



*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 18, 2017**

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

1. **Call to Order:** 6:00pm
2. **Roll Call: Present:** Roberge, DePasse, Butterfield, Kacavas, Levin, Wrubleski. **Absent:** Connors, Johnson,
3. **Public Comment:** No public present.
4. **Montessori Moment:** Upper Elementary Lead Teacher, Laura Blouin, solved a 6<sup>th</sup> year mathematical problem involving square root by using the Montessori material called Golden Beads.
5. **Approval of Minutes** from September 2017 meeting  
**Motion:** Brought moved to approve the minutes; Butterfield seconded.  
**Vote:** Unanimous.
6. **School Update**
  - a. **Educational Program Director** (*please see attached report*)

Wrubleski discussed International Peace Day at Mill Falls, which was observed the day in our usual way and this year also included an international Montessori component. Wrubleski arranged for Mill Falls to be part of the group of Montessori schools worldwide (organized by AMI), whose students sang the peace song, 'Sing Peace Around the World' - each Mill Falls classroom joined in song on International Peace Day.

Wrubleski also discussed the Leadership Summit which included Mill Falls, 3 schools from Concord and Founders Academy participated in this week in Concord. Five Mill Falls Students (4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> years) took part in the Summit where students learned different qualities of a leadership, and discussed qualities of a successful school. During this two-day gathering, students had to choose an issue at their school that they could work on once they are back at school. The Mill Falls students chose to focus on issues related to recess and better care of our bathrooms. They will now have 6 weeks to work on this with the larger student population, guided by Wrubleski. She expects this project will likely evolve into a Leadership group at the school going forward.
  - b. **Executive Director** (*please see attached report*)

Levin noted that since her report, she has learned that Dave Quigly, the interim Charter Office Director, is no longer in the position.

She discussed the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Road Race & Fun Run, which she said was very well planned and a great event for those who attended, but shared that attendance was down significantly from last year. A survey has been sent out to Mill Falls families to get feedback about the event and plans for next year. The parent organizers are planning to shift the focus of the event, making more of a fall harvest festival, which will likely still include the 5k/run but it may not be the highlight.

Levin highlighted the Night of Community plan for this winter, which parent organizers are working on with her now. SNHU will no longer host the event in the same way they have in the past, so the group is looking for a new venue and other creative partnerships. More news to come soon, hopefully!

Chair, Levin and Wrubleski along with Kacavas, =and members of the Facility Committee will meet to discuss the current work being done inside and outside of the building.

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

**a. Finance Committee:** Review of Budget to Actual

Roberge noted that there has been nothing unexpected and school's budget/expenses/income is trending as expected.

**8. Program**

**a: Annual Meeting: Officer Slate, Committee Assignment** (DePasse

**Office Slate:** Depasse called for anyone interested in an officer position to step forward. In lieu of anyone new stepping forward, the following Officer Slate was put forth:

Depasse, Chair  
Butterfield, Vice Chair  
Roberge, Treasurer  
Brough, Secretary

**Motion:** Brough Motioned to accept the slate, Mindy seconded.

**Vote:** Unanimous.

The Board also discussed Committee Assignments and arrived at the following:

**Finance Committee:** *Roberge (chair), Connors, DePasse, Levin (ex-officio)*

**Committee on Trustees:** *DePasse (chair), Brough, Butterfield, Levin.*

**Facility Committee:** *Levin, Martin, Kacavas, with Kanteres & Debbie DePasse*

**Charter Committee:** *Levin, Brough, Connors, Johnson*

**b: Strategic Planning:**

Levin reminded the Board that this is the year of Strategic Planning now that the school is in it's 6<sup>th</sup> year, with their charter newly renewed for the next 5 years. She highlighted that this is the opportunity for the Board to work with the administration to lead the plan for the future (next 3-4 years) for the school. Strategic Planning will provide the Board with a means of deep participation and rekindled commitment to our mission and goals. Levin learned from the workshop she attended, that Strategic Planning is most successful when there is a strong facilitator and integration of staff participation as well as that from an advisory board, past Board leadership, high level donors, community partners, etc. The Governance Committee will meet in the very near future to start brainstorming ideas for this 3-4 hour Strategic Planning Session including place, time, method. Additionally, the Governance Committee will again look at Board growth.

**9. Next Meeting:** Wednesday November 15<sup>th</sup> at 5:45.

**10. Adjournment: 7:44pm.**

**Motion:** Kacavas moved to adjourn; Butterfield seconded. **Vote:** Unanimous.



**Educational Program Director  
Board Report  
October 18, 2017**

**International Peace Day:** Annually, we celebrate International Peace Day by gathering together in an all school meeting to sing “Light a Candle for Peace” by Shelley Murley, read *The Peace Book* by Todd Parr and then we wrap our time together by standing as classes to participate in a Peace Walk. In addition to the assembly, students work on art projects throughout the day to discuss ways to bring peace to the world.

**Picture Day:** This years picture day went smooth with the new company, Coffee Pond, facilitating the project. Thus far, the response to the pictures has been positive.

**Bring a Parent to School Night:** We had an incredible turn out for our annual Bring a Parent to School event. Students have the opportunity to show their families the “ins and outs” of their classrooms and to give lessons on new works learned this year. This is always a popular event.

**Scholastic Book Fair:** Annually, we host our fall book fair during a large parent event and because of this, we sold out of many books. We will most likely have about \$1500 in Scholastic Book dollars to use after this event.

**Professional Development for Staff:** This month, staff will be trained on working with the data gained from the Scholastic Math Inventory, the new computerized math benchmark system we implemented this fall. SMI has proven to provide invaluable data not only for tracking purposes for also for instructional groupings.

**Afterschool Activities:** In October, we added two new afterschool programs. We started a new program with lower elementary students to work through obstacle courses. Tamara Soloman, a parent of third grader, facilitates this program. In addition, the Adventure Club returned for a second time this fall. Students travel around the city to different parks and outdoor spaces to hike and investigate the local surroundings.

**Student Leadership Team:** For the first time, MFCS will participate in Student Leadership Summit. Only 6 schools within New Hampshire are participating in this event, sending a team of 5 students to gain greater leadership skills to bring back to their communities and hopefully to implement a project that will better their schools. I will be accompanying the students during their time at this event and truly look forward to what the students will gain from this training.



**Executive Director's Report  
For the October 18, 2017  
MFCs School Board Meeting  
Submitted by Meryl Levin**

### **Required Reporting**

This month I filed our **Beginning of the Year (BOY) Report**, which provides the NH-DOE with details of each member of our student body (including information about each child's sending district, unique student number, race code and much more).

Next reports to be completed include: **Free and Reduced** Paperwork from our MFCs Families; the **Immunizations Survey**, and **Staff Course Verification**. The final year-end **DOE-25** report – a financial picture of the fiscal year required by the DOE - will be completed once our FY 17 Audit is completed.

### **Charter Office Update**

Earlier this month, **Dave Quigley**, the Independent Contractor who is now ensconced up the DOE's Charter School Office put together a video of voices from a small selection of charter school students and staff. We participated in that video which was part of his annual report to the Board of Education at their October monthly meeting.

### **Board Related**

A reminder that we will complete our Annual Meeting responsibilities at our October Meeting. We need to finalize our committee assignments, and vote our FY18 Officer Slate.

Late last month, I attended a workshop on **Strategic Planning and Execution for Non-Profits**. This free workshop was presented by Enterprise Bank, one in a series they are doing for non profits. It was an extremely well-done presentation which has now given me a much deeper understanding of how we can move forward with our own strategic planning goals. Please note that a section of our October meeting will explore this area of work ahead of us.

### **Facility**

There has been lot of activity in this area since our last meeting. The building sale was completed on September 28<sup>th</sup>. The new owner is Peter Levine. To complete the agreements presented to us for signature, we worked with our Broker, Will Kanteres as well as Bernstein Shur's, Greg Michael for a legal consult. In that process we were able to memorialize the heretofore oral or 'unofficial' agreements with the previous landlord, which comprise our current practices and usages. Those were added as reference into the Estoppel Agreement.

A few things to consider:

- On Tuesday morning as we arrived back to school after the long weekend, we were met by the construction team from MCCI. They will be on site here during the construction, preparation for which is already underway. Construction on the Union Leader's new rental area will begin soon; there is a building permit application that has been filed with the city's building's department. The new landlord told me that he expects all construction to be completed by March.
- During construction, the UL will move all their offices to the front of the building while their new rental area (adjacent to the back of our space) is re-constructed. The UL will then move to their rental space, and the front of the building will be worked on in preparation for MC2 Charter School to take over the space.
- The changes to the building will require that new adult bathrooms be added to our area as we will no longer have access to the hall bathrooms we've been using. The landlord has said those will go on the other side of the wall from our kitchen or kiddo bathrooms, but we have not yet seen a stamped and approved plan.

- Additionally, there has been discussion of a change in our egress options in the back of our space.
- Related, the new owner is keen for us to take the space on the other side of the wall from our front office (around 2500sq ft.), but that will all need to be negotiated.
- In addition to the indoor projects, there is a parking lot that will be built to accommodate the new entry for the UL and there is some other exterior work planned. That UL parking lot will take over a portion of the field, which heretofore our kiddos have used nearly daily at recess and for other afterschool activities.
- I also understand from the UL, that there will no longer be a maintenance team here at 100 WLD after January. So things like 'hanging shelves, changing light bulbs (and buying new ones which the UL has done) will now fall into our laps, and by relation, our budget. The new landlord will not have a maintenance team on site.

### **MFCS ChildCare Program**

Enrollment in our Child Care Program is strong out of the gate this year. Here's how it looks as of this week: BeforeCare (7-8:15am) = 8 children; Kinder (12-3pm) full-time = 10 children, part-time=7 children, extended (12-5:45)=3. AfterCare (3-5:45pm) = 12 full-time children, 4 part-time children. Many families have been taking advantage of the drop in option for all programs and we continue to offer Child Care on a first come/first served basis on our Early Release Days.

### **Financial**

**Special Education reimbursement payments:** The first set of bills were sent out this week to the sending districts services rendered in September. We have 7 sending districts currently, and a solid 20% of our students receiving special education support.

### **Legislative Update**

There are currently 9 bills related to charter schools in NH. Matt Southerton of the Charter School Alliance has said he does not feel that any of these bills are bad/harmful to charter schools, but I prefer to wait to see how these play out before declaring my feelings on this. Please let me know if you'd like to see a list and brief description of the bills.

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

Our **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Road Race and Family Fun Run** was held at SNHU on September 24<sup>th</sup>. It was a great event, largely organized by MFCS mom, Amanda Gerardi. The runs were the focus of the morning event, though there was also face painting, Jazzercise warm up, music by MFCS Uncle DJ Ron, free food and race day t-shirts, among other activities. We had student athletes and members of the Jr. Monarchs Hockey Team who volunteered at the event. They helped with set up and clean up and cheered the kids on at every turn. Attendance was far lower than the first year. The planning team is looking into expanding the event into a fall festival which will still include a race. Today's newsletter included a survey for families to complete regarding the event.

There is movement afoot to organize a new and improved **Night of Community**, as SNHU is no longer able to cover the food costs involved in the event. I'm working with MFCS parents Rachel Marziano and Mel Johansson to put together an event that would pair a brewery with food trucks. Stay tuned as details come together on this February event! There will also be a small silent auction and kiddo art auction. Please let me know if you have any ideas or contacts you can share or would like to be involved in the planning!

In late September, I applied for a **Community Support Grant** from the Bank of NH. I requested their support of our expanded Wellness Program, which includes development of a school-wide medication curriculum. We are working with an accomplished and highly trained Yoga Instructor, Rosy Latona who is leading staff in the implementation of this mindfulness program. The request was for \$2250 and will be reviewed this month.

### **Human Resources**

Last month we had a change in our Assistant Teacher line up. One of our new Upper Elementary

Assistants decided to move on to another job. We were able to quickly fill that spot with one of our paraprofessionals. However, we have been working with subs to fill the para position left open by the change. We are advertising widely and by word of mouth, with hopes that we will quickly find a good fit so that the position can be filled for the rest of the year. We are also very short on subs (we've hired so many of our subs!), so if you have any ideas of folks who would enjoy working with us from time to time, please let Laura or me know!

**Foundation News:**

The Foundation met here at school on October 3 to focus on the work for the 2017/18 School Year. It was a very productive meeting. The Board discussed its own officer slate for the year, electing the following: Maria Law, Chair; Dave Sarvai, Vice Chair; Dan Calegari, Treasurer; Will Kanteres, Secretary. Rachel Marziano and Newton Kershaw also serve on the Board. The Board also discussed board growth, grant ideas, general school growth, changes to the facility with the sale of the building, and planned fundraising both at the school level and for the Foundation, as well as reviewing the FY17 fundraising numbers in the context of planning for FY18. The Foundations 990 draft has been completed, and will be filed by the November deadline.