

MEHP Governance Board Meeting

September 15, 2021

9:30am – Montessori Elementary at Highland Park

MINUTES

Board Members Present – Shewanee Howard-Baptiste, Dawn Bullard, Keith King, Hal North, Keith Sanford, Susan Stein, Tammy Swenson, Jo Ann Yates (all virtual), Sue Anne Wells (in person)

Staff Present: Sandra Baker, Jeanne Hinchee, Mary Margaret Sullivan, Elaine Swafford

I. Welcome & Reminders – Sue Anne Wells

The meeting was called to order at 9:33am.

- Sue Anne welcomed the Board. She stated the organization has \$4 million left to raise on the MEHP capital campaign. She also reminded the Board to complete the Board on Track courses in order to be compliant with the state. Sue Anne also stated that Edna Varner has an idea to get through the sessions. Please check with her for suggestions.
- Minutes Approval for July 21 meeting: Hal North motioned to approve. Shewanee Howard-Baptiste seconded. All voted in favor to approve the July minutes.

II. MEHP Teacher Presentations: Marie Nelson, Molly McDaniel

- Marie Nelson is a Pre-K and kindergarten teacher at MEHP. She spoke to the Board about her professional background and how she arrived at Montessori education. Marie explained the Association of Montessori Internationale (montessori-ami.org) training and described Montessori education like a house, meaning it is important to first build the foundation and then the walls, then the counter top and wall décor, step by step. Marie is a mentor for teachers in training at MEHP. She invited board members to visit her classroom.
- Molly McDaniel is a lower elementary teacher who came to MEHP from Chattanooga Charter School of Excellence. She is currently completing her Montessori training which consists of 10-15 hours per week. The training is a mix of live classes, video lectures, reading and discussion boards, similar to earning a Masters Degree. Molly will also be attending her second residency this upcoming summer to continue her training.
 - Shewanee asked Molly about assessments for students. Molly stated that students in her class complete weekly spelling inventories. Some classes are

completing a Montessori math assessment. Other classes are completing the I-Ready assessment this week.

III. Director's Report - Dr. Swafford

- Dr. Swafford opened by welcoming board members to come visit the school.
- Academic Report
 - Montessori education has a major focus on classroom materials. There is currently a staging room upstairs in the building where teachers continue to unload supplies.
 - MEHP students will complete their benchmark assessment twice, in December and March. Project Coach Training is currently taking place to observe teachers. Dr. Swafford stated that MEHP is focused on introducing new students to Montessori education while making sure teachers do not hold back the more advanced students.
- Legislative Update
 - On October 1, the annual report is due for the Tennessee Charter School Association.
 - The MEHP building was built for 450-480 students total. The administrative team wrote the charter for 24 children in each classroom with one lead teacher and assistant.
 - The Tennessee Charter School Association meetings are open to the public. Visit [Tennessee Charter Schools | NCSRC \(ed.gov\)](https://www.tncharter.org/) to learn more.
- School Events
 - Highland Park Grammar Reunion: October 22 from 5-7pm
 - Reading Day hosted by the Junior League of Chattanooga: October 28, 3:30-4:40
 - 5th grade girls are participating in the following programs:
 - Kids in the Kitchen, a healthy eating and cooking class series taught by Junior League members
 - Girls on the Run, a national program that teaches social-emotional health and physical health as girls prepare to run or walk a 5K
 - Girls Inc, a national program focused on positive character development
- Medical update
 - Due to the COVID delta variant, MEHP briefly shut down a 2nd grade classroom for a week. There was an uptick in cases during the month of August, as expected. Currently, there are 4 cases.
- Student Needs
 - Students at MEHP are in need of school clothing, especially navy blue and khaki pants, and additional school supplies. For donations, please email marysullivan@cglonline.com.
- IT & Tech
 - Chromebooks were distributed to 5th grade girls.

- Title I Funding
 - There are 204 students at MEHP as of now.
 - Demographics: Asian 1%, Black/African American 50%, Hispanic/Latino 16%, Two or more races 2%, White 31%
 - MEHP is required to have 104 students who are considered low income in order to be considered Title I. Hamilton County will ask for that exact number in October. The MEHP Human Resources team is working on tracking the final number.
 - Susan Stein asked how the school plans to recalibrate if it does not meet this metric for Title I. Dr. Swafford answered that they will have more boots on the ground in November during recruitment season and additional paper applications to neighborhoods and community centers in low-income areas.
 - There are only 19 bus riders at this point, so MEHP is only paying for one bus.
- Hiring:
 - MEHP is currently recruiting for an Assistant Principal and 1 lead teacher for 2nd grade in order to be fully staffed.

IV. Finance Report- Jeanne Hinchee

- Jeanne Hinchee reported that MEHP is currently ordering classroom supplies, but overall, the school is below budget in expenses.

V. Closing Remarks and Adjournment

- The next Board meeting will take place on November 17 at 9:30am.
- The academic committee meeting will meet before November 17 to review data and observe classrooms. Sue Anne needs to receive possible dates from Stacey and Shewanee for the meeting.
- Meeting was adjourned at 10:16am.