

DAVIS MONTESSORI EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Birch Lane Montessori Parent Advisory Committee (MPAC)
Meeting Minutes

September 15, 2020 – 7:00 PM

In Attendance (via Zoom):

President: Sheryl Soucy-Lubell
Vice President: Brian Pakpour
Treasurer: Leila Hartley
Secretary: Cara Baker
Outreach Director: *Vacant*
Historian: Melanie Vida
Principal: Jim Knight

Teachers: Remy Glovin, Sally Palow, 4¹/₅/₆

Others: Jeff Lee
Amanda McNicholas
Kristina Boswell/Wuestewald
Steve/Tina Zicari
Kelly Froman
Oz Shaar-Moshe
Suzy Hernandez
Eric May
Carrie Cohen
Roberto Sequeira
Erica Meyers
Jeni Reed

7:15 p.m. – Meeting called to order by Brian Pakpour

- 1) Welcome/Introductions
- 2) Discussion of new board positions, voting in of new members.
 - a. Remy Glovin made a motion to nominate Sheryl Soucy-Lubell as president (one-year term), Brian Pakpour as vice president (standard two-year term), and Cara Baker as secretary (standard two-year term). Sally Palow seconded the motion. They are replacing the outgoing vice president Roberto Sequeira, and president Ruby Germain/Drogemueller, who left the board last year. New board unanimously voted in.
 - b. Discussion of now-vacant Outreach Coordinator position, the action items for the position, and a call for volunteers to fill the position. Those interested were asked to contact any board member.

- 3) Volunteers needed for helping teachers throughout the year with copying and cutting materials for the classrooms, some of which already went home.
- 4) Discussion of fundraising for the year, whether it would be necessary or not, since we have a fairly healthy bank balance from last year.
 - a. In past years, MPAC has asked for \$50 per student, and that may still be a good amount to ask for this year, with the caveat that people may not be able to give at all this year. Also, there is less need this year, as materials won't be used as much in the classroom. However, if kids come back, the teachers will need classroom supplies (pencils, disinfecting wipes, etc.), not necessarily Montessori materials.
 - b. If parents are interested, some can take home Montessori materials (puzzles, etc.) to check for missing/broken pieces, which can lead to possibly purchasing new materials if warranted.
 - c. Information on fundraising/Direct Donation Drive can be sent out tomorrow (Sept. 16) as it is Back to School Night.
- 5) Kristina Boswell/ Wuestewald mentioned technology deficiencies, such as computers, hotspots, headphones, etc. that may be needed either now or once we go back to in-person teaching. Brian said depending on the item, general education/technology items would need to be supplied by the district or general PTA, not necessarily MPAC.
- 6) Roberto Sequeira mentioned this should be a cost-saving year, as the district by and large should be saving some money, what with kids not being in school, as well as receiving government assistance. Next year, we can use our budget once we're back in person.
- 7) Fundraising ideas?
 - a. Melanie Vida mentioned a Poker Night. (Would need to be legally registered.) A virtual Poker Night could be a simple social event.
 - b. Possible Zoom happy hour?
 - c. In-person park physically distanced community gathering? Discussion of appropriateness of official MPAC social gathering; would need to follow county guidelines. Would kids be in attendance? That would complicate matters somewhat.
- 8) Principal's Report – Jim Knight
 - a. Numbers. We have space in every classroom. Usually pushing 600, right now we are at 550. (Including Montessori. If you know someone looking into Montessori, encourage them to apply!)
 - b. BTSN tomorrow. Looking forward to seeing everyone.
 - c. Another Materials Pickup in October. Likely doing AM and PM pickup, so it won't be spread out over multiple days.
 - d. MPR, hopefully to be under construction next March, to be under construction for one year.
- 9) Roberto mentioned perhaps what MPAC should focus on is how we are handling the lack of Montessori style in our teaching while we are distance learning.
 - a. Sheryl mentioned we have sent links to free resources, and have sent home grammar symbols and moveable alphabets. There is an issue of

equity if some families don't have printers at home, so we may want to be careful about relying on emailing links to printable materials.

- b. Sally Palow mentioned potentially using a document camera to show herself using the classroom manipulatives as she teaches, which wouldn't be hands-on, but would show visually what the child would be doing if in the classroom. She does not want to take the Montessori out of her teaching, but feels once things have settled in with Canvas, she and other teachers can get "more Montessori."
 - c. Roberto brought up the difficulties with at-home learning, using online materials to make things more Montessori may add to the burden of parents who are supporting their kids at home, and teaching them how to use technology.
 - d. Remy Glovin mentioned she is getting the kids acclimated to Canvas and making sure the procedures are on point. After the wrinkles are worked out, the teachers do plan to have more offline activities.
 - e. Jeff Lee mentioned that he appreciates the online learning that his kindergarten-age daughter has experienced so far.
 - f. Kristina wondered if there was discussion of sending home manipulatives (rather than paper cutouts). She would like to help prep materials to send home: beads, play dough, etc. Remy Glovin said it is not cost-effective to do that because of the sheer number of kids and manipulatives. Additionally, what would we do with them all after the kids come back to the classroom? Sheryl said there was some discussion of sending home pony beads and pipe cleaners to make bead chains, and that there might be more sent home at the next material pickup (in six weeks).
- 10) Treasurer's Report – Leila
- a. We purchased new maps over the summer.
 - b. Ended last year with about \$15,000. So far to date we've spent about \$1600-1700 on maps and materials for the new school year. Also received \$100 donation.
- 11) Kelly Froman asked if the timeline for the MPR was changing due to the online learning schedule and the kids not being there. Jim Knight said that no, things are going on as planned (no change due to current learning situation).
- 12) Sally Palow: she appreciates all of us working together, and the teachers understand what the parents are going through. Teachers are going through a lot too. Proud of the kids, with all they are accomplishing. Number one thing for teachers are the kids' (and parents') mental health.
- 13) Adjournment
- a. Brian moved.
 - b. Sheryl seconded.
 - c. Motion approved at 8:19 p.m.