

Park Road Montessori
SLT Meeting
April 19, 2013

Members Present: Bill Aheron, Aryon Dubinsky, Barbara Dubinsky, Sherry Herbert, Anna Moraglia, Kristin Piscitelli, Susan Plaza, Cynthia Wood

March Minutes Approved

Principal's Report:

Update on Melinda – left for personal reasons, it is confidential. Assuming she will be back by next year if not the end of this year. Ms. Jenny and Ms. Renee have been working on math and language arts, science, and social studies. Ms. Leah, as assistant who is certified, is the substitute. She is working on writing. Mr. Bryan, the assistant, is helping as well. Other upper el teachers are providing Montessori lessons for the children. They are still getting quality instruction. Ms. Moraglia is also a parent in that room, it is different but kids are used to it now. Kristen questioned the type of Montessori lessons that were being done, are students still moving forward? Yes, teachers are aware. Sherry stated that children have been in Montessori for a while now; they are independent about asking for lessons etc. Ms. Aryon said they are also prepping for tests.

SLT Election – Monday was the deadline for name submission; Thursday was deadline for the questionnaire. Some people expressed interest but did not complete the questions. Ms. Moraglia will start working on the ballot today; will send in an eblast, we are right on schedule. Bill wondered how many names? 6 filled out the questionnaires – Caroline Miller, has been very involved in PTO, and had two children here, now one 4th grader. Jessica Deling, one child. Mike Herndon, 2 children here, Jacki Peterson has a child in upper el and one going into lower el. Joy Zmoski, current PTO president; Beth Borochock, former PTO treasurer, doing tutoring now with upper el students.

Lottery Results – first lottery 234 children on Pre-K waitlist, last year 185. Kindergarten waitlist has 126, last year 75. 1st grade 37, last year 40. Ms. Cynthia wondered how many Pre-K we can take. Uncertain now as we don't have retentions and siblings yet. They will be able to take some off the waitlist. Bill wondered about the waitlist, how does it work when there are many on the waitlist, does CMS give you a list in order? Ms. Moraglia said she receives a list; she is to start at the top and go down from there. Bill asked how the spots got filled in the first place, siblings are guaranteed. Ms. Moraglia said they must participate in the lottery to be a guarantee. Bill asked about walk zone, has gotten very murky. Ms. Moraglia said there is a certain percentage that has been set aside for walk zone. Student placement can give different answers depending on whom you ask. All but 2 in walk zone did get in. Bill wondered what are the rules, they are not published, not a good feeling of fairness from CMS. Kristen asked about CMS employee transfers? Ms. Moraglia is given a list from student placement with the kids of employees. Tuition increase would help stop kids from leaving.

School Improvement Plan – Dibles end of year testing coming in May. 3rd quarter quarterly has been given, using that info to plan for instruction. We have been part of the EOG pilot, everything going online next year. We have had 3rd and 4th graders participating. Practice EOGs are next week, children can experience the setting. Teachers will be going over skills and concepts that are still lacking to make kids ready for the test. There is a problem with our kids not reading the test – are they not getting enough practice taking tests? Ms. Moraglia said that is a possibility, some parents don't think tests are important etc. Ms. Barbara thinks that the kids prefer to write about their own topics, they don't like being told what to write about. Kristen clarified that traditional kids are used to taking tests, we are not so much. Ms. Aryon said traditional kids take tests for their grades, we don't. Some kids don't have a sense of personal responsibility. Ms. Sherry said that parents are telling their kids this is not important, the kids are acting on that. We need to tell them to do their best no matter what. Ms. Moraglia said that Ms. Denene said her kids are always checking with her before doing things, show a lack of independence. Ms. Barbara told her kids that if they don't do well the Montessori school may not exist. She wants to empower them. Kristen said if we don't get the buy-in from home, we will not make it in the future. Bill said this lends itself to a conversation with a parent audience/dialogue. Is there a forum for this? Ms. Barbara said she told CMS that testing young kids is detrimental. Bill said most of us would prefer not to do any of this but unavoidable, what do we need to do to have everyone succeed?

Ms. Moraglia said Joy emailed her about putting info on Meck Acts in the eblast. Not sure it is the best thing to do, what do we think? Ms. Sherry asked what do they want us to do? Ms. Moraglia said just provide information about the group for interested parents. Bill said it is appropriate if it comes from PTO, not necessarily coming from PRM, they are independent. We agreed to include this information with the appropriate wording.

Goal 3 on SIP – Bill said advocacy committee is very encouraged with CMS proposal for new Montessori elementary in fall 2014, with another in the south in 2015, also a Montessori High in 2014 (current 7th graders could continue on.) Step one is to communicate actively to make sure this stays in the budget plan, will be working on implementation issues like licensing, hiring, environment etc. Right now doing lots of thanks yous etc. to get budget proposal through. Susan asked about Derita, would the high school be freestanding? Ms. Moraglia said that Derita is a behavior management school now, she is under the impression that Montessori would be on its own. Ms. Sherry said the proposal wants to grow the program one year at a time, will start with PReK/K, and add a grade yearly. Ms. Moraglia said we need to ask about 3 year olds. Kristen wondered about the pipeline for teachers, finding certified Montessori. Ms. Barbara said our classrooms will change quite a bit when these open due to busing. Ms. Moraglia said we will not lose that many kids since it will only impact young grades. There are so many people on the wait list, we will not lose students.

Technology:

Ms. Cynthia had no updates. Bill discussed district focus on technology. Kristen wanted to know our intention as a school as far as technology. Ms. Aryon wants more computers and smart boards in each room. Ms. Sherry said grade levels must look at this first, what are needs for children. Ms. Moraglia wants to know how it will be used,

we need to be deliberate. Bill said the CMS budget includes Smart Boards for every classroom (\$7.3M); he suggested asking for flexibility in using those funds for PRM. Ms. Moraglia said she is concerned that it is being forced on everyone; we don't feel it is developmentally appropriate for all our children.

Parent Ed:

Beginners Day and Moving Up Day are set for May 2 at 10:00 and May 2 at 5:30 (Lower El) and 6:00 (Upper El.) Lower El will also do May 3 at 10:00am.

Grace and Courtesy:

Ms. Sherry nominates Ms. Candace and Ms. Trisha for all their time spent on the performance of Flat Stanley. The kids loved the show, big boost of spirit for our school. Ms. Moraglia will send names to Allison.

Other:

Upper El and middle school communication – Bill said the principal expects to have a solid staff in place next year. He understands the need for Montessori certified teachers. Ms. Moraglia said there is a meeting April 30, there may be more information to share after that.

Kristen mentioned the community service project, has not been discussed in some time. Ms. Cynthia said she emailed Ginger about the possibility of a monthly club; anyone can join in at any time. She wants to facilitate service for families. Ms. Aryon suggested participating in a walk or run, gets kids and parents active. Ms. Moraglia mentioned the homeless veterans, is a worthwhile project, and would be easy to get our kids over there. Ms. Barbara suggested making sandwiches for the homeless. Ms. Moraglia said it is a matter of someone taking this on to coordinate events. Kristen and Ms. Cynthia agreed to take this on. Ms. Barbara suggested contacting parents to see if anyone would like to participate in a committee. Ms. Moraglia suggested also using the school counselor. Ms. Moraglia suggested doing something for the neighbors across the street and on the carpool street in September. The homeless veterans "Stand-down" is in October. Brain cancer run is in September.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45.