

July 31, 2008

ICP Board and MCCS Steering Committee Meeting

Minutes taken by Kathy Brewer.

Convened at 7:10 pm at Muddy Creek Charter School

Payton James-Amberg, Kathleen Westly, Kathy Brewer, Kriste York , Jenny Swanson, Morning McCreary, Juliana Meyner, Melanie Kelly, Shona Trumbly, Alex Collins, Laura Venne, Linda Hentch, Rob Hinton, Mark Hazelton

1. Agenda and meeting minutes

Reviewed the minutes of the July 24 meeting and made corrections. Also, the minutes of the ICP Board meeting that was held July 28 as part of the administrator hiring process were reviewed. Because there was not a quorum of the ICP Board or MCCS Steering Committee, approval of the minutes from these meetings was deferred along with those if the July 10 and July 17 meetings.

2. Enrollment Update

Payton said that letters have been sent to all families that have not submitted their registration information. Assuming that all of the outstanding registrations will be submitted, the current enrollment numbers by grade are:

Kindergarten – 12

Grade 1 – 7

Grade 2 - 8

Grade 3 – 13

Grade 4 – 10

Grade 5 – 7

There are currently 5 children on the kindergarten wait list. As there is now room for all of them in the kindergarten class, there is no need for a lottery.

Action: Kriste will contact kindergarten families on the wait list to let them know there is a spot available for them.

Total enrollment in grades 1-5 is currently 45, we are likely looking at having just two classrooms: a 1-3 class and a 3-5 class.

3. Third Grade Placement Options

Kriste reviewed the teachers' current thoughts on how to place third graders in either the 1-3 class or the 3-5 class. In general, there is a strong desire not to place third graders based on perceived ability as this could stigmatize the third graders that are placed in the 1-3 class. Therefore, as much as possible, it is preferred that the class assignments be random. However, there are some important factors that will be considered with the parents in making placement decisions:

- If a child has a sibling in the 1-2 grades or the 4-5 grades, the parents would be asked if they would prefer that the children be in the same class or in different classes.
- If a child has close friends at the school, this would also be discussed with parents as a consideration in placement.
- The temperament of the child also needs to be considered in terms of how they interact with younger or older children.

There is likely to be concern on the part of parents that third graders placed in 1-3 class will not be sufficiently challenged. Kriste said that she will work to help parents understand how multi-age classrooms work and also how children will be grouped according to ability, regardless of their homeroom assignment, for instruction in key subjects. Based on the current classroom configuration, the staffing plan is to have a teaching assistant who would help with these classroom breakouts.

Juliana asked if it would be possible for there to be fundraising by the parents to pay for a part time dedicated third grade teacher. It was decided that at this point it would be difficult to do that fundraising and get someone hired in time to start with that staffing at the beginning of the school year. However, the possibility of fundraising to supplement budget available for salaries will be considered further for possible later implementation.

The possibility of a K-1 split was also raised. There was some discussion about the special needs of kindergarteners and how it is difficult to meet the needs of low end kinders in a K-1 class.

Action: Kriste to prepare an email to go out to all MCCS families with information on multiage classrooms and how the process for determining third grade placements. Kathy will send out the email to the distribution and mail hard copies of the message and the article to families that do not have email.

Action: Kriste to prepare a survey for the third grade families that would solicit information to be considered in placement decisions. This will go out after the first email.

Action: Kriste to schedule meeting for third grade families to discuss classroom placement process.

4. Budget Review

Mark reviewed the G1 draft budget. Because there was not a quorum of the ICP Board present, the budget revisions could not be approved. The board will review the budget in more detail over email and approve when a quorum can be convened.

Action: ICP Board will meet to approve budget so needed purchases can be authorized.

Budget available for carpet cleaning was discussed. Payton said that is not clear that this is an expense that can be paid for from the grant. It is desirable to have carpets cleaned the week of August 4 as the teachers are out the classrooms at a workshop.

Action: Payton will check with ODE about whether carpet cleaning service can be charged to the grant as part of the building preparation.

Action: Jenny Swanson will get some estimates for having the carpets cleaned.

We need to get US and Oregon flags for the school. We should be able to get them donated.

Action: Alex Collins will followup on getting flags donated to the school.

5. Library Report

Melanie presented the cost estimate for a library check out system that Jen ??? put together.

Summarize....

Shona said that the advantage of getting the “plus” system is that volunteers can catalog new books at home and then import the data into the library system. This would likely increase the number of volunteer hours for library support.

All of these types of systems have a yearly maintenance fee. Shona also said that it should be confirmed how book catalog information can be imported from existing databases.

Action: Jennifer to followup on additional questions about the library check out system.

6. Administrator Hiring

Four candidates for the MCCA administrator position were interviewed on July 28. There is one more candidate that was not available that day who will be interviewed on Saturday, August 2. As part of their meeting on July 28, the ICP Board authorized the hiring committee to proceed with a hiring decision after that interview.

7. Furniture Donation Update

Alex said that the furniture being donated by the Portland business (what is it??) will be ready for moving the last week in August. Moving costs are estimated to be less than \$500. As this is fully depreciated furniture, there is no write-off for the business. The recommendation was made that as a thank you MCCA prepare a plaque or some other item that can be displayed by the business as token of our appreciation.

Action: MCCA Steering Committee to prepare a thank you gift for _____ for the furniture donation.

8. Marketing Plan

Kathleen said that MCCA will have an ad in the fall education guide that will run in the Albany Democrat Herald (Aug 5), the Gazette-Times (Aug 6), and in both on August 10. Anita had also placed an add in the August Thymes at First Alternative Co-op.

Other suggestions for advertising were Our Town, Valley Parent, and the area Moms magazine. There was some discussion about how much time/resources we have right now for advertising giving everything that needs to be done in the next month to get the school started. Once the school is up and going, it will be easier to demonstrate its value to prospective families. The general thought was that for now we need to just work with the enrollment numbers we have and move forward, with a goal of a coordinated marketing effort for the next open enrollment period which will start in November 2008 (transfer deadline January 2009).

Action: Make a decision regarding classroom configurations at next Thursday's meetings. Need to make sure all parents know this is on the agenda, so in addition to email we need to call parents who don't have email.

9. Stove Update

The commercial stove donated by HP was moved today!!! Thanks to Mark Meyer for providing his trailer and expertise for transport.

10. Grant Updates

Payton contacted the Clemons Foundation and is not clear when they will meet to make a decision on our grant request for the cafeteria tables. So she is proceeding with ordering the tables and has put the cost back into the charter startup grant. If the Clemons Foundation does come back with approval we will discuss the possibility of using those funds for another purpose at MCCS.

Leah, Payton, and others worked together to submit a grant for funding field trips to the Grey Family Foundation.

11. Extended Care Update

Morning provided a draft of the Kindergarten extended care contract for review.

Action: ICP Board to review Kindergarten extended care contract and get comments back to Morning.

Action: Morning to provide afternoon extended care contract for review.

12. Recordkeeping Update

Linda Hentch said that she reviewed the enrollment records and it is clear that MCCS is drawing from a wide range of families, including homeschoolers and families outside of the Corvallis School District.

She is focusing on getting the recordkeeping structure set up so that we will be ready on day 1 to take attendance. Other details will be worked out once the office assistant is hired.

13. Curriculum Update

Kriste said that the teachers had decided on the Bridges Math curriculum and it has been ordered. They will be working to finalize the plan for literacy instruction and will be ordering that material as well.

The teachers have prepared a thematic rotation for the general science themes. The initial focus will be on the immediate local area. One idea is to develop a field guide to the Muddy Creek school campus, detailing the animals and plants and land features present. From there they would move out into the watershed.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:12 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 pm.