

Family & Community Engagement Committee

Date: 11.11.2025

Committee Co-chairs: Mariah White and Drew Althoff

Committee Members: Megan Baker-Hunger, Chris Dubis, Savana Johnson, Heidi Meyer, Tina Smith, Marlie Voigt

Vision Statement

To foster strong and sustained connections with families and community partners to best serve BMS students.

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.

Goal Focuses

- Community outreach and public relations
- Volunteer recruitment and retention
- Family/Parent/Guardian events at BMS
- Increasing attendance at student conference nights
- Staff and student wellness
- Wellness policy review and compliance

ATTENDING: Chris, Marlie, Megan, Tina, Savana, Mariah, Drew

Topic
CIRCLE CHECK-IN
• What's been one of your favorite moments of the day?
AGENDA
1. New approach to our time together: <u>Committee Norms</u> 2. Need someone to step up and take notes for minutes 3. Breads and Spreads RECAP 4. Happy Harvest (signup for donations and school calendar) 5. RP Events ACTION TEAM 6. New Families ACTION TEAM
QUESTIONS FOR TODAY
Starting today, our new Committee Norms: ☐ Be prompt and prepared ☐ Laptops to meetings for work in action teams ☐ Discussions will be done in circle format so everyone gets a chance to speak and be heard ☐ Assume positive intent and accept non-closure

DISCUSSION/CIRCLE:

B&S Recap:

1. Based on feedback we received, do we need to revamp/change the approach to B&S?
 - a. IDEA: First half of event is guided open house / last half is community time

Happy Harvest:

1. Who will get a signup for donations out to all staff/all school?
2. Who will get the event on the school calendar?
3. What do we already have from previous years?

ACTION TEAMS:

RP Events: contingent on grant funding unless we fundraise

1. How many events and when?
2. What will the themes be?
3. How do we want to construct scripts and then practice with Erdkinders?
4. What resources do we need to tap into for speakers / event conversations?
5. Do we need/want to recruit volunteers for events?
6. What about child care and food?

New Families:

1. What will our committee send to new families when they join BMS?
2. How do we spread the message to new parents that we need their support?
3. How do we engage new parents to volunteer at school?
4. What else do we want to start with?

ANSWERS / ACTION ITEMS

**** Person(s) responsible for the action are listed next to the item. If no name is listed, it's an idea for further discussion. A strikethrough means it's been completed.**

COMMITTEE NORMS:

Group agreed to new committee norms

OPEN HOUSE:

Group agreed to revamp our approach to open house

- Need better and earlier communication about event (more about open house, less about food donations)
- Would like to combine it with Back-to-school BBQ
 - Rebrand it from Breads and Spreads to just be an open house in connection with BBQ
- If a standalone event, it would be best split up as:
 - First half, students guide parents at open house / last half, food and community

HAPPY HARVEST:

Group agreed that we need to focus on making this event more meaningful for students

~~ACTION: Talk with Sherry about what needs to go out to families (DREW)~~

- Sherry will get what we need to send out organized and we will get something out to families by end of this week (done through Signup Genius)
- Teachers need to update the spreadsheet to include their projects and supplies needed

RP EVENTS ACTION TEAM (breakout):

Group agreed to focus on hosting two events throughout the school year

- One January and one April
- Themes will be Technology Use and Wellness (respectively)
- We need to get volunteers for child care
- We need to arrange Erdkinder students becoming facilitators for events
- We need staff to step in to help train students
- We also need to develop resources to go home with families at the end of events (continuing education)

NEW FAMILY WELCOME ACTION TEAM (breakout):

ACTION: Ask Henry/Sherry what already goes out to families when they enroll (MARIAH/DREW)

- Send a postcard to new students when they enroll as a personal message welcoming them
 - Have a picture of the school on it (something to connect them to BMS)
- Send a letter/personal note to new parents when they enroll to:
 - Welcome them
 - Encourage active participation in their student's school experience
 - Remind we're always accepting volunteers and how to become one
 - Explain yearly school events and what to expect
- Group has discussed in the past also giving out some "promo items" as a gift to new students/families
 - Ex. BMS pencil and sticker