

BIRCH LANE MONTESSORI PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting minutes

November 13, 2018

Meeting convened at 7:02 pm

Welcome/Introduction

- Present: Sheryl S-L, Roberto S, Remy G, Belinda, Leila H, Jim K, Rucheeta K, Debbie B, Shawna S, Patricia M-M

Principal's report – Jim Knight

- Youth Truth Survey for 3rd-6th graders, and for families, is now available. Results available online and can be broken down by school and district, but not by Montessori vs. traditional. Good to look at trends, but don't read too much meaning into individual responses. Survey is being conducted in classrooms so that children can participate. Results will be shared with climate committee at BLE. The questions in the family survey are slightly different than the student survey
- This week is conference week. Teachers have been very busy.
- Due to air quality, the school has been having indoor recess, and will continue for the foreseeable future. Staff are treating it as rainy days with indoor activities. One consequence is that intermediate students eat lunch 20 minutes later because primary students can't leave MPR to have outdoor recess.
- This week is friendship week
- Montessori 5/6 classrooms had a successful Poetry Slam
- Math Night has been rescheduled to December 6th due to conflict with City of Davis Tree Lighting ceremony
- Suggestion from Rucheeta for "Math-in-the-Bag" similar to Book in the Bag. Jim K. will discuss this with math coaches.
- A plan is in place to staff K/1 classroom when Jessica Beckinger takes maternity leave, anticipated in February 2019 through the end of the school year. Plans are not official so can't say any more about this. Parents in affected room will be notified when the time comes.

President's report – Sheryl Soucy-Lubell

- We need a volunteer Outreach Coordinator to assist with Kindergarten outreach in January. Duties include updating materials with new dates, coordinating other volunteers to deliver outreach materials to preschools, publicizing the program and registration on social media, reserving space at the Farmer's Market for 2 weekends in January, coordinating volunteers to staff the Farmer's Market table, assisting teachers with Kinder Info Night as requested (but MPAC does not coordinate this).

- New 5/6 Teacher Amanda Garza will begin instruction after Thanksgiving Break, on November 26. She will overlap with interim teacher Kristin Provost for 2 days.

Vice President's report – Roberto Sequeira

- Fundraising is ahead of schedule for the year with direct donations as well as an anticipated donation from a separate fundraising event in December for which DMEF is expected to be the beneficiary. Therefore, we don't need to focus on fundraising a Birch Lane family dinner as we have in prior years. Instead we will let PTA take the proceeds for all of those events this year.

Treasurer's report – Sheryl Soucy-Lubell for Amanda McNicholas

- Direct donations continue to arrive, \$1,150 since last meeting, putting us ahead of expectations
- We spent \$1,500 on materials in the last month, most of which have arrived. Lisa Yamasaki is especially grateful for materials and asked staff to explore the materials and find a home for them on the shelves.
- Teachers have requested funds to purchase access to webinars, approx. \$200 per group viewing. Roberto motioned to use the funds for this purpose, Remy seconded, all in favor, no opposed.
- Teachers will have dedicated time once/month on Wednesdays to have prep for Montessori program as a whole, to allow for sharing of best practices and collaborative activities. They may use this time for webinar viewing and discussion. Roberto suggested calling webinar vendor to ask for discount if we commit to ordering multiple webinars, especially if we don't need the PD credits that are part of the cost.

Discussion/Parent Education on "Montessori at Home" – all

- Reviewed hand-out
- There is no right/wrong way to implement some aspects of Montessori philosophy at home. The goal is to provide some continuity at home with practices learned in school.
- One major tenet of the philosophy is to allow the child to do himself, whatever he is capable of.
 - Establish order and age-appropriate expectations
 - Grace and Courtesy at home
 - Uninterrupted periods of investigation – it's OK to be bored
 - Areas of engagement: in the kitchen, in the living area, homework time

Adjourned at 8:16