

Academic Practices Team Mtg - 1/14/24

Committee Members: Meghan Booth, Kim Bell, Angela Kaul, Kris Swogger, Amy Schillerstrom, Henry Schantzen, Mariah White, Sherry Lohmeyer and guest

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:

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">What type of learner are you?<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ex: Auditory/Visual/Kinesthetic			
Classroom Supports			
Follow Up <ul style="list-style-type: none">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?<ul style="list-style-type: none">CH - recognizing letters and sounds (removable alphabet), tracing, CVC and moving into longer words by the end of K; focus on sounds first, then coding blending, grammar; using materials; preparing for the next level by practicing and increasing stamina; students are writing in the air, followed by on white boards, then paper once all cursive letters have been taught<ul style="list-style-type: none">Follow up on kindergarten standards for writing, what do they say and how are they being taught at their level, is the physical act of using paper and pencil or using the movable alphabet equate to writing a sentenceE1 - have noticed there isn't stamina, and cannot recall how to form the letters on paper when they come into E1; act of using paper and pencil is writing to communicate ideas, including grammar, complex sentences into paragraphs, using a variety of word choice; focus on letters and sounds along with handwriting; handwriting and cursive is reviewed in 2nd and 3rd as well; traits of writing, editing phases, step by step directions; preparing is through stamina, redirecting toward thesaurus,			

rewriting; wanting to know phonemes identify letters and write them, write simple sentences, spaces between their words, spell first and last name, compose sentence; free writing through journal with minimal feedback, May Display goes through editing phases with the most feedback

- Follow up - are they being asked to use cursive throughout (an ongoing conversation), why continue teaching cursive if they aren't going to be using it beyond E1; some are transfers coming in at the E2 or ErdK level
- E2 - being able to express thoughts on paper in a readable and coherent manner (someone else can understand your thoughts); focus on spelling, grammar, syntax; starting basic with 4th graders (what is a sentence and such) and reviewing for 5th graders that need it; offer feedback on basic mechanics in journals (caps and punct); Kim allows them a total freewrite that isn't even reading it and getting positive feedback from her students on this; explicit types of writing; 6th do opinion/persuasive writing and get feedback on that; lots of scaffolding to learn the revision process which is difficult for them to understand they may need to work on editing several times; culture and science works have reading/responding which isn't getting corrected for spelling but is corrected for clear communication; 5th graders are working toward 3 paragraphs and 6th graders are working toward 5 paragraphs
- ErdK - pushing them on communicating a complete thought and why they gave that response in writing; 6 traits of writing is their focus, including essay structure; types of writing so students do more than one formal writing process; informal is through journals (prompts given if they choose to use), set a time for them to write to build writing stamina which is not graded other than if they wrote the whole time and if they followed a clear thought within their writing (no spelling or other feedback is given); struggle with plagiarism and using words they don't understand (copy/paste), grammar; citing sources
- Homework - talk about cursive at your level
 - Is K the best place to teach cursive? If you are going to make a change, what would that change be? Why are those levels who don't require it, choose not to?

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?
 - MRX tested in river falls, did not like it because.....
 - Our language didn't match the system's language
 - Too cumbersome, heard not top choice from others as well
 - Different Montessori gradebook will be previewed
 - If it's simple and easy to follow, there is some interest (if it follows the student); not interested in quantifying everything
- What System was used at River Falls.... Remind us why it was not a favored program.

Transparent Classroom -- option for a gradebook

Academic Behavior -

Survey sent out on Monday, will review results next meeting

- Academic behaviors such as work refusal?

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](#) --

Professional Development

- **List of trainings for new staff**
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- **Which ones should be covered during a new staff training during or before workshop week?**
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- **Which ones should be covered during mentoring training?**
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Any new business?			
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[National Conferences](#)

- Is there a preference over teammates or different levels?
 - No preference there are pros and cons either way
 - Most conferences provided recordings to share back with teams if needed/Wanted
- Should preference be given to fully licensed staff?
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- Does there need to be a spring and winter form due date?
- Virtual Conferences

Next Month			
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February

- **Cursive conversation**

Closing			
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Notes:

