

Coulee Montessori SET Minutes

October 15, 2024 5:30pm @ Coulee Montessori/Northside Library

IN ATTENDANCE (Board Roster):

Kim Shively	Alexis Brandow	Alex Hiller	Sara Horstman	Cami Fuller
Amy Merkey	Kathryn Wiegrefe	Sarah Bradle	Lisa Dillon	Katie Bittner

All present at meeting except: Mariah Bigelow, Val Krage

Other attendees: Ms Nikki (Children's House teacher), Ms Maddie (E1 Teacher), Jenna Anfang

CALL TO ORDER

Public Comment - None scheduled

GOVERNANCE TOPICS

School performance/sharing student work – Staff

-Ms Nikki spoke about Dr Engle visiting her CH classroom. She said this year it's a very busy classroom with challenging behaviors. Some administrators volunteered some hours to help. Dr Engle came during Hmong New Year celebration, and it was nice for the children to have him there. He asked if there was still interest in all-day 4K. Ms Nikki said yes, if there was a full-time assistant in each classroom. 6th graders sometimes come down to help at the end of the day when everyone is packing up, and this is also appreciated very much.

-Ms Maddie said her E1 class has fewer behavioral issues but there is a greater need for an academic focus, with some students behind where they need to be. The increased class size hasn't made it significantly harder in E1 this year.

-E2 has inherited some of the challenging behaviors and is figuring out how to work with that. The new classroom placements for E2 are working out well. Ms Bigelow likes being right by the greenhouse. The school has gotten many plant donations, including several potted trees! SET toured the greenhouse.

Principal Report –Sarah Bradle

-118 students are currently enrolled, down just a few from last year. Each CH classroom can have up to 18 students. A minimum of 25 total CH students would be needed

to keep two classes. If SET were to do any advertising prior to enrollment time, January and March would be ideal times to do so.

- Many kids are coming in with lower life skills and need more help with basic self-help skills in addition to socializing and academic learning.

- Test scores for both reading and math have improved significantly year over year. Work still needs to be done, but it is encouraging to see progress.

- The charter renewal is due in the spring, SET should hear more in the next month and can begin working on it.

- It is likely that the school start times and school calendar will change for the 2025-2026 school year. There is fairly widespread support for it. Changing start times would save the district about \$300,000 in transportation costs annually. Changing the school calendar would allow for more, longer breaks throughout the year. Burnout is high among staff and breaks are important for staff, kids and family.

School Promotions – Kim

- We will be able to open up Children's House summer school preview to anyone in the district. We want to let more people know about kindergarten summer school. This could help summer school numbers as well as potentially get more people to enroll permanently after trying it.

- There was discussion on what the hurdle is for more people not enrolling at Coulee Montessori. Is it because we don't have all-day 4K, or is it because people aren't aware that the school is here and it's free? Flyers and brochures might be helpful to leave in places like the library or Children's Museum, etc. Ms Maddie is willing to help make a flyer. The Torchlight parade was a good way to be visible in the community. We could look for more opportunities similar to that.

PTO TOPICS

Secretary's Report – Kim made a motion to approve minutes from August and September. Cami seconded it, the motion carried.

Treasurer's Report – No current funding requests. Alex made a motion to approve the Treasurer's report. Sara seconded it, the motion carried

Parent-Teacher Conference Meals – Alex is coordinating getting sandwich platters and salads from Lindy's.

Fundraiser – Get Movin' fundraiser produced less than past years, under \$6,000 as of the afternoon of the final day. Some families feel that it's hard to go back to the same people twice a year and simply ask for money. We would like to make a form of thank-you flyer to send to donors so that people know what their money went toward. We could talk more with a fundraiser pro about how to have an effective fundraiser. Maybe do some kind of raffle? Let's brainstorm new ideas.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:24pm.