

Coulee Montessori SET Minutes

Jan 20, 2026 5:30pm @ Coulee Montessori/Northside Elementary Library

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 Maddie (E1 Teacher), Ms Madeline (CH Teacher)

CALL TO ORDER

Secretary's Report – Ann Epstein

Sara H. made a motion to approve the December minutes. Kathryn seconded; the motion carried.

School Performance/ Sharing student work – Ms Maddie and Ms Madeline

Discussion primarily centered around CH summer school. Ms Madeline and Ms Nikki have decided not to offer it because the last few years it has not had enough children signed up to run it. They would need all their kindergarten students to sign up, which they don't feel is realistic.

We could talk to Administration about the need for support in the summer school classrooms and the importance of being able to run it for school readiness for 4-year olds. Students who have done summer school prior to entering 4K are better prepared and ready to adapt to the classroom environment.

Districtwide Parents Update – Sara

There was discussion of a "Be Here" campaign to reduce screen use and improve children's wellbeing and reduce their anxiety. Perhaps we should make the Soup Supper and Family Nights a phone-free zone to model this. The book "The Anxious Generation" was referenced, and this book speaks of screens and social media's impact on children's mental health. "The Amazing Generation" is a graphic novel for kids, written as a follow-up to that book.

Soup Supper and Montessori Ed Week

We could improve the atmosphere at the Soup Supper by having a jazz trio or something fun off to the side to level things up a bit.

A sign-up will be made for supplies and foods that are easy for volunteers to bring and SET members will plan to be responsible for most of the soups. We could request donations from JavaVino, Pickermans, or other businesses. Amy will reach out to Jen Cabassa to see if she may be willing to help coordinate the sign-up.

We could encourage families to bring their own dishes to reduce waste and provide an incentive like an extra raffle ticket for those who do.

After the soup, there will be different presentations for families to go to. Maybe we could record the Montessori Education presentation to use for promotion afterward. Childcare is helpful during the presentations and a UW-L contact may be able to find college students willing to help out.

4K Enrollment and School Promotion

New video - Nick Marcou will do video work. We should see if we can change Northside/Coulee Montessori to show CM first on the social media sites.

The District will send a postcard on behalf of all charter schools, ours can include a QR code for the soup supper to have it publicized and hopefully bring in some outside people to tour the school and learn more about the Montessori program.

We can ask Pearl Street Books to put a Montessori bookmark in books that are sold during Montessori Ed week. Or have a table of Montessori books in the store to share resources or demonstrate works. Mariah, Sara and Maddie will design a bookmark. At the table, they could also hand out postcards advertising the soup supper.

Website refreshes will be coming in April. We may want to put more information on that if we are going to start linking to it with QR codes on brochures, etc.

Family Fun Fair will be discussed at the February meeting. It is a Community Helpers theme, and we can have a framed photo of our CM teachers at the booth. Kathryn has a drawing box to donate to SET to use for this event or any other purposes and will bring it to the February meeting.

Parent-Teacher Conference Meals

Conferences for CM are March 5 and 9. We could help supply items for a taco bar on March 5, when conferences run from 3-7pm.

School Board Presentations

We could try to get on the School Board Agenda to share for Montessori Ed Week. Mariah also wants to take some students to the April meeting to invite board members to the plant sale. We want to stay top of mind and bring awareness to the board about our school.

February school board meeting dates are the 2nd and 16th. Students could come and share a work to better inform the group about the Montessori Method. They could also invite board members to the Soup Supper. Kim and Sara or Josh could go.

Location for Future Meetings

In February, the SET meeting will be held at the Coulee Montessori/Northside Elementary library again. Beginning in March, we will be back to Central High School.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:04 PM.