



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 February 12, 2020

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

1. Call to Order, Roll Call & Welcome Public

Butterfield called the meeting to order at 6:10 PM

Present: Butterfield, Corriveau, Depasse, Johnson, Levin, Talbot, Wrubleski; **Absent:** Connors, Trombley, Marr

2. Announcements/Updates: No announcements/updates

3. Governance Committee: The nomination of Sara Bee to the Board of Trustees, and expected vote will be deferred until after a meeting with Bee is held next week. Levin has scheduled to meet with Bee on February 20th. This nomination is expected to be presented at the March meeting.

4. Public Comment: No public present

5. Meeting Business

a. Approval of Minutes from January 2020 meeting.

Motion: Corriveau moved to approve the January 2020 meeting minutes; Butterfield Seconded.

Vote: Unanimous.

6. Montessori Moment: Anya Morales, Lower El Lead Teacher (Acadia Room)

Morales presented a lesson that utilizes the Montessori grammar symbol materials to introduce prepositions to a small group of students. When introducing something brand new to her students, she told them a story to gather interest through terminology and offering up a big idea that will be revisited again at another time. The process of this initial presentation is how every grammar part of speech is typically introduced to the students.

7. School Update

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

Wrubleski highlighted the Social/Emotional Learning (SEL) Skills & Fostering a SEL-Supportive School Environment professional development workshop led by Eric Mann that was held at Mill Falls. Mann is a licensed social worker and works with school districts around the state. Mann was a great resource for the staff in the areas of SEL and executive functioning. He discussed what SEL looks like, the impact and the regulation of emotions, creating an environment to support the students in their learning, among many other details. A solid social emotional state is necessary for students to be available for learning and while we have integrated this type of support in our classrooms, we can always do better. All faculty, except for paraprofessionals participated. This professional development was paid for through Title Funds. Wrubleski added that the State of New Hampshire now requires that everyone reflect on a suicide policy, which is related to these areas of focus and learning. The plan is for the next session to focus specifically on suicide prevention.

Butterfield inquired if Mann discussed the active shooter drills and the recent study that these can create a high level of stress for students. Wrubleski stated that this was not covered specifically, but rather more about how to spot dysregulation in our students and about creating a relationship with the students to be sure they are comfortable in seeking help. Levin stated that last week a lock down drill was practiced. The students are made aware in advance and the drill is not a surprise to them. It is presented more as what to do with oneself in an emergency situation.

Levin and Wrubleski shared that they are researching the possibility of working with a licensed Social Worker one/two days per week, utilizing this person as a consultant to establish and support strategies and do some direct service with some of our students who need such supports.

b. Executive Director *(Please also see ED report)*

Levin confirmed that the landlord has now provided contact information for the new tenants at 100 WLD.

She also noted that the 2020 Lottery Enrollment numbers are a bit lower than previous years. To date, we have approximately 130 students enrolled in the Lottery, and we are typically at about 150-170 by now. She reminded Trustees that our Lottery fills spots in our Kinder, and other grade levels where they may be spots. Consistent enrollment relies on a reliable wait list. A reminder that our wait list rolls over (as per state charter law allowances) so this year's kinder wait list becomes next year's 1st grade wait list and so on. She asked the Board to please help us spread the word about our 2020 Lottery - encourage friends, neighbors and colleagues to consider applying to Mill Falls. Please encourage folks to join us at the March 7th Info Session. You can also direct them to our website - <https://millfalls.org/the-2020-lottery> - where the Lottery Enrollment details are shared.

Levin is seeking suggestions for a 2020 Lottery Day Official. The Official cannot be a parent, or someone related to the school. Lottery Day is Wednesday, March 25th at 4:15pm. Butterfield suggested for an Official and will reach out to them to see if it would be a consideration.

Levin shared that the school will be hosting our Annual Grandparents & Special Friends Day on March 17th from 9-11. Levin invited the Board to join this special event.

Levin asked the group to share recommendations for people to visit Mill Falls and learn about our unique public Montessori Program. She is in the process of scheduling Montessori Morning Tours and building the potential guest lists for those tours. She reminded the Board that the tours help us build our guest list for our Annual Leadership Breakfast in the spring.

Johnson inquired about the Corona virus protocol. The Board discussed the development of an infectious disease protocol (rather than a Corona virus specific policy). Levin mentioned that the handbook contains protocol regarding infectious disease for the family responsibilities, and said that we should define the school responsibilities. Johnson will send a draft policy for the Corona virus as a good reference for building such a protocol at Mill Falls.

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

a. Finance Committee: Levin reported that the FY19 Audit completed and has been posted to website. There are no unexpected trends in the January Budget to Actual.

9. Program

a: Committees Reports & Planning:

Governance Committee: At the March meeting, the Strategic Plan will be revisited, and specific tasks will be assigned to the committees and individuals. The school is meeting their Strategic Plan solidly; the Board needs to further refine their plan. Butterfield will review the current draft plan and the Committee priorities, and bring her suggestions to the March meeting. The next step is to name the chairs (or co-chairs) of each committee and define the assignments and expectations.

10. Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 18, 2020 at 5:45pm

12. Adjournment

Motion: Talbot moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:15pm; DePasse seconded the motion. **Vote:** Unanimous.



**Educational Program Director
Board Report
February 12, 2020**

South American Celebration: Annually, we choose one continent to showcase classroom projects and incorporate our families into the learning. This year, students focused on the continent of South America. The Kindergarten classroom studied Columbia and South American animals, Lower Elementary focused on Chile, Brazil and Columbia. The Upper Elementary focused on the Amazon Rainforest. Projects in the Lower Elementary focused on the fundamental needs in each of the countries and were showcased through visual posters, slideshows, 3-D models, clothing, food tasting and much more. The Upper Elementary researched the layers of the Amazon Rainforest, learned basic language structures, studied the topography of the area and wrapped all their studies with a few traditional South American food tastings.

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Workshop: On February 12th, we hosted a workshop facilitated by Eric Mann on the topic of Social Emotional Learning and executive functioning skills. Eric will address the importance of social connection, regulation strategies, and a SEL supportive environment.

Afterschool Programs: Its been a busy month of fun activities! Colleen Costa is running her second session of Board Game Club; Christine Bisson is facilitating the Drama Club; Coding Club is just starting with our own Jen Zedler and the McIntyre Ski club will be finishing up this this month! Phew!

Mid-year Site Visit with NCMPS: On Friday, January 31st, we engaged in our second site visit of three with Elizabeth Slade from NCMPS. As a team, the staff participated in a guided lesson study session, discussed the progress thus far as a school and reflected on personal growth. I had the opportunity to meet with Elizabeth one-to-one for some personal coaching on how to support the staff.



Executive Director's Report
For the February 12, 2020
MFCS School Board Meeting
Submitted by Meryl Levin

Required Reporting

This month, we filed our February 1st report of student enrollment and await our quarterly payment of **Equitable Aid** from the state. We also completed our **DOE-25 quarterly reporting**. We will soon be preparing our student data for the **Middle of the Year Report (MOY)**, which is quite similar to the BOY (Beginning of the Year) and EOY (End of the Year). I continue to file monthly reports related to **Federal Grant expenditures** as required.

Facility

We learned last week that areas of the building at 100 WLD have or will soon be leased to several new tenants. This came to our attention when various delivery people stopped in to ask where they could find the doors to these various new offices. We have requested contact information from our landlord for all new tenants, reminding the landlord that we are required to have that information as part of our Emergency Response Plan. We have also learned that the tenant who will be moving into the current MC2 space is Easter Seals; they will also be taking the empty space beside our front office which will soon be fit up for them.

MFCS ChildCare Program

Here's a breakdown of all Child Care Programs as of this week:

BeforeCare (7-8:15am) = 12 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).

Members of our staff have been incredibly helpful since our AfterCare Coordinator gave her notice. She was also a paraprofessional during the regular school day. We have hired a new paraprofessional will also be doing some shifts of our AfterCare Program. That being said, **we are still looking to fill a number of AfterCare shifts**. If you, or someone you know, may have links to applicants for this position (2:45-4:30 or 2:45-6pm based on the school calendar) please let me know ASAP! Thank you!

Enrollment

We are about halfway through the **2020 Lottery Enrollment Period** which closes on March 16th. I have led three of our four planned Lottery Information Sessions, each of which have been very well attended. The final session will be held on Saturday, March 7th at 10am. As you have heard me say, we **STRONGLY** encourage families applying for the Lottery to attend an Information Session, as our Public Montessori Program is a unique setting. We would like all enrolling families to familiarize themselves with our mission and our setting, before entering the Lottery.

Please help us spread the word about our 2020 Lottery - encourage friends, neighbors and colleagues to consider applying to Mill Falls. Please encourage folks to join us at the March 7th Info Session. You can also direct them to our website - <https://millfalls.org/the-2020-lottery> - where the Lottery Enrollment details are shared in detail. **Please also share the info and link on your personal FB pages.**

Any ideas for a 2020 Lottery Day Official? Please speak to me directly if you have any ideas! Lottery Day is Wednesday, March 25th.

We have now received all **Intent to Return Forms** back from our enrolled students/families. And while nearly all have noted that they intend to return next year, we are aware of several who

are applying elsewhere. Our usual work will begin to get a clearer sense of plans for next year, especially from the families of our current 5th year students. We have a developing list of those we know or have heard will not be returning, and will continue to connect with families about this, so that we are not caught off guard in terms of opening, at the end of the year, 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 Grace to lead some tours of those on wait lists before school comes to a close.

Financial

SpEd: We have been receiving regular payments from all sending districts with SpEd students for whom we provide services. A reminder that our Manchester agreement is scheduled to be revisited each March for next school year.

Title Funds: This month we applied to use Title Funds for another exciting professional development opportunity that will take place later this week. This day of professional development for our faculty is titled *Social/Emotional Learning (SEL) Skills & Fostering a SEL-Supportive School Environment*, and will be led by Eric Mann. Eric is a Social Worker with SERESC and a behavioral consultant for many NH school districts.

Earlier this month, our **Annual Financial Audit** was completed and both digital and hard copy has been shared with us. I will have copies at our Jan. meeting. I have filed our audit with the DOE and also posted it on our website. Additionally, our auditor sent over the final **paperwork now required of us by the state's AG's office** related in part to school-based fundraising.

Legislative Updates

There are a number of conversations still going in in relation to the rejected \$46 million federal grant for charter school expansion and development mentioned in previous reports. Additionally, members of the legislature will have a commission studying per-pupil aid. Matt Southerton, Executive Director of the NH Charter School Alliance is continuing to keep an eye on bills and legislative activity that impacts NH charter schools.

MFCS Community Building & Volunteerism

Our preparation is nearly complete for our **Annual Calendar Raffle Fundraiser**. This all-school effort involves the acquisition of 30 raffle items (one for each day of the month of April). Here's how it works: Before February vacation, each child will be sent home with 10 calendars and together with their parents are asked to sell the ten calendars at \$10 each; some students/families sell more than 10. The calendars are also available online. Calendars are sold from late February, through the end of March. Then in April, a winner is selected daily and the winner and prize are announced on our FB page and elsewhere in our communications. We print over 2000 calendars, announce it on our public Facebook Page and also in our weekly newsletter. It's a great way for companies to get in front of scores of potential customers for in exchange for a gift certificate of \$25-\$100 value. The goal is to raise \$10,000. It's always a push, so your help will be MUCH appreciated!

I have worked with one of our Parent Volunteers to organize a **Rock Painting Workshop** in preparation for our all-school beautification day on Earth Day 2020. The workshop will be held this Thursday from 3-4pm. If you'd like to join in the fun, please let me know! We are hoping to schedule the **2020 Spaghetti Dinner** for early spring with Manchester School of Technology as our partner. Stay tuned for details!

A reminder: We have confirmed the date of **June 6th, 2020** for our **Annual Night of Community**, which will be held at the **Palace Theatre's Spotlight Room**, as it has been since 2018. If you'd like to lend a hand – **securing sponsorship, artwork**, or have other ideas - please let me know! Thank you to our own, Donna, for securing our first two sponsors and to Pete for securing art work for the auction

Soon after we return from February Vacation, we will be hosting our **Annual Grandparents & Special Friends Day on March 17th from 9-11**. If any of you are able to attend the start of the event...that would be wonderful! Please do let me know. The day begins with a small gathering in our common space – I give a quick overview of our program, show our 100th Day Slide show and then send them off to their children's classrooms to participate in a mini-work cycle. It's a wonderful event!

Foundation News:

The final count on the **Foundation's 2019 Annual Appeal** has brought in **\$18,663!**

Are there people you know who have not yet visited Mill Falls and learned about our unique public Montessori Program? We are in the process of scheduling a series of Montessori Morning Tours and building the potential guest lists for those tours. Keep in mind that the tours help us build our guest list for our **Annual Leadership Breakfast** in the spring. So, if you have friends, neighbors, colleagues, or family members who you feel would be interested and supportive of our work – either to partner, fund, or help advocate – please email me directly so that we can connect with them! Thank you!

The Foundation currently holds **\$399,117.38** in its accounts.

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