

Wausau Area Montessori Charter School Governance Council

Minutes of December 19, 2023 Meeting

Attendees:

Alisia Jones
Casey Jensen
Chris Dietsche
Dana Moore

Elizabeth Channel
Kate Schuster
Tyler Berg (5:37)

Excused absence:

Tiffany Rodriguez Lee
Casandra Feidt
Bethany Stookey
Julie Schell

1. Call to order & Welcome

- 5:32 called to order

2. Public comments

- No public comment

3. Approval of previous meeting minutes

- Dana moved to approve the December 5, 2023 special meeting minutes; Casey seconded.
 - The motion passed unanimously with no discussion.

4. Head of School report (Elizabeth Channel)

- Gratitude for our families who continue to want to learn more about Montessori education and what they can be doing at home.
 - Elizabeth is working on adding more information to the Canvas page
- Budget:
 - At end of 2022-2023 Year: -\$ 2,198.99
 - For 2023-2024: \$14,974.00
 - Balance at end of November: \$ 2,565.59
 - A large sum has been spent for MMUN. Payments are coming in to replenish account. All families are paying on time this year. Payments are also being made against last year's deficit (unpaid MMUN balances).
- Prospective family tours in November: 2
- Current enrollment for 2023-24: 101 (80.2% of capacity) – no change from last month. No waitlist at present. A couple families moving to area that are interested in enrolling this year.
 - 12 Kindergarten
 - 16 First Grade
 - 17 Second Grade
 - 18 Third Grade
 - 17 Fourth Grade
 - 10 Fifth Grade
 - 6 Sixth Grade
 - 4 Seventh Grade
 - 1 Eighth Grade

5. District Administration Liaison report (Julie Schell)

- None

6. Faculty/Staff Report (Alisia Jones)

- December to remember dress up days. Competition for the Golden Owl.
- Getting ready for winter break
- Mr. Trueblood's class is doing a puppet show for the school about 'Christmas around the world'.
- E1 will be doing a breakfast on Friday
- Working on getting Montessori on the district facebook page. Ms. Cruz has started a PR committee in her classroom; Ms. Jones will lead.
- Virtue: Peacefulness

7. Parent Connect Report (Dana Moore)

- Checking as of Dec 3 meeting = \$3,819.33 | Savings = \$11.53
- Dip sale (not Parent connect run) for MMUN complete
- Future goal to cover fieldtrip expenses (e.g., grand)
- Will cover bowling night for our students; Bowling date to be confirmed, location Day's Bowl-a-Dome. There will be two shifts of bowling to accommodate an expected larger group.
 - Chris suggested that parents should be notified whenever Parent Connect is covering a cost.
- Looking for a streamlined way for parents to pay for stuff – Melissa found a service (Cheddar Up) that they are looking in to.
 - Elizabeth will check with Kris to see if Infinant canvas could be used to pay for field trips, etc.
- Culver's share night coming up. Will need some volunteers (table and car runners). Date to be confirmed.
 - Dana to check with Melissa on how old volunteers have to be
- Horace Mann 6th grade requested to purchase purchasing popcorn from Parent Connect on December 22.

8. School board report

- December 11 – Montessori requests to stay at Horace Mann approved
 - Timeline update – Montessori @ Horace Mann Design January-June 2024, Bidding July 2024, Construction September 2024-August 2025
 - Original scope for Montessori @ \$5M now expect to cost \$5.6M
- Red Granite proposed to be located at Monk Garden – board gave initial approval / will be sent to full board for approval in January (will lease 2-acres of land from Monk Garden)
 - Kate questioned the grant that Red Granite has received, (are we eligible for one)? Answer: Elizabeth periodically looks for grants that we are eligible for.
- Board recommended to hire a demographer to look at population trends in Wausau post-pandemic
- Dr. Hilts to retire at end of year
 - Dana noted that we should extend gratitude to Dr. Hilts
 - Chris recommended that we get on the agenda to meet with the new superintendent, once chosen

9. Discussion/Action Items

- We need to start working on the academic plan for our 7th and 8th graders (e.g. for discussion: with access to rooms within Horace Mann, do we continue with Allied Programming with Horace Mann or will we provide this in our Montessori curriculum? Currently students pick from the 8th grade offerings: STEM, business ed, tech ed, Art 2D, Art 3D, family and consumer sciences, band, orchestra, choir (not this year as there is no choir director), piano exploitations, guitar exploration . . . 4 per semester. In 8th grade they also have access to foreign language.)
 - Add to the January agenda
- Elizabeth sent email to Tabatha Gunderson about needing an additional E1 teacher next year
- Approved for 4K for next school year.
 - Questions about 4K wrap care (Elizabeth will ask legality, charging, etc.)
- Families have expressed disappointment with framing of our "request to stay at Horace Mann" to school board. Parents wanting more communication from school and Governance Council on our status and what advocacy needs to be done.
 - Elizabeth will post a blurb in our newsletter
- Discussed adding monthly communication to the board (and canvas) from our governance council with highlights from our monthly meetings
 - Add to the January agenda
- Families have raised question about why kids have to stand in line before school rather than play. Reason: Staff found that kids were dis-regulated from morning play and struggled to come into school and settle. Staff could revisit.
- Discussed recess, length of our recess in comparison to other schools in district and how lunch, bathroom and lining up cuts into recess. Much of this is due to Horace Mann schedule.
 - Elizabeth to explore further.
- Desire to push for Elizabeth to become full time head of school next year
 - Add to the January agenda: brainstorm letter of request to the district.
 - Elizabeth needs to do all the material prep. / programming / training
 - Varied development needs of a school with 4K-8 grades
 - After school requirements: 2x PTOs, governances, concerts and gatherings, etc.
- Terms
 - Tiffany has completed her second term
 - need confirmation if she wants to continue to third term
 - Chris – third ends Nov 2024
 - Kate – second term ends April 2025
 - Cassy – second term ends May 2025
 - Dana and Tyler – second term ends Dec 2025
 - Cansandra – first term ends Sept 2024
 - Bethany – first term ends Jan 2025
 - Alicia completed a full term in August, second term ends August 2025
 - need confirmation if she wants to continue

12. Adjourn

- Casey moved to adjourn, Dana seconded.
- The motion passed unanimously with no discussion.
- Meeting ended 7:05