

Park Road Montessori  
SLT Meeting  
September 6, 2013

Members Present: Bill Aheron, Ayrton Dubinsky, Kathy Foushee, Mike Herndon, Sherry Herbert, Anna Hurdle, Caroline Miller, Anna Moraglia, Jackie Peterson, Kristen Piscitelli, Susan Plaza, Debbie Webber, and Cynthia Wood.

Called to order by Bill Aheron.

Ms. Moraglia stated we need to approve the SIP by next meeting. Bill noted that the PTA rep joining us will be Jby Szymonski. Ms. Moraglia said we have 505 students this year, the largest ever. Also the largest carpool ever! Upper E students will be on "safety patrol" soon.

School Improvement Plan Updates:

New Smart Goals—Ms. Moraglia stated the PRM was in compliance with the first 2 goals regarding planning and duty free lunch. Ms. Anna said taking a break sometimes does take more work. Mike clarified that these goals are mandated by the state. Kristen asked about filling in the strategies, Ms. Moraglia said that is the next step. She will attend a training on the new template next week.

Goals 4 and 5 (PRM goals) – complete.

Goal 6 – Bill pointed out the new elements that reflect key items from the PRM Philosophy Document regarding authentic Montessori practice. Anna H, Caroline, and Bill met and made additions. Staff feedback is also included. Goal is broken down into 5 categories – Parent Ed, Authentic Montessori, Professional Development, Personal Responsibility/Community Connection, and Staff Engagement.

1. Parent Engagement – Jackie reported on sub group meeting ideas for Parent Ed (Digital Library, Exit Survey etc.) Kristen asked to broaden scope of parent engagement by having 2 parent conferences per year instead of one. Ms. Moraglia mentioned that some private Montessori schools require parents to come into the classroom. Ms. Anna has seen that at other schools where parents come in to observe their child. Ms. Anna said the bell schedule creates a problem, extended school day makes it difficult for teachers and parents. Jackie asked about CMS, what do they allow in the magnet contract? Bill asked if we could include an "expectation list" similar to things we sign from the media center, classroom teachers etc. Ms. Anna said the time will be an issue, when will the conferences happen. Ms. Foushee suggested a teacher workday. Mike clarified is it teacher time or parent time? Kristen said both. Cynthia said we could implement an observation opportunity now, adding another schoolwide conference is more difficult. Ms. Moraglia suggested that we need a firm plan before placing this idea in the SP. Bill agreed, says staff can develop this list of "expectations." Ms. Anna said there are many children who have 4 conferences per year. Ms. Ayrton suggested getting input from staff first before telling teachers they have to allow observations and additional conferences. Ms. Cynthia agreed that all staff need to be involved. Bill clarified that these are expectations for parents. Ms. Ayrton said that visitors in class can be disrupted. Jackie reminded us that the goal is to create a partnership between parents and teachers. Action Item – Jackie, Kristen, and Ayrton will work on this. Bill would like to add the creation of an expectation document to this category in the SP.

2. Authentic Montessori – Ms. Anna suggested adding a section about recruiting since CMS does not emphasize that as much as we need to (training centers, conferences, etc.) We should always be recruiting for the CMS Montessori schools. Ms. Moraglia said we have been working on getting CMS more aware of the needs, the magnet department will pay for training for teachers without Montessori training. Caroline suggested that Montessori training is more important in sourcing new candidates than the NC teacher license. Having Teacher Assistants in every classroom is an integral part of the authentic Montessori experience. Ms. Cynthia wants to make sure that the state knows the reduced hours are creating a problem. Bill suggested mentioning at Open House the challenges from reduced staffing/hours – make parents aware. Ms. Moraglia suggested sending something home with state official contact information etc.

Bill asked for questions. Ms. Aryon wanted clarification on professional development suggestions about conferences. Change language to say “as available” – budget required for this. Bill said the PTO budget should be influenced by the school philosophy. Ms. Moraglia said this is beyond the CMS Magnet Dept. PRM has about \$700 per year for professional development and conferences. Bill suggested discussing with the PTO to create a goal regarding guest speakers and conference attendance. Ms. Cathy suggested researching what other Montessori schools are doing for PD. Ms. Moraglia mentioned applying for grants as well.

Bill discussed the need for Montessori training for the non-Montessori certified teachers at PRM. Aryon asked when this training would occur. Bill suggested that parents and subs could cover classes for teachers/assistants attending orientation. ACTION ITEM: Ms. Cynthia, Ms. Anna, and Ms. Moraglia will research possibilities.

Aryon asked about mentors – they are only required for 3 years, the SP has more included. Bill thinks all teachers should be involved. Ms. Moraglia uncertain whether this should be a goal in the SP as there is no “proof” for the goal. Jackie said this is about a learning community. Aryon is concerned about adding to teacher duties – the reality is a lack of time. Bill clarified state rules on this.

Ms. Moraglia suggested there may be too many goals to do well. Mike agreed, suggesting looking at the big picture. Bill asked what else the SLT should do? Caroline mentioned hiring a Montessori Coordinator, Ms. Moraglia said the request is in to CMS

Discussion on teacher satisfaction and morale: it was suggested that we create a sub-committee, including Kathy and Mike to discuss issues with parents and teachers.

- possibly do a survey before winter break
- make the survey as quantifiable as possible
- What do we need to focus on in SLT to make things better

A lot of desires and goals have been proposed. Team should prioritize and identify what we can accomplish this school year, next year or longer term.

Next Meeting: September 20, 7:30am