

Coulee Montessori SET Minutes

Nov 18, 2025 5:30pm @ Central High School Rm 232

IN ATTENDANCE (Board Roster):

Kim Shively	Mariah Bigelow	Amy Merkey	Alex Hiller
Sara Horstman	Ann Epstein	Kathryn Wiegrefe	Alexander Kent
Andy Thomes			

Not present: Lisa Dillon, Sarah Bradle

Other attendees: Ms Jenny (E1 Teacher), Jen Cabassa

CALL TO ORDER

Secretary's Report – Kathryn

Ann made a motion to approve the minutes, Sara seconded, the motion carried.

School Performance/Sharing Student Work – Mariah and Nikki

E1 - Science transition from botany to zoology. living/nonliving; plants/animals; vertebrates/invertebrates

E2 – There are new tables, chairs and shelves in the greenhouse. Kids are always out there and loving that space. The school's Instagram page is CM_Grows. Students post highly entertaining content each week!

Friday Fun Day was great, and everyone had a lot of fun.

Do we want to do more events during the day for families to try to get more engagement from kids? Perhaps our next fun run could be during the day. Is our goal to get more kids involved or more families involved? It was very hard to find a good date for the fun run last time. However, doing it during the day would be much more work for extra games, having 100+ kids rather than the 30 that came to the fun run.

E1 - Aimesweb is for progress monitoring weekly, and standardized testing throughout the year. The kids use paper and then it is entered into the system by a teacher.

E2 - Aimesweb is used as a starting point for book groups and then teachers adjust based on what they know about the students.

Principal Report – Sarah Bradle

There is potential legislation being watched for its impact to Montessori education and certain standards that schools may be required to meet for curriculum. Act 20 required a personal reading plan for kids below 25%. Districts currently must choose specific reading curriculums that are approved and match the state program. If the same thing were to be implemented for math, it would be a great concern. Our math test scores don't reflect as well as we'd like from a testing perspective. Some of the students are opted out of testing, and that is hurting the overall CM score. Perhaps we should advocate for more students to opt in to testing for the benefit of the school. As more develops, perhaps we want to talk to other charter schools to see how we can work together on this if needed.

Districtwide Parents Update – Sara

4K enrollment opens in December, and there was initial discussion on how to promote this program to fill up our Children's House classrooms. This turned to a discussion on the significant behavior challenges that teachers are facing with these students. Having one TA would not be enough if the class size were to increase. Maybe we shouldn't advertise or try to get more students in, unless we get teachers more help or find a way to manage behavior issues. How can we support parents to be more involved, help give them tools on parenting, how to potty train, etc. Make this a breakout group in December and revisit the social/emotional aspect of students as an ongoing issue.

Vote on VP/President-Elect – Kim

Kim makes a motion to approve Sara Horstman as VP, Alex Kent seconds, motion passes. Not sure if we can make her "President Elect" with current bylaws, so we will revisit her becoming President when Kim is ready to step down.

Spanish Offering Follow-up – Kim, Ann, Jen

Jen Cabassa comes in to read and has noticed that students at CM are interested in learning and absorbing foreign language. This gets students interested in other cultures. Start by integrating it through bilingual books in the classroom. Are there any other parents who know Spanish who may be interested in volunteering too? Maybe that's the first step. We have easy access to books, so that's a natural place to start. Three-part cards could also be an easy addition. Volunteers could laminate and cut these. Perhaps a Spanish club could be something to try to add later. Or maybe there is already another school doing this that we could join.

Diaper Drive – Amy

Pre-made posters are available for advertising the diaper drive. We need 1400 diapers by Feb 6th to get the Expo vendor fee paid. Could we make a chart or visual for the classrooms to see progress? The recommended time for the drive is a month. Due to Christmas expenses for families, it may be better received to do this in January after the holidays.

Governance Training Recap – Kim, Amy, Mariah, Sara

Kim, Amy, Mariah and Sara M attended a training meeting and came away from it feeling like SET is doing many things well and has a good structure and strong mission/vision. They recognized that it is important to get in front of the school board and work well with the administrator.

Holiday Store

Donated items are available for students to pick from a “store” at school on December 16 and 17 to give to a family member. Volunteers are needed to help staff the store. There is a sign-up for 1hr slots to help.

PTO TOPICS

Treasurer’s Report – Alex Hiller

Alex will order the things from the teacher’s wish list in the next week or so.

Funding requests for River Falls January 17th conference. SET has paid for teachers to go to that in the past. \$119 per person with early bird discount, otherwise \$179. Mariah may get in free because she is presenting. Madeline, Maddie and Nikki are interested in going. Kim makes motion to approve up to \$357 to go to conference. Alex seconds, motion carries.

Sara Marcou mentioned a public conference in Milwaukee in April that is \$650. This is potentially a future discussion if we would help with that.

E2 students are requesting field trip funds to Hixon House. The total fee is \$120, they are requesting \$60. Approved. SET will cover any shortfall if students aren’t able to fund the rest.

Adjourned at 7:33