



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 Board Meeting Minutes for October 12, 2022 @ 5:45pm

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

1. Call to Order, Roll Call & Welcome Public & Guests Diane HARRISES and Amy HOLLINGWORTH (DePasse)

Present: Levin, Wrubleski, Hind, Trombley, Dalton, Marr, DePasse

Absent: Connors, Bee, Butterfield, Corriveau

Invited Guests: Amy Hollingworth & Diane HARRISES, who are going through the nomination process for Board service.

2. Public Comment: No public present.

3. Montessori Moment: Colleen Costa, Lead Upper Elementary Teacher, presented a lesson on factors, using the Peg Board.

4. Meeting Business

a. Approval of Minutes from September 2022 meeting

Motion: Trombley motioned to approve the minutes from the September 2022 Board Meeting; Marr Seconded. **Vote:** Unanimous.

5. School Reporting

a. Educational Program Director (*please also see attached report*): Wrubleski highlighted the piloting of a new student data information tool – Transparent Classroom (TP). This is a Montessori-designed tool that combines the record keeping of lessons with other student profile data. Our Montessori Coach, Elizabeth Slade, has been using it for quite some time and highly recommends public Montessori schools like ours to utilize this tool. Staff has begun working with TP, recording lessons provided and exploring this new student data system.

b. Executive Director (*please also see attached report*): Levin welcomed guests, Diane and Amy. She noted that there are 8 sending districts represented in our Special Education student population. Pizza Fridays, Read-In's, Volunteers (and more) are back! It's nice to have Parents/Guardians/Friends of Mill Falls back in the building as the COVID cloud lifts. Dalton/Levin discussed ideas related to rebuilding our sense of community and how to rebuild given COVID and all the new families we have absorbed since the pandemic began and our volunteer and community program was reduced.

6. Committee Reports

a: Charter Committee Report: Dalton shared that the Committee met earlier this month to discuss the goals of the Committee for the 2022/23 School Year. Out of that discussion arose a proposal to change the name (a bylaw change) and enhance the committee description in our Standing Committees & Ad Hoc Task Force Structure Document. Three areas of Committee focus on this year are: Boosting Parent Volunteering, Building a Network (external partnerships and new relationships), Legislation Policy Update (Corriveau will work with Levin specifically on this piece). The Committee will meet next on November 1st at 8:30 at Mill Falls.

Motion: Dalton motioned to change of committee name in our bylaws from Charter to Mission & Charter Committee; AND to approve the enhanced committee role to include the following in our Standing Committees & Ad Hoc Task Force Structure Document: "During non-charter renewal years, this Committee will identify strategic goals to assist in the school's mission-driven initiatives. Information

from administration and data will be used to prioritize those goals and an action plan will be created by this committee. In addition, the committee will educate the BOT and school community (as needed) of pending legislation that might impact MFCS/NH Charter Schools.”

Marr seconded. **Vote: Unanimous.**

7: Program:

a: Trustee Service

Secretary Role Review: Sara Bee, our current Secretary is on leave for approximately 6 months. The Board discussed a plan to have an interim Secretary during the leave period. Dalton agreed to fill that role.

Motion: Dalton self-nominated to be the Interim Secretary effective immediately; Marr seconded.

Vote: Unanimous.

Connors leave update: DePasse shared that Connors is also on leave for an expected 3-6 months, as her workload at school has made service this fall impossible. She does however wish to stay on the Board, and looks forward to resuming her service. The Board asked for a written letter from Connors; DePasse will follow up.

Naomi Butterfield Term Renewal will be voted on at the November meeting.

b: Finance:

Trombley noted that there are 2 additions to list of pre-approved vendors (regular charges over \$2500) which requires a Board vote.

Motion: Trombley motioned to include **Vachon (auditor)** and **Fred C Church (insurer)** to the pre-approved list of expenses over \$2500; Marr seconded.

Vote: Unanimous.

c: Communications: Levin noted that everyone has now downloaded What's App. She reminded them to check their online bios. The group agreed they would review the use and training of Mill Falls Emails at the November meeting.

d: Board Meetings: The group will recirculate the survey that was sent out to determine 'best meeting day' for the monthly Board meeting. It looks like the best start time will be 6:15pm. The data will be presented at the November meeting.

8. Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 16, 2022 @ 6:00pm.

9. Adjournment at 6:50pm: Trombley motion to adjourn; Marr seconded. **Vote:** Unanimous.



Educational Program Director Board Report October 12, 2022

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.

Transparent Classroom: We have decided to pilot a new student information system for the year. This system can be used for student record keeping, progress reports, individual student data, lottery information, attendance and much more. Given we plan to pilot the system for the year, we hope to learn the program inside and out with the intent of determining if it is an appropriate fit for MFCS by June 2023.

Delta Dental Leadership Summit: Five students represented MFCS at the annual Delta Dental Leadership Summit in Concord, NH. This program is created to offer students who exhibit leadership qualities, but tend to step into the background rather than the forefront, an opportunity to shine. The students discussed leadership qualities, and participated in tasks that pushed them to integrate these qualities. The conclusion of the 2-day event was to present a project that will help improve MFCS. This project will be implemented over the course of the year, essentially bringing the summit full circle.

Afterschool Programs: This month we began afterschool programming for the first time in 3 years! Amy Broadhead, the new assistant in the Zion classroom, will be facilitating an outside game time with both lower and upper elementary students. We so excited to be offering this opportunity for students again!

Scholastic Book Fair: Starting October 11th, we hosted our annual Scholastic Book Fair. Students took advantage of the book fair by browsing independently and with family, to purchase new books. This fall we will receive over \$2500 of scholastic dollars to purchase new books or technology to utilize in our classrooms.



**Executive Director's Report
For the October 12, 2022
MFCS School Board Meeting
Submitted by Meryl Levin**

Required Reporting

The beginning of the year has many reporting requirements from the DOE, these include: **DOE-25 Form** which has now been completed and filed; **Free & Reduced Report; Immunization Report; BOY (Beginning Of the Year) Pupil Report; as well as several staff related surveys.** Also as required, our **English Language Learners** have been assessed a certified ELL educator to identify those who qualify for services this year.

Our **2022/23 Emergency Response Plan (ERP)** has been filed with NH Homeland Security, after being signed off on by both the Manchester Fire and Police Departments. Our plan includes the new legislatively required responses to certain newly required risks, and it also has been updated to reflect some of the new staff workspaces we have in our formerly common areas. The **Staff Safety Committee** will begin meeting later this fall. We have already activated our annual safety schedule related to staff prep and drills.

Board Related

Looking forward to welcoming our guests at this week's meeting: **Diane HARRISES and Amy HOLLINGWORTH.** You have been sent their bios; both have expressed great interest in joining the Board this fall. Trustees interested in meeting with them about board service are asked to contact Greg, Naomi, and me.

Last week, the **Charter Committee** held its first meeting. It was a wonderful discussion of committee goals and priorities. The minutes from the meeting will be shared with that Board.

There are a few other Board-related items that need attention:

- **WhatsApp:** If you haven't downloaded the app and sent me a message through the app, please do so I can create the Board Group and Committee groups.
- If you have not reviewed your **website bio**, please do, and let me know any changes. You can view it here: <https://millfalls.org/about-us/mill-falls-school-board/>
- We will be discussing **board email use** at the meeting in October.

Facility & Wellness

Each week since the year began, we have seen multiple COVID cases, some among staff, some among students. We continue to report cases to members of our school community to alert those who may have been exposed.

MFCS Child Care Program

Our **Before Care Program** is running smoothly. It is being staffed by 3 members of our Mill Falls Staff, and runs daily, during school days, from 7-8:15am.

Enrollment & Start of the Year Paperwork

Enrollment has remained steady since the school year began.

Jen Avery in the Front Office has done a great job of securing the return of the acknowledgement page from our MFCS families, which states they have read our **Family Handbook** and our **Fall 2022 COVID Protocol.** We have also received signed **Technology Use Agreements** from students entering a new program level.

Financial

Special Education: We have established contracts with the current sending districts who have resident students enrolled at Mill Falls. Invoices for September will go out shortly.

The **end of FY22 Budget to Actual** has been completed and sent to the Finance Committee. Any trustees who are interested in reviewing that, are asked to please let me know.

Our **Pizza Friday Program**, which raises a small amount of funds each year for our school, is in full swing. We so appreciate our program partner with **Pizza Man** on East Industrial Drive.

Our auditor now has all the FY 22 paperwork and our QuickBooks file as per his request. We await word on other specific receipts/records he will request for the **FY22 Audit**. Once completed, our audits are sent to the DOE and posted on our website.

Title Funds: I continue to request reimbursement for those Title Funds we are accessing this year (I for Upper Elementary Intervention; II for Professional Development; III for ELL Supports; IV for various applications).

ESSER Funds: I continue to request reimbursement for funds spent as part of our COVID/ESSER III funding. A reminder that we have previously shared our plans for our ESSER III funds. Review of the plan can be found here: <https://millfalls.org/mill-falls-esser-funds-usage-plan/>. Some of that will be tweaked as we enter this year knowing more about costs and available resources, but our areas of focus will largely remain the same.

Lease Aid: We have received notification of the Lease Aid we will receive this year. It is significantly less than previous years, based in part on the fact that there are more charter schools, but the same amount of funds. A much larger impact on our Lease Aid allotment links to that fact that our landlord required a change in the wording in our lease to note common charges which cannot be included in Lease Aid supports. I wrote to the DOE following the notification to make sure a mistake had not been made, but indeed, it has not been.

MFCS Community Building & Volunteerism

Read Ins are back and we have had wonderful attendance thus far! Each Friday, parents/guardians/friends are invited to selected classrooms to read for 30 minutes with their children.

This coming week features our beloved **Bring Your Parent/Guardian to School Night** where students lead their adults through a mini-Montessori Work Cycle. In addition, our **Fall Book Fair** is open for business. Special thanks to our volunteers which included Board Members Hind and Danielle, who helped set up the Fair which Jen Avery organizes. It looks amazing, even though the space allotted is far smaller than past year.

This month, a small group of our Upper Elementary students participated in the **International Peace Summit and 13th Delta Dental Student Leadership Summit**. Both of these are led by Jay Bonsigl and provide our students with important time to develop their leadership skills. I had the pleasure of being part of both of these events, and am so proud of the students and so appreciative that our staffer, Mindy Kacavas led our group of students at the Leadership Summit held in Concord. There we joined 4 other schools in that 2-day workshop and the students are now charged with creating a follow up project that will benefit our school. Stay tuned for details!

Mindy also took our **ELL students on a field trip** to a local Apple Orchard. Part of her work with our English Language Learners is to familiarize them with typical American English language and community activities. The trip was a great success (see the newsletter from 10/7/22 for pictures!).

Human Resources

COVID and some other non-COVID illnesses have seriously impacted our staff attendance since the year began, me included. We are so very fortunate that our staff steps up to help out those whose teaching or team partners are out. Our amazing staff has showed incredible grace and flexibility by leaning in to support one another and our students.

Foundation News: The Foundation currently has \$521,560 in its accounts.