



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 August 30, 2022 @ 5:45pm

Held @ Mill Falls, 100 William Loeb Drive, Manchester, NH

1. **Call to Order, Roll Call & Welcome Public:** In Connor's absence, Vice Chair Marr called the meeting to order at 5:51pm. **Present:** Levin, Wrubleski, Marr, Corriveau, Bashier, Butterfield, Dalton, Trombley. **Absent:** Connors, Bee, DePasse.
2. **Public Comment:** No public present.
3. **Meeting Business**
 - a. **Approval of Minutes** from June 2022 meeting. Trombley moved to accept the June 2022 Meeting Minutes; Butterfield seconded. **Vote:** Unanimous.
 - b. **Board Business:** The Board discussed that following it's approval of Levin's contract in June, that with the information that Connor's will be stepping away, Marr, Vice Chair, would sign the agreement. **Motion:** Butterfield motioned to direct all chair duties to vice chair Heather Marr; Dalton seconded. **Vote:** Unanimous.
4. **Updates on Misc. COVID-related Items and School Opening (Levin & Wrubleski)**

Wrubleski shared: This week we welcomed back staff, beginning on 8/29. For 4 days of of Staff Opening Days – our annual professional development (PD), planning and collaborative time. We worked on on PD, revamping meeting times and schedules to help better protect instructional time. The week will end with a workshop on Social and Emotional Training led by Gerri King. Looking forward, we are seeking new tools to improve and enhance our record keeping both to better organize that data and to assist in the creation of our Progress Reports. We are looking forward to our Popsicle Party tomorrow evening, the first since 2019!

Levin provided an Operational Update, including: Fall 2022 COVID Protocol – among other changes we are no longer co-horting, and able to add after school programs and run our Before Care Program this year. She added that our Charter Renewal was approved in early August. *Please also see Levin's attached report.*
6. **2022/23 Board Planning**
 - **REMINDER: Saturday, September 17th, 8:30-12pm** - Engagement Workshop with Gerri King, Communications Consultant. To be held at Mill Falls.
 - Annual Meeting Planning and Date Selection (officer slate and committee assignments)
 - Committee Work Overview
 - 10th Year Anniversary (ad hoc committee needed)
7. **Next Meeting:** **Wednesday, September 21, 2022 @ 5:45pm.**
8. **Adjournment:** Butterfield motioied to adjourn at 6:07pm; Trombley seconded. **Vote:** Unanimous.



**Executive Director's Report
For the August 30, 2022
MFCS School Board Meeting
Submitted by Meryl Levin**

Charter Renewal

On August 11th Laura and I were joined by 4 members of the Mill Falls Board of Trustees – Danielle, Hind, Naomi, and Sara - as we went before the NH Board of Education on the occasion of our **2nd charter renewal**. After a brief presentation by me, followed by an engaging dialogue with members of the Board of Education, they unanimously voted to approve our charter renewal.

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 by the DOE, the final FY22 Pupil Aid funds were deposited in our bank account over the summer.

DOE-25 for FY22: We have requested and received approval for a filing extension of this extensive financial report. We expect to complete the DOE-25 well before the extension date of Sept 30.

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 **FY22 Audit** is expected to begin in mid or late September, the final date for the start of the audit has not yet been set. Over the summer we had communication from the New Hampshire AG's office regarding some new reporting elements they require. In recent years they began requesting a selection of forms from the Federal 990 which our auditor's office completes annually; in our discussion we settled on their now also receiving the annual DOE-25 from us as part of their oversight.

The 2021/22 Annual Report will be filed this coming week, and a copy will be sent to the Board, as well as the DOE. The reporting format has been greatly simplified from past years.

As is now an annual requirement, we will also submit our **2022/23 Emergency Response Plan** to the DOE in partnership with the Homeland Security Office. Recent legislation has now altered the due date from September 1st to October 15th, and also added several hazard specific annexes added due to legislative changes. These include: Biological Incident(s), Civil Unrest, Cyber Incident(s), Drought Incident(s), Extreme Temperature(s), Hurricane(s)/Severe Storm(s), Winter Storm(s). Luckily, the Department of Homeland Security has shared templates for these additions. As noted in past years, 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 Project Manager, Grace Eaton, as well as those of the Fire Marshall and the Police Chief are required.

Related to school safety, I have applied for the **Security Action for Education (SAFE) grant funds** for two important projects. One will provide funds to install a school-wide emergency alert system so that alerts can be heard in all our spaces indoors and outdoors if needed. Additionally, we have requested funds to install a keyfob system. Regular keys and our intercom/buzzer system will work alongside the new card-based access system. We await word on approval of our requests.

Board Related

A reminder that we have scheduled a Board Development Workshop for **Saturday, September 17th, 8:30-12pm**. The focus will be on Engagement. The workshop will be led by Gerri King, Communications Consultant, and will be held at Mill Falls.

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. **Jen Avery**, our Office Manager put in many hours of painting for which we are so appreciative! **Laura Wrubleski** has redesigned the back common space and 'bowling alley' to create more effective workspaces for our interventionists, Special Educators, ELL Coordinator, Reading Coach and Social Worker. We have created a more cozy space in the kitchen for staff. There is still more to do, and we will complete the last bits when staff is together this week. Since we signed our lease renewal, we have worked hard to make the limited space continue to work for our growing needs and staff.

This month our **fire extinguishers** will be inspected (an annual requirement).

MFCS Child Care Program

I am pleased to share that we have been able to staff our **Before Care Program** this year and with the change of COVID protocol we will run the program beginning the first day of school. We currently have 12 children enrolled – the minimum needed to run the program / maximum is 15 children. The Program will be staffed by Mill Falls staff members; we also have staff subs to call upon should they be needed.

Enrollment & Prep for the New School Year

We completed the year with a clear picture of which students would be staying with us this coming year, and who would be moving to other school/educational environments. As August arrived, families on our 'watch list' made their final decisions, and we are set to begin the year with 168 students.

Kinder: This year our Kinder class has a very large number of siblings of currently enrolled students – 17! We also have the child of one staff member in the class.

Lower Elementary: We had very little movement in our Lower El this summer.

Upper Elementary: This year we have an all-time high number of 6th year students – 22!

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:** 1st = 23; 2nd = 25; 3rd = 24; **Upper El:** 4th = 22; 5th = 28; 6th = 22

All of our **Handbooks and Fall 2022 COVID Protocols** – Staff, Family, Child Care and Volunteer – have been updated as needed and will be posted on our website. Staff, Families, and those enrolled in Child Care are required to review these documents and return a signature page stating such.

Financial

Over the summer, I continued to the process of requesting regular reimbursements for expenses that qualify for **COVID ESSER Funds** as well as our **Title Funds**.

MFCS continues to be 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 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). Our Upper Elementary Interventionist is paid via Title I funds.

2021/22 Special Education reimbursement payments were paid in full though we are awaiting one payment from Manchester which has now been processed by them. By the end of August, we will create new 2022/23 contracts for each of the sending districts so that we can be reimbursed for Special Education services our staff provides. A reminder that the amendment to our contract with Manchester was completed last spring, as per the original agreement. While we do have 5 paras hired, some are only part time and like the rest of the state and nation, we have had a lack of applicants. Laura has been in touch with the relevant sending districts and families to alert them of the shortage and expects to hear more from the districts with regarding plans for coverage.

MFCs Community Building & Volunteerism

In the last spring, we held a Family Engagement meeting which was attended by a small but very interested group of parents/guardians. As we aim to rebuild our volunteer program and parent/guardian engagement activities, we have created a new electronic version of the 'Count Me In' form which will be shared again, on paper at our upcoming Popsicle Party. Note: this will be the first **Popsicle Party** (the event kicks off the school year) since 2019! See details below about this year's PP! We have not yet been able to finalize a plan with SNHU to host what was (pre-COVID) our **Annual Fall Road Race & Family Fun Run** but remain hopeful that we may be able to hold it later in the year. The event includes sponsorship and donations and was historically one of our two large in-person, school-based fundraising events.

Just as we have not been able to hold the Road Race since 2019, we were not able to hold the beloved **Night of Community** fundraising event in June 2022. Here's hoping June 2023 will be possible!

Please consider joining us on **Wednesday, August 31st 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

As you are aware, we have great staff retention and nearly all of our staff is returning! We are looking forward welcoming our three new staff members during our **Annual Staff Opening Days** (Monday, August 29th – Thursday, September 1). During the week, our Retirement and Aflac brokers will meet with staff; we will also provide First Aid/CPR training or recertification for staff. Laura has planned 4 full days of collaboration and professional development.

We begin the year with Shannon out on maternity leave – baby Ellie arrived earlier this week! Shannon will return in early December. Her roll is being filled by a Montessori trained lead teacher who moved to NH from CA this spring. Two other staffers are pregnant and will be out on leave later this year.

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 1 new assistant teacher, 1 new Music Teacher and the short-term sub mentioned above.

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 \$520,263 in its accounts.