

**Monocacy Montessori Communities, Incorporated (MMCI) Board of Trustees (BOT)**

**Wednesday, May 30, 2018 @ MVMPCS, 217 Dill Ave., Frederick**

**BOT members in attendance:** Amy Duvall (President), Kathleen Lutrell (Vice President @MVM), Kevin Wilfong (Treasurer), Melissa Najera (Assistant Treasurer), Molly Spence (Secretary), Lisa McCrohan (Parent Trustee @CCM), Deb Korth (Parent Trustee @MVM), Jeff Koehler (Parent Trustee @MVM), Matthew Mills (Parent Trustee @CCM), Libby Miller (Friend of Education); Ellie Landru (GC Chair @MVM), Molly Carlson (GC Chair @CCM).

**BOT members absent:** Analiese Kennedy (Parent Trustee @CCM), Jonathan Phillips (Parent Trustee @MVM).

**Regular Meeting Agenda**

**1. Call to Order/Welcome (MMCI BOT President Amy Duvall) (7:05 p.m.)**

**2. Community Comments (7:05-7:33 p.m.)**

*Comments summarized:*

Bonnie White, parent at CCM: Came to discuss incident at CCM. She says there was been a conspicuous lack of communication; more communication could have prevented things from escalating. Communication needs to be examined and addressed at CCM. Her concern is for the safety and wellbeing of her children and other children at the school, and to provide that, parents need information. She wants to know that the school will inform parents of any events that have the potential to harm children in any way. She requests this information in a timely manner so parents can make decisions. She wants to know that the school will protect and advocate for its students. She asks the BOT to please examine decisions made during the event at CCM. She is willing to help in any way she can.

Jennifer Knowles, parent at CCM: Sent an e-mail earlier today to the BOT, and therefore will not repeat all of her comments. She copied FCPS officials on the email and knows there is a lot of fear in her doing that, but she has concerns because she also values CCM and she would not have sent the e-mail she did not think it was important. CCM is part of FCPS and the school system has a lot of resources and experience with the sort of thing that happened at CCM. She wants the incident to be looked at objectively and not with fear. She wants to establish trust in the system at CCM.

Echo Morris, parent of four students at CCM: She said her goal, and the goal of other parents she has spoken with, is to give students a voice. She is interested in correcting communication, reestablishing trust and establishing clear avenues for students to address their needs. She said she does not want to chastise students or staff or to remove any staff from their positions at the school.

Chrissi Lillard, parent at CCM: *Read aloud letters from anonymous parent and two anonymous students at CCM expressing concerns about incident at CCM.* She stated that the biggest thing in her opinion is to restore the trust in the kids. "I truly believe that the principal has everyone's best interests at heart. I think she was trying to do the best thing for the child in question, but as a result she did not serve the children in that room who were being affected by hearing about suicide and other issues." She has sent a list of issues she would like to be addressed to CCM BOT Vice President Liz Seal. She is seeking an impartial investigation to help the school understand how to handle situations like this in the future. "We don't have both side of the information so how can we make a judgment about whether everything was done safely for our kids?"

Eric Riccio, parent of two CCM students, and a staff member at CCM: He said he takes security very seriously at the school, and understands the concerns and hears the concerns from parents. He has spoken to a lot of parents who have called him following the incident at CCM. He believes everything was handled to the best of the staff's ability at the time, even though he said he does not have all the details. "Being a special education teacher I do know how hard it is to work with certain individuals. It is very difficult to judge any situation, and to get every situation right is nearly impossible." Moving forward he asked if there was an independent review done, who would be able to do such a thing?

Amy Duvall, parent of 2 CCM students (one is a middle-schooler) and MMCI BOT President: She has heard many different details about the situation from her son, who is in the room where the incident happened. She said

there are multiple sides to the story of what happened in the room, and understanding all of those viewpoints is important to the thought process of how to deal with the situation moving forward.

### **3. Consent Agenda Items (7:34 p.m.)**

a) April 2018 meeting minutes

*E-vote passed on 5/7/18*

b) E-vote to reimburse MVM principal for \$121.36 difference between approved hotel expenditure and final bill from Montessori conference

*E-vote passed on 5/3/18*

### **4. Mindful Communication Moment (Lisa McCrohan) (7:35 p.m.)**

*Four phrases for our children and our community: May we be safe, may we be happy, may we be healthy, and may we live and make policies and express them in ways that are with ease.*

### **5. Reports (7:36 p.m.)**

CCMPCS VP Report (Liz Seal): *Lead testing is scheduled for June 5, and will be compliant with new state legislation.*

*CCM had a lot of parent conversations and dialogue around the perceived safety incident in our middle school the week of May 13. There was a very productive safety meeting held at CCM on May 23 and parents were given a lot of information at that meeting. In addition, some parents feel that their concerns continue to go unheard. She has encouraged these parents to come to the GC and/or BOT with additional concerns so that they can be addressed by leadership to the best of their abilities. She received direct communication from one CCM parent, Chrissi Lillard, which is included as an addendum to this report.*

*The CCM Spanish Language Task Force continues to work to inventory materials and come up with strategies to improve the Spanish language program in the coming years. There will be an additional meeting in June during which the task force will work to further define the Spanish program strategic plan. The BOT will receive additional updates as these items are completed.*

*End of Year Staffing Update: CCM has hired Katie Mosquera, a current upper elementary teacher, to be the new Montessori resource teacher. Michael Beth Edwards, current IA in that classroom, has been hired to replace Katie Mosquera. Ms. Therese, another upper elementary teacher, will switch to a lower elementary classroom that is being vacated by Mrs. Montalvo. Mr. Erard will be leaving CCM upper elementary, as his family is moving out of state in August. There two other upper elementary rooms currently open for a teaching position in the fall. Staffing Committee continues to work on staffing these classes with excellent candidates. CCM's special education teacher Ms. Curtin will also be leaving the school after this school year. This position and a 0.5 special education position are both in the interview process.*

MVMPCS VP Report / MVM Building Project Update (Kathleen Lutrell): *Following the recent rains, there has been some flooding at MVM, principally affecting the multi-purpose room, one Lower Elementary classroom, the Lower Elementary boy's bathroom and a small section of the hallway in Lower Elementary. The issues have been discussed with MVM's landlord, and extra expenses have been budgeted for in the school's budget. Regarding the MVM building project, there is an initial renovation estimate now completed for the Banner School property. We advised that we wanted this estimate to cover all worst-case scenarios. It came in at \$3.3 million, which is still do-able and in our budget, depending on the price we can work out for purchasing the building and property. A committee meeting and a building/property tour of the Banner School site will occur in June.*

BOT Treasurer Report (Kevin Wilfong): *The MMCI bookkeeper's laptop is down; no data is believed to be lost. We are in the process of MMCI insurance renewal, with more details to come at later meetings.*

### **6. Updates**

CCM update (GC Chair Molly Carlson): *MMCI has contracted with Clubhouse Kids to provide Before and After Care starting in Fall 2018. CCM has initiated a lead water test per FCPS requirements, working with*

*Fredericktowne Labs. CCM is exploring the addition of a Raptor Visitor Management System. A community meeting addressing topics of School Safety was held on May 23; notes from the meeting are being distributed to parents and the GC and school staff will hold a follow-up meeting on June 5 from 4-5pm.*

CCM update (Principal Marilyn Horan) – *Have hired special education staff, will be at school next week. Middle school teachers got \$15,000 grant for Chesapeake Bay trip to take some middle school students. PARCC is finished. Spanish assessment upcoming. Field Day completed.*

MVM update (GC Chair Ellie Landru): *The GC plans to work with middle school students and staff to look at the school's dress code policy. Follow-up will be done by an MVM work group. The intention is to empower the students to work on addressing concerns and figuring out how or whether to change the dress code policy. The GC is encouraging students to follow a clear path to teachers first, then to administration, and then to the Governing Council.*

MVM update (Principal Nancy Radkiewicz): *PARCC assessments are now complete. Ms. Amy's Lower Elementary class was displaced by floodwaters for one week. Students did work in the sanctuary and were also hosted in other Lower Elementary rooms. All 8<sup>th</sup> graders took a special trip to Chincoteague recently. The middle school semi-formal dance is to be held on June 1. There will again be a movie night fundraiser on the last day of school, June 15. Incoming students and their families have also been invited to the event.*

Safety Committee (Deb Korth): No updates.

Fundraising Committee (Analiese Kennedy): Absent, no report sent.

Legislative Committee (Matt Mills): *PARCC testing was scheduled on the same date as Take Your Child to Work Day – plan to make someone in Annapolis aware of this.*

Grants Committee (Jeff Koehler):

*MVM is now at Level 5 for MD EXCELS, and CCM was approved last month. The certifications last until 2019.*

*MMCI: MD Charter School Program - up to \$900k available, but we need to expand our student population by at least 30% or start another school.*

*CCM: Fender Grant (Desiree submitted/awarded; reports due 31 May 2018); \$800 - report done  
Gladhill Grant (Sarah Shriner submitted/awarded; report due 25 May 2018); \$800 - will be submitted ASAP  
Dollar General Literacy (Desiree submitted, Kristine administering; report in May 2018); \$4,000 - report done  
Patterson Grant (Desiree submitted)  
KaBOOM Community Build Playgrounds (Desiree investigating)*

*MVM: Gladhill Grant (Jen Anderson submitted/awarded; report due 25 May 2018); \$800  
Aldi Smart Kids (Jen Anderson submitted)  
Fender Grant (Ms Shannon investigating with Jeff)*

## **7. Discussion/Action Items (8:13 p.m.)**

### **Discussion: CCM student security meeting results (Liz Seal)**

*CCM's Governing Council did a lot of work during the week of the incident at CCM and the week following to inform the community about what happened. There was a sheriff's corporal as well as FCPS liaison Mark Pritts paired with the school principal and school counselor all present at a meeting with parents. A lot of concerns were addressed by police as well as the staff and the GC; however, there are still parents who are concerned about safety at the school. There is also a meeting planned this week between the staff and GC; the hope is that everyone can get on the same page and we can figure out how to better resource our staff to deal with incidents.*

Amy Duvall presented a chart/workflow to help address issues. It is a working document, with opportunities to add resources and follow-ups. (See attachment)

**Discussion: Nominating Committee** (Amy Duvall)

We need volunteers to join this committee, looking ahead to elections in November. A recruitment process needs to happen in the summer. Molly Spence will start putting a committee together to include at least 5 members: 2 BOT members, and at least one member from each school. She will also survey current GC members and BOT members who are leaving their positions about their roles and expectations.

**Discussion/Vote: Lottery Committee Proposal to Hire New MMCI Lottery Vendor** (Melissa, Kevin, Molly)

The MMCI Lottery Committee was briefed on research completed by Melissa, Kevin, Molly and David Henry, a parent at MVM who is serving as the current Lottery liaison. The group gave an explanation about why they believe that Smart Choice Technologies should be hired as the new vendor for MMCI's lottery.

**MOTION** by Kevin Wilfong: I move to accept the lottery application search committee's recommendation of Smart Choice Technologies to become the new lottery vendor, with the upfront costs paid from MMCI savings up to \$8,000 and annual fees of up to \$6,500, to be shared from each school's Admin Fee. **SECOND** by Amy Duvall. All members present in favor. **MOTION PASSED.**

**Discussion/Vote: MMCI Cash Flow Policy** (Kevin): There has been discussion about the formation of an MMCI Emergency Fund. Discussion occurred at April BOT meeting. The idea was Kevin was pulling \$200,000 from MMCI funds to create an emergency fund, and then reconcile the account and give excess over \$200,000 as a refund back to each school. The emergency fund would help MMCI cover any type of major facility issue, payroll if needed. Pushing the overage back to the schools would be in the hopes that they would put it into their facilities funds because both schools have facilities goals. The intention is to take all of the unassigned cash and put it all into an "emergency fund to be used for items deemed critical or urgent by the BOT." This gives some flexibility as to its use. It would be in a money market account, so it is able to be accessed quickly. At the end of the year there will be a reconciliation of all admin fees and refunds given back into schools' savings. There needs to be a formal description of what the MMCI Emergency Fund is for; Kevin will formulate a policy and email to the BOT for an e-vote.

**MOTION** by Amy Duvall at 10 p.m.: Proceed into closed session discussion. **SECOND** by Molly. All in favor.

**7. Announcements**

1. Upcoming MMCI Business Meetings (held at 7PM the FINAL Wednesday of each month):
  - June 27 @ CCM
  - July meeting cancelled
  - August 29 @MVM
  - September 26 @ CMM
2. Minutes and Agendas may be found online at <http://mmcimd.org/calendar/>