

Academic Practices Team Mtg - 12/10/24

Committee Members: Meghan Booth, Kim Bell, Angela Kaul, Kris Swogger, Anna Aarre, Amy Schillerstrom

Bluffview Montessori Vision Statement

Empowered learners unfolding their full potential as whole and unique persons in a global community.

Bluffview Montessori Mission

Bluffview Montessori School empowers self-directed learning through a materials-based Montessori curriculum that encourages independence and natural curiosity. Bluffview cultivates learners' deep respect for self, community, and a peaceful environment, while nourishing the intrinsic desire for academic, civic, and personal fulfillment.

Attendance: Meghan Booth, Kim Bell, Angela Kaul, Kris Swogger, Amy Schillerstrom, Mariah White, Shelly Merchelwitz, Kiersten Porter, Kayla Steinfeldt, Pat Hohensee, Linda Salzmann, Casey Johnson, Randi Smith, Anna Aarre

Topic	Responsible	Notes	Minutes from meeting
WELCOME! Circle Chat		To empower all voices that are present and create shared ownership and accountability in our committee work.	
Check in <ul style="list-style-type: none">Share a thorn and rose from this week or last week<ul style="list-style-type: none">thorn: something bothering you, frustrating, exhausting, etc.Rose: something positive, hopeful, excited about, etc.)You may share in any order you wish			
Classroom Supports			
Teachers report back regarding level discussions on areas of most needed support <ul style="list-style-type: none">Homework for PLC --- Prioritizing needs for learning.... Math facts, spelling, writing, independent work skillsAcademic behaviors such as work refusal?What is the team lead responsible vs what is the mentor responsible? - Mentor/Mentee discussion Conversation <ul style="list-style-type: none">CH - priorities<ul style="list-style-type: none">Writing, tracing<ul style="list-style-type: none">Metal insetsHand eye coordinationPractical life (strengthening of hands)Retention of soundsPerseverance is decreasing, lack of I want to and I will give it a try; increase in arguing			

- RTI
 - Difficult to do in the classrooms (led by teacher)
 - Students are not pulled
 - Noticing gaps from K to 1st
 - K is more materials/process and 1st is more paper format
 - K is more concrete and 1st is more abstract
 - K doesn't have tests (spelling tests) whereas 1st does
 - K does work plans and 1st does dailies (not understanding how dailies are the priority over follow ons)
 - Looking for a buffer for a way to show students' performance (observation only right now)
- E1 - priorities
 - Reading and Writing as a strong base because it's in all areas
 - Spelling and spelling patterns
 - Use resources
 - Problem solve
 - Transitions from one level to another, reteaching
- E2 - priorities
 - Writing a concern
 - Organization and mechanics in writing
 - Math varies by grade/group
 - Independence, accountability, trying before asking
- ErdK - priorities
 - Writing
 - Work refusal (higher when writing is being asked)
 - Stamina
 - Spelling
 - Math facts and fluency
 - How to think as opposed to relying on others (adults, google); wanting them to think through and problem solve
- Thoughts
 - At every level writing and thinking were mentioned
 - K doesn't do a lot of writing, retention isn't strong and a lot of reteaching needs to be done on the basics instead of moving forward (extra work for the students because they need to be retaught it)
 - Some K students take all year to learn the sounds so they aren't reaching the point where E1 teachers are expecting them to be coming in
 - What do dailies look like now since a change has been made?
 - Difference in where students are expected to be vs where they are actually at; now at the lowest in their classroom which leaves some of them overwhelmed
 - Not able to put their thoughts together to be able to share with anyone
 - Taking the time to teach the lessons each day (math, reading, writing) and how to collectively assess; how to fit it into their day; teaching them how to present their work and critique each other's work
 - Montessori writing vs rules of writing and allowing creative writing
 - Difficult to combine the state standards and meeting the child where they are at, especially for those who are behind
 - Seeing less willingness to persevere through explicit teaching is happening (students' attention to detail without the complaining and attitude); less effort, pride in their work
 - How would we collect data around writing (writing interventions)? What do we need from teachers?
 - Data Team's Assignment
 - What are you doing to prepare them for writing for the next level? What are you needing from the next level in terms of writing skills? What is the definition of writing (does it look different at every level)? When are they allowed free writing (isn't critiqued) and when are they being assessed on it? Create rubrics for each grade level that show what you expect each incoming level to know and shows where each incoming student is at at the end of the school year?
 - Academics Team Assignment

- Pat shared
 - She has two years of MCA math data, the following is from last year (2024)
 - 3rd grade students - the data shows 59% of students in the state scored in the proficient category; 61% of our students scored in the proficient category
 - Number and Operations, More or Less - seems there may not have been enough questions asked to get data on how well students did in these areas
 - 4th grade students - the data shows 57% of students in the state scored in the proficient category; 46% of our students scored in the proficient category
 - Number and Operations was an area that was noted as being particularly low for students
 - 5th grade students - the data shows 44% of students in the state scored in the proficient category; 54% of our students scored in the proficient category
 - 6th grade students - the data shows 40% of students in the state scored in the proficient category; 43% of our students scored in the proficient category
 - Geometry and Measurement and Probability were areas that were noted as being particularly low for students
 - 7th grade students - the data shows 40% of students in the state scored in the proficient category; 38% of our students scored in the proficient category
 - That group has been low consistently over the years
 - In the subcategory, Number and Operations, 52% of students are in the below expectation category
 - Data and Analysis was low subcategory as well
 - Group agrees that these things are what our students are struggling with
 - Check to see if those who are low (4th graders) are consistently low over the years (similar to the 7th graders)
 - Which groups participated in the Reading Groups and Math Groups?
 - Math may also be the vocabulary which comes back to the reading and writing (ex sum and product, borrow and regrouping); story problems are an issue all over; looking at and reading all of the parts of the problem
 - Begin learning names of geometric shapes in K, but still struggle in E1 when it's retaught (part of the caring about their own learning piece?)

[Sentence Prompts for I Don't Know](#)

[Survey around academic behavior](#) --- is this worth sending out? Would you add or strike anything?

Mentee/Mentor
Program

One of the main tasks that has been asked of us this year is to review and adjust the Mentor/Mentee handbook/program.

- Focus for this month is trying to divide tasks that should/could be handled by a lead teacher in a level and what should be handled with a mentor.

[Mentor Handbook](#) -- Start at page 21 and go through task lists

[Mentee Handbook](#) --

Any new business?

If time Gradebooks -

Do levels have a consistent system for monitoring student mastery or does each teacher have their own system?

There was discussion about a Montessori Gradebook at one point. What was the hope/desire for wanting an online system?

What System was used at River Falls.... Remind us why it was not a favored program.			
Next Month			
January - Academic behaviors such as work refusal?			
Closing			

Notes:

- We did not get to the Handbook or New Business in this meeting. Those will be moved to the January agenda. For notes on item one see above. :)