

Academic Practices Team Mtg - 2/11/25

Committee Members: Meghan Booth (Erdkinder Coordinator), Kim Bell (Special Education Teacher), Angela Kaul (E2A Teacher), Kris Swogger (Reading Title and EL Teacher), Amy Schillerstrom (E1A Teacher), Henry Schantzen (Head of School), Sherry Lohmeyer (Assistant Head of School)

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:

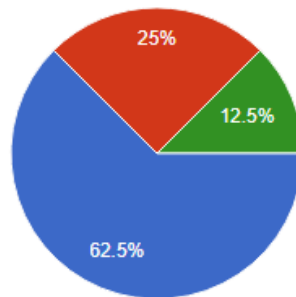
Mariah White (E1C Teacher) (absent)

Topic	Responsible	Notes	Minutes from meeting
WELCOME! Circle Chat	2 min	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 is one word to describe you today?			
Academic Calendar	8 min		
2025-26 School Year 2025-26 school year calendar <ul style="list-style-type: none">2026-27 school year calendarThe first day of the 2025-26 school year for all students will be Wednesday, Sept. 3. Students in Grade 5 and Grade 9, as well as new students to the Winona Area Learning Center, will begin on Tuesday, Sept. 2.The last day of school will be Thursday, June 4.Friday, Nov. 14 will be a district-wide parent-teacher conference day. Students will not be in school that day.Winter break: Wednesday, Dec. 24 through Friday, Jan. 2.Spring break: Monday, March 9 through Friday, March 13.			
Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Spring Conferences, we need to make a final decision, Thursday/Thursday or Thursday/Monday			

Regarding fall parent/teacher conferences, there are three options that you can select.

 [Copy chart](#)

16 responses

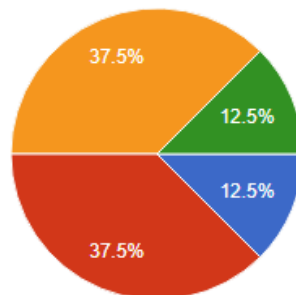


- Conferences in the evenings like normal: Thursday, Nov. 6 Thursday, Nov. 13 (this makes Nov 14th a full day off)
- Conferences in the evenings like normal: Thursday, Nov. 13 and Monday, Nov. 16 (this makes Nov 14th a full da...)
- Conferences during the "school day" Friday, Nov 14th 8:00-4:00 (with a 4 h...)
- Conferences during the "school day" Friday, Nov 14th 8:00-6:00 (all in one...)

Regarding spring parent/teacher conferences,

 [Copy chart](#)

16 responses



- Conferences in the evenings like normal: Thursday, April 2 and Monday, April 6
- Conferences in the evenings like normal: Thursday, April 9 and Monday, April 13
- Conferences in the evenings like normal: Thursday, April 2 and Thursda...
- Optional conferences-done by appointment with individual families

Work
Refusal/Avoidance

20 min

- Survey Results ([linked here](#))
- Most classrooms report at least 4 students that struggle in each of the areas, task initiation, changing tasks, organizational skills.
- Every Gen Ed teacher listed writing as a work that triggers avoidance
- When math was mentioned it seemed to be more case by case or skill than math in general.
- SPED and Interventionists also list writing as a barrier

Follow up Question for Committee:

Rough guess for those here, how many of the students in your classroom are falling into multiple buckets. I.e. you thought of them for task initiation and stamina? (initiation-start of work time, changing tasks, avoidance, organization)

Next Steps? Behavior committee?

Cursive

30 min

To Start -- circle to answer:

Round 1: Is Cursive Taught explicitly at your level? Is Cursive required at your level? Why/why not?

Round 2: Is K the best place to teach cursive? If you are going to make a change, what would that change be?

Open Discussion?

Any new business?

Next Month

Mentor Mentee Discussion (or create a group to do this separately)
(any roll over from this meeting?)

Closing

Notes:

- Conferences
 - Recommending Thursday/Thursday for fall/spring7 conferences; if attendance declines in the fall, there may be a change for spring conferences
- Cursive conversation
 - Erdkinders do not teach it nor do they require it (transfers in from other schools, students are able to choose)
 - E2 teachers require a practice in handwriting; choice to use it in lesson notes because it's not across the board with student use (transfers in from other schools and IEPs); became optional when it became the focus instead of the materials the students were learning; could see it as choice work if it led to something else like calligraphy
 - E1 teachers do teach it and do require it; other than IEPs; understanding it was a school-wide expectation; staggers and increases by grade
 - CH teachers do teach it but when copying they are not required to write it in cursive; as year progresses there is more expected (journaling); understanding it was a school-wide expectation; explain it as copy the shapes, dot it to get them started; kindergarten students who come in already know how to print and it's a lot of work to teach them cursive

- E1s have shelf works for cursive practice, E2 level does not but has tracing work
- E1s would be willing to wait until 2nd or 3rd grade to teach cursive, would like cursive to stay
- The financial aspect is being brought up at the CH level since much of their works are in cursive
- See the benefits of cursive
- Where we seem to get hung up is how to get new students caught up?
- Two levels focusing on cursive (CH/E1) where the other two are not
- Space is an issue...
- Some students revert back to print even in this environment; what are they doing at home? Store bought items are all in print both at school and at home.
- If cursive is the standard, then resources should be sent home to support cursive at home
- Should cursive be an opportunity instead of a requirement?
- Does it make sense to keep it at the CH level since it follows the scribble flow?
- ErdK could bring calligraphy in as a solo time, they can support it and develop it, but they aren't going to teach it
- Keep the choice in E2? Could add extension works that focus on cursive.
- Focus on legibility? In E2, if you choose cursive, you need to work on writing neatly.
- Work refusal
 - Seems to come back to writing
 - I haven't mastered either, asked to work in a way that isn't my preference of writing