

PARK ROAD MONTESSORI
SLT Meeting
March 21, 2014

Members Presents: Bill Aheron, Yetta Buchanan, Aryon Dubinsky, Sherry Herbert, Mike Herndon, Anna Hurdle, Anna Moraglia, Kristen Piscitelli, Susan Plaza, Candace Steude, Debbie Webber, Cynthia Wood.

The meeting was called to order by Bill Aheron.

PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE:

Lottery results are in, 337 on the waitlist. PreK has 45 new students right now. Children will enter off the waitlist this summer. 2014/15 Staff allotments have not changed from last year.

There will be an SLT election this spring, notice coming out in Tuesday's e-blast. Once parents contact Ms. Moraglia with their interest, she will give them the questions to answer. We hope to have the election around the spring picnic.

Ms. Becky is ordering books and videos for assistants to use for Montessori training, videos are from AMI. Ms. Moraglia will survey staff about professional development during workdays. She knows we have people leaving, wants to train their replacements this fall. Bill discussed the difficulty of scheduling paid training/development for assistants. Ms. Moraglia feels that if the assistants are going to be here on the workdays she believes they should be able to help the classroom teachers pack up their classrooms. Cynthia suggested that the fall training may be more useful instead of having the summer off after training. Ms. Moraglia said it will happen in September. Anna H. said ongoing training would be preferable, perhaps adding one meeting per month for training would be possible. They could have one training session to begin then continue with one meeting per month, different people could help with this each month. Cynthia mentioned that because there is turnover it may be useful to have the first training annually for new staff, maybe video the first session? Ms. Aryon agreed that videotaping would be useful so staff can go back and review when they like. Anna H. said since Ms. Moraglia knows staffing issues it is best to wait for the fall. Ms. Moraglia stated that ideally there would be a calendar with the topic for each month.

Bill mentioned that CMS published their demographic information, available on the website. PRM is at 10.8% of students identified as economically disadvantaged. CMS overall is 53%. This is based on Free and Reduced Lunch numbers. The other two Montessori schools have higher proportions of EDS. Bill feels that ideally the PRM student population better reflect the zone demographics. Is there anything in our control to make this happen? Maria Montessori created this education for students in need. He proposed that SLT discuss this at future meeting.

Mike asked how the waitlist here at PRM has changed as new magnets come into the system. Ms. Moraglia said interest has increased yearly. The delayed entry process for students after 1st grade is an interview process for child and parents. Want to make sure that parents know what the Montessori education is about. Ms. Moraglia said we have taken in quite a few students this way. This process is working. Anna H. said many families are in good schools with bright students who simply hate school.

TESTING IMPACTS:

Ms. Moraglia, Bill, and Anna H. have been speaking with teachers to quantify the lost instructional time due to testing. Seat time in testing is very obvious. What we want to identify is lost instructional time as a result of the teacher administering test while other students are in the class without their teacher. 2/3 of the teaching staff participated in this process; the Primary team did this as a group. There is a strong consensus in the results. Third graders lose 262 hours yearly due to testing. This is a large portion of the student time in class. Third grade testing impacts first and second graders as well as they are in the same class. PEP progress monitoring is a challenge as well, very time consuming. Mike asked how this compares to other schools. Bill discussed what do we do with this information? He has reached out to SLT chairs at other schools to try and get data from other schools so we can bring it to CMS administration. Ms. Moraglia said the month of December had basically no instruction in Lower Elementary due to MAPS and DIBELS testing windows. Ms. Candace discussed the impact at traditional schools with no assistant teacher. Bill believes the impacts will be lower due to the lack of multigrade classrooms. Does anyone at CMS realize how this is impacting Montessori schools? Mike wondered if anyone else was collecting data like this. Ms. Moraglia said principals were asked how long MAPS testing took (seat hours.)

Ms. Debbie said test time varies as it is adaptive, anywhere from 45 minutes to 2 hours. Wi-Fi connections have created difficulties. Ms. Moraglia reported that teachers were asked for feedback on the scheduling, changes have been made. We are trying something new for end of year DIBELS testing. For primary level, the teachers will not be giving the test. We will pull assistants and other people to give those tests, they are being trained now.

Bill asked about communicating this test data. Ms. Moraglia recommended that we properly frame the issue before going to CMS administration. Anna H. said staff was concerned that this data may come back as a problem for PRM. Ms. Moraglia is fine with sharing this data with PRM staff. Mike agrees that we need more data from other schools before the information is shared with others. Bill will continue reaching out to other SLT chairs and will follow-up with us through email. Ms. Sherry suggested asking Meck Acts if they have any data. MAP testing is a CMS process. DIBELS is part of the state Read To Achieve mandate. TD is state, anything that says RTA is state, PEP is state as well. Ms. Moraglia discussed PEPs, the process CMS uses is very time consuming. We are moving to a new paperwork system that is more user friendly to lessen the teacher burden. The data we are capturing is the burden of lost instructional time

from administration of tests and PEP plans. Mike wondered if going to the district will be useful if the tests are mainly state tests. Bill said yes, district has some control of how it fulfills state mandates. Ms. Moraglia reminded us that we will not get to opt out of testing, if we eliminate one it will be replaced by another. CMS did find ways to use test data to keep some students from doing the portfolio for the state. Ms. Debbie reminded us that some of these things are to protect from lawsuits. The range of Developmental readiness for academic work and testing is vast in lower grades; K-2 tests are a challenge. Anna H. said we should continue to monitor this and collect future data for comparison at PRM. **ACTION ITEM: Bill will reach out to other schools and update our group.**

EXIT SURVEY and PARENT COMPACT:

PRM wants to make clear expectations for parents coming into the school. A draft has been created based on current CMS compacts as well as other Montessori school guidelines. Mike said the draft item about technology may be a problem. Ms. Sherry said the Primary team has created a one page document for new families. The team will meet with parents on beginner's day to go over the information. Parents will be asked to sign the document. It will be used at parent conferences in October as well. Ms. Moraglia said parents must sign a magnet agreement when they enter the lottery. She would like to share our draft with the other Montessori schools, perhaps become a CMS document. Ms. Anna H. said she has had parents who refused to sign, is this a widespread problem? We generally get over 90% of the compacts back signed. Cynthia wondered if people just sign because it is included in a big pile of paperwork that goes home early in the year. Perhaps it could get more attention at Open House. Cynthia believes it needs to be reinforced in class or at Parent Ed etc. Ms. Aryon said it could be a homework assignment for students. Bill said we should have something in place for this spring. **ACTIONS ITEM: Ms. Moraglia and Ms. Sherry will finalize the draft and share with other Montessori schools.**

We will discuss exit survey at the next meeting – how and when to use it. Send Bill suggestions for changes to question list. Ms. Moraglia said administration is reviewing this as well, perhaps there is information CMS would like as well.

There is an idea of hosting an Introduction to Montessori workshop for adults so they can experience Montessori learning from Primary through Lower and Upper El. We would love to offer this to some CMS administration as well as incoming parents. More details to come in April meeting. Alternative licensing should be included as well.

Next Meeting: Friday, April 11