



**Moss Street Children's Center
Parent Council Meeting
October 6, 2016
6-7:15**

Notes

Attended Becky Lamoureux, Director; Jackie Brown, Staff Representative; Amber and Josh Fitzgerald; Chelsea and Bo Moreau; Melissa Wischerath; Brenda and Bradley Hughes; Jen Ditmar; Kathryn and Michael Thier

Introductions & role of the council

Chair of parent council description

Becky presented the two fold mission and structure of MSCC-spending a lot of time on the role of student staff and the role of the classified staff in training and supervising the student staff. She also presented the role of the parent council chair. The chair leads the council meetings and assists the director in the planning and facilitation of the meetings and communication with the center families. There is no current council chair and anyone interested in this role should contact Becky.

Moss Street Updates

Moss Street is an EMU program

The EMU student board approves our budget each year. MSCC receives funding from the student incidental fees and this allows us to keep our services affordable to student families. This is why we prioritize serving student families and providing student engagement opportunities including employment, internships, practicums, volunteering and observations.

UO Moss Street policy-proposed changes

The moss street UO policy was selected for review this year by Robin Holmes. Over the last 18 months the proposed solutions have been presented to various stakeholders and groups for consultation and feedback. Becky presented the latest version of the proposed policy changes that will be proposed by the EMU Director Laurie Woodward in December and asked for feedback or questions. The proposed changes then will be reviewed by the UO policy committee for their process. This is the second time that the proposed changes

have been shared with the MSCC parent council for feedback and questions. There was a parent comment that for parents that graduate from the UO before their child/ren graduate from Moss Street it is a big loss to leave the community and care of Moss Street. However, other parents in the group commented that they were glad that the enrollment priority does end when parents are no longer students because it assures that the care available is prioritized for current students. Parents asked a variety of questions including the following:

Q: How will the provision of care for children with Special Needs be affected by these proposed changes?

A: MSCC will continue to provide care for families with children with special needs. As stated in our parent handbook, we value the inclusion of all children. The current UO policy lists care for children with special needs through the holding of a number of spaces for children with special needs. The spots were to be filled following the same enrollment priorities listed for all applicants. The proposed policy does not include any listing of specific prioritization or enrollment procedures in order to meet the policy guidelines of the UO. Procedures are to be referred to in the policies but not included with in. MSCC proposed procedures will enroll children with special needs in the same priorities as all other children ie. Student families first.

Q: How will the provision of care be affected when the status of a graduate student changes?

A: If a graduate student's status changes so might their access and rate at MSCC. Any hours offered fall term will be guaranteed through spring term. For summer and fall terms the status of the parent as a student or a non-student may impact the prioritization of enrollment and hours. Graduate students that are not paying incidental fees will be charged the non-student rate. Families will not lose their prioritization according to our procedures if they are on, "leave status" for one term.

Q: Will MSCC access ever be considered for sale from entities outside of the UO?

A: The proposed policy changes do not specifically cover this situation. However, the policy does say that the provision of child care will be prioritized for student families. If an entity were to

purchase spots the prioritization of student families would be required with in the proposed changes.

Parent Issues

Collaborations with the Rec Center and other Depts. Parents expressed interest in having children involved in activities at the Rec Center. This lead to a conversation about other projects or activities for children. One parent volunteered to teach dance classes to the children. There was interest in possible language classes. Becky said that she would pursue these collaborations this year. We also discussed past **participation of parents** in the classrooms. There is an open invitation for all parents and families to share with their child's classroom their beliefs, culture, holidays and interest. This lead to a discussion of the MSCC approach to holidays at the center (below is an excerpt from our parent handbook).

Moss Street staff attempt to utilize a multi-cultural approach to holidays. This is accomplished in several ways:

By de-emphasizing the prevalent culture's holidays, especially those of religious origins;

By providing information to children about a wide range of various celebrations; and,

By making efforts to include traditional celebrations of all the cultural groups in our programs.

The implementation of these efforts may vary from classroom to classroom. The variations are based on the ages of the children, the cultural interests of the parents and children of the particular program, and the expertise of the teaching staff. You are encouraged to provide information and advice to assist staff in providing children with a broad range of opportunities. We welcome parental input, understanding and assistance.

Many children love to celebrate their birthdays at school. Contact your child's teacher for help in making the day a memorable occasion for your child and an integral part of the experience at Moss Street.

In recognition of the diverse religious beliefs of the families we serve, we will credit the bill of any family whose child misses care to observe a religious holiday. If your family wishes such an adjustment, please advise the Moss Street main office.

One parent asked what activities does the center offer for parents to get to know one another. The center has a **family event** each term; the harvest carnival, the pancake breakfast, preschool graduation and the Moss Street birthday party. The center also offers three sessions each term of **Nurturing Parenting workshops** where families can discuss parenting topics and help to identify a community of support. Families shared that they felt most connected with the families that pick up or drop off at the same time of day. Parents said it would be great if other parents and staff introduced themselves repeatedly and if there were pictures with names of the children in each classroom. Becky will pass this recommendation on to the mentor teachers.