



Approved August 20, 2015

July 16, 2015, 4:00 p.m.

Fort Collins Montessori School Board Meeting Minutes

Present:

Board Members - John Sanderson, President; Lorie Federman, Vice President; Eric Danielson; Emily Paris-McNiven; Nicole Sizemore

Ex Officio Board Members – Amber Nipp, Board Faculty Representative

Community Members – Jessica Knight, presenting report for Head of School, Angie Noden; Jen Cicora; Betsy Rinehart, Ryan Hanon

Absent:

Board Member– Kathy Lynch

Ex Officio Board Member - Frank Vincent, Head of School

1. Welcome and Reading of Vision, Mission and Values – Read by Mrs. Sizemore

2. Review and approve agenda (Vote)

Motion: *The FCMS Board hereby adopts this July 16, 2015 Board Agenda.*

Motion by: Mr. Sanderson

Comments: None

Seconded by: Ms. Federman

VOTE: All in favor, motion passes

3. Public Comment

Jessica Knight made an inquiry about the parent satisfaction survey (is it up on the website?). Mr. Sanderson explained that it will be included in the Annual Report along with information about finances and academics. There were approximately 45 respondents which is a good number. Angie Noden asked if 45 was about half of the school population. Mr. Sanderson explained the survey received an excellent response. Most of the responses were positive and there are some items that will need to be worked on. Ms. Federman, Board Representative to the School Accountability Committee (SAC), explained that in August, SAC members will be working on results as well as goals.

4. Board Officers (Vote)

- **Present Kathy Lynch resignation and acknowledgement**

Mr. Sanderson took a moment talk about how the school started. Veronica Estelle recruited Kathy Lynch, Lorie Federman, and John Sanderson. Kathy has been the secretary and has offered to continue to help, however because of distance and time zones, she has presented her resignation as board member.

Mr. Sanderson would like to take a minute to honor Kathy Lynch, a wonderful person and a good friend, and thank her for her amazing contributions to Fort Collins Montessori School.

- **Review officer roles and elect new officers**

Mr. Sanderson explained that members being voted in must recuse themselves from voting during the motion specific to them. Ms. Federman read an excerpt from the charter that explains the roles of each officer.

Motion: *The FCMS Board elects Nicole Sizemore as Secretary.*

Motion by: Ms. Federman

Comment: None

Seconded: Mrs. Paris-McNivon

VOTE: All in favor, Motion passes

Motion: *The FCMS Board elects Eric Danielson as Treasurer.*

Motion by: Ms. Federman

Comment: None

Seconded: Mrs. Sizemore

VOTE: All in favor, Motion passes

Mrs. Sizemore asked if we have a Sunshine List. Mr. Sanderson explained we do not have one at the moment.

5. Specials and Before/After Care (Ms. Nipp and Jessica Knight (invited guest), Discussion and Vote)

Mr. Sanderson explained that there are benefits to payments being restructured, for instance continuity and simplicity.

Ms. Nipp explained that for teaching staff prefers specials after the school day. During the school day it disrupts the Montessori Curriculum. Ms. Nipp expressed that they want to make sure they are following CO standards as well as what the charter requirements. Physical Education standards are being met with the SPARKS curriculum. Teachers have aligned the curriculum with the CO Standards. They feel confident that all areas are meeting requirements (specials such as art and music included). Bringing someone in to help with specials and allow teachers planning time is not beneficial to teachers because, as part of their planning, they observe students.

Jessica Knight proposed adding extra curricular activities as a bonus at the end of the school day because state standards are already being met. We have the resources as well as a budget line to hire people to come in and provide services. One option is to use money from that line item to ask after care personnel to come in an hour early to perform prep work for the teachers.

After care was discussed. Drop-ins were offered last year but it became so popular that some days there was no available space. Costs were discussed and Jessica Knight explained she has websites to compare costs. Other places offer snacks so it seems less costly but we do not offer snacks. Last year the after care children would have activities but it was a very laid back curriculum. The proposal offers a structured calendar where activities would

last 6+ weeks. The idea is to formalize extra curricular activities and make them free to after care students and available to non after care students for a small fee.

The staff would like to continue with an AMI curriculum. An option would be to use some of the available funds to provide professional development for teachers in areas such as music and Spanish so that they can institute these in the classroom while protecting the AMI classroom environment.

Mrs. Sizemore asked if we could use parent volunteers for prep work. Jessica Knight explained that there are three tiers of volunteers. Depending on where volunteers work they require different levels of background checks.

Ms. Federman has a vision of Montessori all day when we have our own facility. It is a great compromise to offer this now but she would like to see a Montessori 7am-5pm when FCMS has its own space. It is a staff issue (HOS and teachers). Montessori does integrated curriculum. Primary does not need specials as they are integrated and all is provided but older students may need that and we should ask teachers what they prefer and survey parents to ask whether they want specials during the day or would prefer their children to have a longer school day. Lorie talked about Countryside Montessori in Chicago and how their PE program works.

Jessica Knight explained that state standards change as we add grades. Past 4th grade we are required to provide more.

Logistics would have to be addressed. Mrs. Paris-McNiven pointed out that parent input would be important. Jessica Knight has an e-mail drafted and ready to go as soon as item is approved. There are not professionals or parents lined up or non that have already committed to provide extra curriculums. Jessica Knight has some names and would proceed to find out more information and finalize potential activities.

Mr. Sanderson suggested approving the item as proposed and then, after Jessica Knight has done outreach and checked with parents, we can revisit the item in October/November to talk about adjustments if necessary.

Motion: *The FCMS Board adopts the before/after care proposal as is, including payment structure and extracurricular activities, and revisit this at the September Board Meeting.*

Motion by: Ms. Federman

Comment: Mrs. Sizemore would like to hear back regarding parent feedback about Extra Curriculums

Seconded: Mrs. Paris-McNiven

VOTE: all in favor, Motion passes

6. HOS Report (Jessica Knight standing in for Mr. Vincent)

- **Enrollment**

Mr. Sanderson asked what enrollment numbers were exactly. Jessica Knight said all K-4 spots were filled. There are 2 half day Kindergarten spots and they are filled. Jessica Knight has reached out to (5) 3 year old and they have until tomorrow to answer. Then they move on to notify the next (5) 3 year olds on the list.

Mrs. Sizemore inquired about the process of filling spots with one age group over another. Mr. Sanderson explained that the board can set caps on each age group. We could change those if we wanted to. For the time being we will try to fill the spots with the best possible balance of ages.

Fort Collins Montessori School

April 15, 2015 enrollment numbers to accompany the FY2016 budget.

Max Enrollment	<u>Current</u>		Waiting			
2015-16						
P3-10	P-3 F= 2	}	3	P-3 F= 2	}	5
	P-3 H= 1			P-4 H= 1		
P4-14	P-4 F= 13	}	16	P-4 F= 7	}	8
	P-4 H= 4			P-4 H= 0		
K-16	K-F= 13	}	14	K-F= 20	}	20
	K-H= 2			K-H= 2		
Cap: Primary = 40	Total 35			Total 32		
G1-13	G1= 13		13	G1= 7		12
G2- 17	G2= 17		17	G2= 6		7
G3- 11	G3= 11		11	G3= 1		1
G4- 6	G4= 6		6	G4= 4		4
	G5= 0			G5= 0		
	G6= 0			G6= 0		
Cap: Elementary = 47	Total 47			Total 18		25 total

**Numbers in RED are the numbers given by Jessica Knight. These are the numbers as of 7/16/2015.*

- **Marketing plan**

Jessica Knight said she has received very positive feedback from the 4th of July parade. She has received many calls about enrollment and employment after the parade and people specifying they learned about the school there. Mrs. Sizemore said we should keep this as an annual event. Jessica Knight said they have several things planned for the upcoming year: parent nights, open houses - they are calling the Montessori Information Nights. The objective is to have the community come in as well, not just enrolled families.

Jessica Knight believes our most successful marketing is word of mouth. Mr. Sanderson agreed but expressed he was not comfortable relying simply on word of mouth. Jessica Knight asked where marketing fell. Mr. Sanderson explained it fell with the Head of School. Jessica Knight asked if they were supposed to be coming up with a marketing plan. Mr. Sanderson said Mrs. Sizemore has a lot of expertise in this area and she, among others, have offered to help and be a part of the creation of a marketing plan. Ultimately it is up to the HOS to execute the plan. Mr. Sanderson believes that we should, as a minimum, advertise in the Coloradoan. Ms. Federman would like to see pictures of children working in ads. Jessica Knight suggested using Facebook to advertise. Mrs. Lynch does have time and can keep up with the Facebook page. Mr. Sanderson asked Jessica Knight to get in touch with Mrs. Lynch regarding Facebook access and maintenance. A presence in KUNC was discussed. All who commented were in agreement that it was a good option. Mr. Sanderson asked Jessica Knight if she wanted help with the marketing plan. Jessica Knight said she would talk to Mr. Vincent about it. Jessica was concerned about advertising while not having spots available. Mrs. Sizemore explained that all advertising materials made at this moment were only offering preschool enrollment. K-4 has been removed from advertising materials because we have wait lists there.

- **Annual Report**

Jessica Knight said Mr. Vincent has been researching annual reports and will have a draft by August.

- **Start-up grant update**

Jessica Knight said there is approximately \$10,000 left to spend.

- **Hiring update**

Jessica Knight said the staff, teachers and herself, have been interviewing potential assistants. Mr. Vincent has been in communication. She believes candidate references have been checked and they are almost ready to offer positions for assistants and after care. They had many applicants but not many qualified applicants. There were more applicants for the assistant vacancies.

7. Finance Committee Report (Mr. Daniels, Discussion, Vote)

- **Monthly Financials**

Other than outstanding items, we are ending our Fiscal Year with a good surplus. We are in a very good place – coming out in the black. Budget to Actuals, everything was pretty much where it was budgeted or under. We exceeded projected revenues by about \$15,000. Mr. Sanderson said it looks like we will end up with unrestricted fund balance that is better than what is in the report.

- **Scholarships**

There is no indication that the church will provide the same financial assistance they did the past year (\$3,000). We have some money left over from their donation this past year and it will go towards helping students this year. We waived 50% tuition for one K student. Ms. Nipp asked if we are reaching out to people to let them know there is some money available for help. Mr. Sanderson explained that we are not in a position offer much more help financially but we are working towards that and the district is aware of this. In 3-5 years we will hopefully be in a position to help many more. If someone come in right now and needs help, we have some money available to provide financial assistance. Mr. Daniels asked if, since we are at full capacity almost, we can identify families that need help. Mr. Sanderson said we need to check families and let them know this is available. Mrs. Sizemore wanted to let the other members know that while we were conducting outreach, she did reach out to places like La Familia and other minority and lower income centers regarding the school.

- \$1500 increase in 'salary' line to provide teachers with a Master's a \$500 pay increase

Mr. Sanderson said this item was a direct request from Mr. Vincent. All that commented agreed we love our teachers and would like to see them receive more compensation.

Motion: *The FCMS Board adopts the Tuition and Fee Reduction Policy as described in FCMS Tuition and Fee Reduction Policy, Year 2.*

Motion by: Mr. Daniels

Comment: Mr. Sanderson wants to make sure Mrs. Sizemore is changing the motion to reflect the new name and motion as it was called out for vote.

Seconded: Ms. Federman

VOTE: All in favor, Motion passes

Motion: *The FCMS board increases the salary line in the FY16 budget by \$1500, which will be used to bring teachers with a Masters degree to an equitable level.*

Motion by: Mr. Daniels

Comment: None

Seconded: Mrs. Paris-McNivon

VOTE: All in favor, Motion passes

8. Parent Volunteer Coordinating Committee (Ms. Federman, Discussion, Vote)

Ms. Federman summarized the item. Mrs. Sizemore explained how the Parent Volunteer Committee would work. The parent survey results showed a need to do more community building and involvement so we have to work on that. The budget for the item will be used to pay for postage when sending in items such as Boxtops, to pay for teacher lunches during professional development days and to pay for community building events when needed. Parent Volunteer Committee will prepare a proposal for each event and the board representative will approve the proposal along with the budget for each event. A \$500 line item is being proposed for this coming year. Nicole Sizemore's main concern is that we do not burn out our volunteers. Ms. Federman said big fund raising will be left to the Fundraising Committee. Mr. Sanderson asked Ms. Nipp for her thoughts on this new approach and she believes it will be much easier communicating with just one person. Mrs. Sizemore asked that teachers make sure they express their needs and to set their boundaries. This is meant to help them, not be a burden. Ms. Federman asked about Volunteer Training and asked that we draw out a plan. Jessica Knight said she is working on volunteer training and has a plan for this. Mr. Sanderson asked Ms. Nipp to stay in touch to make sure that this is as close as it is to meet teachers' needs. The name PVCC is rather long, we will change this to PVC.

Motion: *The FCMS Board adopts the Parent Volunteer Committee description of structures, processes, and duties with the understanding that Lorie and Nicole will work with Jessica and Amber to revise the description per the board meeting dialogue.*

Motion by: Mr. Sanderson

Comment: None

Seconded: Mrs. Sizemore

VOTE: All in favor, Motion passes

9. Report from Facilities Committee

Mrs. Paris-McNivon is on the Facilities Committee. The committee currently has four volunteers and they need to recruit more participants that are interested in task based assignments as well as participants that are willing to be there for a long term. The committee can then come up with a timeline and a strategic plan but are currently at a loss on how to do that. Facility ideally needs to be locked in by December but April at the latest.

Mr. Sanderson explained that we cannot continue our 2016-2017 year at our current facility. Participants do not need to be parents. We can recruit people from different backgrounds: real estate, development, financing, and tasks like visiting places or other leg work.

Mrs. Paris-McNivon informed the group that the committee plans to meet once a month. Nicole Sizemore asked if the committee would put together a list of places they have looked at because Veronica Estelle has visited every place Mrs. Sizemore has suggested. Mrs. Paris-McNivon informed the group she will be putting together a list as well as a list of needs/specs for a location.

10. Board meeting schedule

Mr. Sanderson began the discussion explaining we are currently meeting from 4:00-6:00 p.m. on the 3rd Thursday of every month. Does this time work for everyone? There was some discussion regarding everyone's specific needs. Mrs. Sizemore commented that she has heard parents say they cannot make the meetings because of the time and lack of childcare. This is also the case for some board members (not impossible but a bit more inconvenient).

Jessica Knight said she has been inviting more parents to attend but time is not very convenient.

Mr. Sanderson thanked all for their input and pointed out that although parent attendance is very valuable, having board members attend is crucial. Without a quorum there can be no meeting. Mr. Sanderson asked if two hours was long enough. Mrs. Paris-McNivon shared what had worked well in another board she was part of. Having members review all documents before the meeting and moving straight into discussion saves time. The president should be leading, not doing. The rest of the board can help. Mrs. Sizemore asked if we needed to post agenda packets.

Mr. Sanderson explained that we must advertise the meeting 24 hours in advance and post the agenda if possible. We do not need to share agenda packets. Mr. Sanderson also reminded all that best practice rules are that the board does not participate with the audience. The only time the audience can speak is as a guest or during public comment.

Motion: *FCMS board meetings, beginning in August, will be held from 5:30-7:30 p.m. on the 3rd Thursday of each month.*

Motion by: Mr. Sanderson

Comment: Ms. Federman will check with the Church

Seconded: Mrs. Sizemore

VOTE: All in favor, Motion passes

11. Board membership process

Mr. Sanderson will move this item to the next meeting.

12. Review and approve minutes (Vote)

Motion: *The FCMS Board hereby adopts the minutes, as amended, from the June 18, 2015 board meeting.*

Motion by: Mrs. Sizemore

Comment: None

Seconded: Mr. Sanderson

VOTE: All in favor, Motion passes

13. Conclude meeting

Motion: *The FCMS Board moves to adjourn the July 16, 2015 board meeting.*

Motion by: Mr. Sanderson

Comment: None

Seconded: Mrs. Paris-McNivon

VOTE: All in favor, Motion passes

Respectfully Submitted by Nicole Sizemore