



Oct 9, 2014

FCMS Board Agenda

Fort Collins Montessori School

Board Present: Ronnie Estelle, Lorie Federman, Kathy Lynch, John Sanderson, Jen Schiller, Frank Vincent

Public Present: Four parents (one of which is also a FCMS Assistant)

4:00-4:10 Welcome and Reading of Vision and Mission

Approve the minutes from Aug 16 and Sept 11 - Approved

4:10-4:15 Public Comment:

- Feedback from new parent to Montessori - anxious to learn what is going on in the classroom; recommends better communications; open house wasn't helpful; family potluck staff were not available; ice cream social was cancelled; understands that the school is busy with start-up activities, but hopes that a sense of community will be developed, and more community activities will be implemented.
- Second parent agreed – more sense of community needs to happen; community is the big reason parents choose Montessori; need the opportunity to interact: parents, teachers, and board.

4:15-4:30 Head of School Report

- a) **Enrollment as of Oct 8, 2014** – 64 students
 - **Primary** – 31
 - Nipp – 15
 - Eaton – 16
 - **Elementary** - 33
 - Hanon – 16
 - Schiller - 17
- b) **Before After Care Program** – update
 - 2 students in am; 15-16 in the pm (maximum is 20);
 - drop-ins occasionally
- c) **Hires** – update
 - Lorie Lessing for morning para-professional for Ms. Nipp's classroom
 - Martha Hill - Special Needs teacher
 - Sarah Waible – Speech Therapist
 - Katherine D Smith - Nurse
- d) **Calendar** – adjustments?

- Cannot use current space on week-end, such as for the Open House. Recommend that we move Sunday events to Mondays.
- e) **Handbooks** – Staff and Employee
- Recommend that the board review the handbook and approve it by the next board meeting.

4:30-4:45 Discussion on Report Items

Calendar: Ronnie gave update of current situation in the classrooms as it relates to balancing a quality of teaching life with the need to communicate with the parents via open houses and other parent education events...

- How do we balance staff quality of life with need to have open houses, enrollment events, parent involvement (watch me work, coffee and conversation, work time for elementary), as well as upcoming community events (January Preschool events, PSD Open Houses??).
 - Open Houses need to be scheduled by next week with PSD's website and PSD's Early Childhood Center.
 - Oct 26 Open House could be cancelled because we no longer need it for enrollment.

Open discussion:

- Frank – many school visits have occurred each week with very positive responses from families with this process.
- Frank – parent events in which children show parents their work may not be the most effective because it is not authentic Montessori.
- Kathy, John, and Jen – discussion on best way to create community and educate parents. Suggestions: could we envision and host
 - Monthly parent meeting where school committees report followed by teachers presenting a Parent Ed topic with materials presentations.
 - Parent family night.
- PSD marketing – they and all schools post Open Houses in January and February.

Motion from Lorie: *Move to cancel Oct 26 Open House; We direct the HOS, working with the Board President, to develop a revised schedule of events that simultaneously addresses the needs of public outreach with parental education/involvement.*

Discussion – John - why cancel Oct 26 OH? Discussion followed and an address to John's questions included the comment that we have sufficient enrollment and an Open House in two weekends followed by parent events in Nov and Dec might be unnecessary extra work for our teachers.

Does the motion stand? Yes

All are in favor of the motions – Yes

Vote: Motion passed with unanimous approval

4:45 - 5:00 Budget Presentation Actuals to budget September

- John reports that budget projections look good. We may be in the black soon enough to staff a new assistant in the afternoon and perhaps someone to assist guides move primary furniture. We currently have parents who volunteer in the afternoon starting this week....wait to see how this works.

Motion John set a motion to authorize Frank to staff the afternoon primary half-time assistant beginning as soon as possible.

Lorie seconded

Discussion – Elementary? Jen, elementary guide, reports that the elementary children move the furniture confidently in the afternoon; Jen takes care of the mornings and is happy to do so as it helps her plan each day in the morning. Jen would rather call on parent volunteers for nature walks

and field trips rather than furniture moving. The needs in elementary are different from the needs in Primary in that Elementary classrooms need less adult assistance in them than the Primary classrooms.

Vote: Motion passed with unanimous approval

5:00 – 5:10 **Fund Raising**

- Update and discussion – One family is making an additional donation on a monthly basis. Do we have a form or link on our website for parent donations? Not yet. We should look at state statutes – we have a waiver in our district contract that we will allow us to receive donations.
- Allocation of donations – Monthly donation from the church of \$300 for scholarships to low income families in the primary classroom using the FRL lunch eligibility criteria. Thus far, only one family has responded and submitted the paperwork. Church input – they allow us to decide how we allocate the funds, however they requested initially that the funds go to help our FRP primary families.

Motion from Ronnie to allocate scholarships based on FRL to provide tuition waivers up to 50% as allowed by the money in the scholarship fund.

Seconded by Kathy

Does the motion stand? Yes

All are in favor of the motions – Yes

Vote: Motion passed unanimously

5:10-5:20 **Finance Committee and SAC**

- **What is a SAC? Lorie will be the Board Rep on this committee and take the lead on researching and establishing it.**
A SAC committee holds the school accountable and includes seven members and a school administrator, no more than 2 board members, at least one community member, one teacher, and one member of a parent organization. Does not have to include board members.
- **Finance Committee John will be the Board Rep on this committee and take the lead on researching and establishing it.**
How do we establish and staff committees?
When should this be established?

5:20-5:25 **Staff Training** – Professional Development on Child Safety

- Does Frank have upcoming professional development scheduled? Board suggests child safety.
- When? Nov and Dec. The Board needs an outline of professional development for the rest of the academic year.

5:25-5:30 **Closing and Adjourn**