. **Guest:** Garth Corriveau

2. Announcements/Updates

Levin announced that this will be Roberge's final board meeting after serving on the board for multiple terms as our Treasurer. She expressed appreciation to Roberge for her years of service and significant impact.

3. Public Comment: No public present.

4. Meeting Business

a. Approval of Minutes from Sept 2019 meeting

Motion: Roberge moved to approve the September 2019 meeting minutes; Trombley seconded.

Vote: Unanimous

5. School Update

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

Wrubleski shared that the fall school activities are in full swing as shown in her report. She highlighted the Professional Development section of her report, which ties into the current Montessori audit being undertaken in collaboration with Elizabeth Slade of the National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector (NCMPS). She reminded the board that the ultimate goal of this work is to be sure that our Montessori practice is authentic, and that it plays the primary role in all we do here. Earlier this fall, Meryl Levin, Colleen Lacroix, Shannon Helie and Laura Wrubleski attended a 2 day workshop in Boston, learning about the MCMPS' Montessori Coaching Model designed to support our public Montessori school structure. Related, Wrubleski has integrated weekly classroom observations during work cycles in order to best coach the teaching staff. As part of the coaching work, Wrubleski holds weekly meetings with the teachers where she employs the coaching model of asking questions, presenting "wonderings", and discussing progress of "grow and glow". While weekly meetings with the coaching staff is something that has been in place for years, this approach is a bit different than Wrubleski's past meeting structures. She is already finding this to be a productive model for teachers to feel supported and empowered. In addition, Wrubleski participates in bi-monthly meetings organized by NCMPS (using Zoom) to bring together other performing the same roles at schools around the country. She is also founding this collaboration to be a great learning community in which to share techniques and strategies.

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

Levin emphasized the day-long seminar that she attended with Jim O'Shaughnessy and Elek Miller of the Drummon Woodsum law firm. The workshop focused on Schools, Technology and the Law. The discussion involved all aspects of technology, including the efforts needed in figuring out what is needed to meet the new legislation related to tech and the required policies and practices. Levin shared that the room was filled with many districts that are working to respond to the new requirements, and was a very informative day. Levin presented the idea of the Board convening an ad-hoc committee to help with the fulfillment of this policy. She mentioned that for the first time, the school has a (very) part-time position this year that focuses on technology within the school that will also aid in addressing the new technology policy passed in June, which is geared toward safety and security of students and staff.

Levin confirmed the June 6, 2019 date for Annual Night of Community – the annual end of year fundraiser - to be held once again at the Palace Theatre’s Spotlight Room. She asked if anyone is able to help with sponsorships or securing artwork, to please let her know. This event is one of two large efforts each year that engage school families directly – the other being the calendar raffle.

Levin concluded with a reminder that our Reading Interventionist recently is out on medical leave. The school is currently working to fill this gap, and has advertised broadly (including at local Universities with Education Programs), but has not yet received any applicants. The role is described in more detail on our website. Levin asked for assistance in sharing word about this need among people’s networks.

6. Montessori Moment:

Colleen Lacroix, MFCS Math Interventionist shared videos of progressive lessons engaging in oral repetition to reinforce the concepts of math, and learning through multiple strategies.

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

a. Finance Committee: During the review of Budget-to-Actual, Levin shared that there are no unexpected trends on the FY20 Budget to Actual to date. She noted that the rollover funds totaling from several budget line items from FY18 and FY 19 of \$34,596.79 will soon be moved to the savings account for future use, as they were not used in the year defined. She added that the first Special Education bills were sent out earlier this month (as per the reimbursement model), therefore, as expected, no funds have yet been received.

8. Program

a: Review of Committee Goals/Priorities

The board reviewed the goals and priorities utilizing a google collaboration document.

The following Committee assignments were made at the Board’s September Annual Meeting:

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

b: Review of Strategic Plan Status

The Governance Committee will prepare a draft strategic plan based on the goals and priorities shared by the committees. This will be shared for discussion with the full Board at an upcoming meeting.

c. Ad hoc committee:

The Board may choose to add an ad hoc committee to support the technology initiative.

9. Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 13, 5:45pm

10. Adjournment

Motion: DePasse motioned to adjourn at 7:38 pm; Trombley seconded. **Vote:** Unanimous.



Executive Director's Report
For the October 23, 2019
MFCS School Board Meeting
Submitted by Meryl Levin

Required Reporting

We received our first **2019/20 Per Pupil Aid**. This is based on the reported enrollment.

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

Grace has completed the **Immunization Report** and our **Free & Reduced Report**. These have been uploaded to the DOE, as required.

Additionally, all students who required **English language assessment** have been assessed by an outside assessor in coordination with our ELL Coordinator, Mindy Kacavas.

The **BOY- Beginning of the Year report** has been completed and uploaded to the DOE, as required. Annually, we are required to complete the BOY, M(middle)OY and the E(end)OY.

In addition to these large reports, there are a number of smaller surveys and data that have been reported to the DOE, as required annually.

Board Related

At the October meeting, we will be joined by Garth Coriveau, who will later meet this month with the Governance Committee and other interested Trustees as we consider his nomination to the Board.

Additionally, Board members have been asked to work on **Committee Goals** in advance of the October meeting, which will include time to review those goals as a group.

Facility

The 100 WLD landlord recently painted lines in the circle used for pickup and drop off.

We have completed the security improvements, which were funded by federal grant funds managed by the state's Homeland Security Department to improve school safety. We have now received reimbursement for those expenses (a reminder that reimbursement is 80% grant paid / 20% school paid).

Technology

This year we have a contract with a **Tech Consultant**. She has been charged with keeping our student technology in good working order (iPads & Chromebooks) and looking for ways to make technology integration smoother for staff. In addition, she's consulted with Greg DePasse on our new filtering system which is designed to keep our students and our data safe.

This past week, I attended a **day-long seminar** lead by Jim O'Shaughnessy and Elek Miller of the DrummonWoodsum law firm. The workshop focused on **Schools, Technology and the Law** and took a modest dive into the responsibilities of schools in relation to new tech-related laws as well as other areas that touch on the crossroads of technology, safety and discipline of students and staff.

MFCS ChildCare Program

Enrollment in our **Child Care Program** is extremely high this year. In fact, we currently still have a wait list for the AfterCare Program. Here's a breakdown of all programs as of this week:

BeforeCare (7-8:15am) = 10 full time, 0 part time; **KinderCare** (12-3) = 7 full time, 6 part time; **Aftercare** (3-5:45pm) = 15 full time, 8 part time and 5 full time **Extended Kinders** (3-5:45).

Enrollment

This school year we have had a few start-of-the-year departures. We have been able to quickly fill those spots and are currently operating as a full house (168 students) as we have nearly daily this school year. We continue to have a significant wait list at every grade level. In working to fill the open spots, we do learn about those on the wait list who are no longer interested in enrolling with us (moved, settled in at school, etc.). As an operating procedure, we aim to be in touch with the top 5-10 families on each grade's wait list to further facilitate our ability to quickly fill any vacancies. Grace Eaton, our new Project Manager, is incorporating this work into her admissions role.

Financial

SpEd: This month we sent out the first set of SpEd service reimbursement invoices to the current sending districts who have resident students with IEP's enrolled at Mill Falls and receive services from our special educators and/or paraprofessionals. At this time our SpEd Team and paras support students from 3 different districts. In addition, there are a few students who receive services directly from their sending districts or by those contracted via the districts.

Title Funds: We are currently accessing Title Funds in the following areas: Title IIa – Professional Development; Title III – English Language Learner supports and we are part of a consortium of other charters and districts to access those funds; and Title IV – each charter school receives \$10,000 to support programming of various kinds.

The Field Work for our **FY19 Audit** has been completed and we await the reporting from our auditor. As is our practice, his findings will first be shared with the Executive Director and Finance Committee, and the final report will be shared with full Board. It will then be uploaded to our website and submitted to the DOE as required annually.

MFCS Community Building & Volunteerism

Our **4th Annual Road Race & Family Fun Run** held on September 22nd at SNHU's new Penmen Stadium was a great success both in terms of attendance and fundraising! We had close to 100 participants and support from multiple student athletic teams at SNHU. The event raised close to \$5000, largely in sponsorship. Thank you to those of you who supported the event!

We are hoping to confirm the date of **June 6th 2020 for our Annual Night of Community**, which we plan to hold at the **Palace Theatre**, again this year. If you'd like to lend a hand – securing sponsorship, artwork, or have other ideas - please let me know!

Last month we held our **annual All-School Service Day at the NH Food Bank**. Students walked over to the Food Bank in 3 groups, and packaged 14 boxes in total. This equals approximately 3,024 meals of mac n cheese dinners, which were then distributed by the Food Bank to food insecure NH residents.

In 2013, I was one of the speakers at the inaugural **TEDxAmoskeagMillyard** event during which I spoke about the founding of our school and the magic of Montessori. Since then I've been involved with this TEDx team, helping speakers prepare. This year's TEDxAmoskeagMillyard event is on **November 16, 2019** at the Stockbridge Theatre at Pinkerton Academy in Derry, New Hampshire. I invite you to join me at the event, which is always thought provoking and engaging. Ticket information can be found here: <https://tedxamoskeagmillyard.com>

Human Resources

Last week, our Reading Interventionist, Sherry Humphrey, went out on medical leave. We are in the process of filling her position with a short-term opportunity. She expects to return in January. We have advertised widely and reached out some of our educational contacts. If you have any leads, please share them with Laura and I.

Foundation News:

The Foundation currently holds **\$375,451.75** in its accounts.

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**Educational Program Director
Board Report
October 23, 2019**

International Peace Day: Annually, our community celebrates International Peace Day with an all school assembly. Students sing “Light a Candle for Peace”, read the book *Peace* by Todd Parr and wrap up the meeting by participating in an all school peace walk. The students then return to their classrooms to make small projects representing their understanding of peace. This day is always a favorite by all.

Bring a Parent to School Night: This year the weather played in our favor and rained out sporting events, freeing many families up for a night of Montessori! We had record attendance for this family event. It was lovely to see so many parents ready and available for learning.

Afterschool Programs: This month we have 2 different afterschool programs. We have jump roping for lower elementary students taught by Jen Zedler and Kristin Ross. Jump roping is a great activity to practice at recess! Additionally we have a Green Thumb club taught by Melissa Fortin, our art teacher. Melissa is using nature as a form of art offering items from nature to create and paint!

Scholastic Book Fair: Starting October 7th, we hosted our annual Scholastic Book Fair. Students took advantage of the enchanted forest themed book fair and each enjoyed browsing and purchasing new books. This fall we will receive over \$2500 of scholastic dollars to purchase new books or technology to utilize in our classrooms.

Professional Development: Meryl, Colleen Lacroix, Shannon Helie and I attended a 2-day workshop in Boston on the Montessori Coaching method. Elizabeth Slade facilitated this workshop on a method she had developed and piloted through NCMPS. Through the 2-day workshop, we worked in small groups to learn observation techniques, develop language to ask guiding questions in coaching sessions and to direct staff to a greater level of understanding in Montessori.

NCMPS Montessori Audit: On October 10th, Elizabeth Slade (From NCMPS) spent the day in continuation of our Montessori Audit, observing our classrooms, meeting with staff and giving guidance on pertinent systems. This is the first of three visits this year in addition to phone conversations as needed. At this point, as an administration team, we have just received our follow up plan are working to develop our guiding goals for the remainder of the year.