

## **Mountain Sun Community School Board**

### **Meeting Minutes**

February 13, 2019

Open Session

5:45-8:10 p.m.

*Members Present: Michael, Dilshad, Linda, Jennifer, Melissa, Mary, Joy, Meighan, Kevin, Nicole, Brigid, Jessica*

*Guest: McNeill Mann (Natural Play Coordinator)*

*Dilshad chaired the meeting and Linda recorded minutes.*

### **Board Chairman Comments**

- Dilshad shared that J Cantrell is no longer a Board member or Treasurer. Nicole Mihalas will fill the roles of Board Vice Chairman and Treasurer at this time.

### **Approval of December open minutes**

- The January 9, 2019 minutes were reviewed and approved with two corrections.

### **Natural Play Project Discussion with McNeill Mann**

- McNeill clarified terms used when referencing MSCS's Natural Play: NPP is Natural Play Project, the MSCS project while NLI is Natural Learning Initiative, the planning group from NC State University.
- NLI visited the campus recently and is now working on a design for this campus. There will be a conference call with them tomorrow. This is likely to be a big plan phased in over many years based on priorities and funding.
- NPI involves community outreach with El Centro, Rise and Shine, Family Place and Brevard Music Center. El Centro and Rise and Shine are primarily after-school programs that do not have young children so their initial involvement has been limited.
- Meetings have been held with Rise and Shine and Family Place, and playdates are scheduled with age 3-5 children on our campus beginning in March. McNeill hopes to continue these once or twice a week. These playdates will feature specific programming in the beginning as we learn rather than leave the impression participants are here for open play at a public park.
- Work will focus on developing the MSCS model for Natural Play, hoping we become a hub or authority for Natural Play in this area. We will reapply for the United Way grant soon for additional funding for the Natural Play work.
- McNeill shared wonderful Natural Play maps created by students. She has already proven to be indispensable at MCSC.

### **Faculty Report**

- Brigid shared that there is lots of work and interaction going on in classrooms during this long stretch to spring break. This is an exciting time of year with so much richness in the work.
- MSCS classrooms' sense of community shown through when the father of two young students died recently. The situation was handled beautifully by both staff and students.

### **Executive Director's report**

- Personnel: Michael reported that mid-year check-ins are done. Sharon Rood is now helping part-time with Reading in the Acorn classroom.
- The school is in the usual winter cycle of illness going around. Teachers are reminding students to wash hands, wipe down surfaces, and generally practice good hygiene.

students to wash hands, wipe down surfaces and generally practice good hygiene.

- The Montessori-specific software Transparent Classroom is being explored. After viewing a webinar about this progress tracking system, teachers are now trying it with a few students in each classroom. After 60-90 days Michael and staff will decide whether to use it school-wide. The cost would be \$1.50 per student per month; it is possible that additional technology will be needed to use this software properly. This will initially be a teacher tool, and it will take several years to populate the system as the MSCS curriculum is developed and refined.
- Ellie Elzerman, the Montessori consultant working with staff, will be back next week. The focus of her visit will be further development of language and math documents.
- Recruitment and retention efforts are ongoing. The deadline for reenrollment is February 15. There are new families interested in the school, including a family that is traveling from MI to visit. MSCS 2019-2020 enrollment is expected to be in the range of 85-90 students. The Acorn class is expected to be full again; the size of Monarchs and Coyotes classes will likely increase as 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders move up.
- The current VISION cadre visited the school recently and made positive comments.
- Michael will be a panel member at a Get Set early childhood community meeting.
- Project Empathy: MSCS's conflict resolution and emotional literacy approach may be included in a T'Times article in March.
- Brigid and Kim attended a Montessori professional development day at Lander University recently. The topic was infusing art into everything; it confirmed so much of what MSCS teachers are already doing but also provided some good reminders.

### **Financial Update**

- Claudia Hawkins has finished the MSCS 2017 federal 990 form. The Executive Board and Michael will meet with Claudia to go over this document in detail. It will be shared with the entire Board in March.
- Other financials were reviewed and everything is on track. It remains critical for us to make our fundraising goal to meet our budget.

*The meeting continued into closed session.*

*The meeting reconvened in open session.*

*The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.*