The MAPBC met on Friday, Nov. 15th. The meeting began at 6:03PM.

Those in attendance included

Youme Nguyen Ly

Hai Nguyen Ly

Stephanie Valdes

Liz Lesperance

Jenn Bose

Liz recited the NFB pledge.

We did not meet in October. Liz put forth a motion to approve the September meeting minutes. Youme seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Stephanie had the link prepared for the 21-minute November presidential release.

The state convention is approaching in a few months. Shara advised Stephanie that she booked a suite for childcare. Hai suggested this be a multi-purpose space. Hai and Youme are preparing to bring supplies for this room. We would like to have the question of whether childcare is needed included on the state convention registration form. Stephanie shared that one child from Maine who participated in the BELL academy this past summer is interested in attending the state convention. Stephanie will reach out to the other BELL academy parents to see if there is interest in attending as well. Stephanie will create a document in our shared folder with the contact info for the BELL academy participants. Stephanie suggested reaching out to volunteers who have experience in childcare. Youme also suggested utilizing some of the individuals who were vetted as part of the BELL academy to supervise as well. Hai advised that the convention committee should reach out to the MAPBC if there is a need to utilize this space for a different purpose. Stephanie is requesting space in the agenda for elections as is stated in our constitution. We discussed meeting as a division on Friday prior to dinner. Stephanie will run this by Shara.

The BELL academy committee is actively planning the 2025 BELL academy which will be Aug. 4th - Aug. 15th. The location is still being determined but may be in Waltham. We will use contracts this time to ensure vendors and other resources follow through. We are actively searching for a lead teacher. Stephanie spoke to the national office to find out what the requirements are for the lead teacher. The individual must have a strong knowledge of braille and a background or significant experience in education.

There is currently a pampered chef fundraiser for the BELL academy. Stephanie will share these details with Cullen who can add the details on the affiliate Facebook page.

Stephanie will be attending a seminar in February pertaining to funding for the BELL academy.

Bertucci’s is willing to do a fundraiser for BELL where all 23 of their locations will participate. There is a flyer with a code and if customers use this 15% of their order will go to the BELL fundraiser. We will attempt to secure the required documentation to prove that we are a nonprofit organization in order to get this fundraiser in motion.

Youme also suggested having a platform or location where people can donate online.

Our next meeting will be Thursday, Dec. 12th at 6:00PM where we will focus on our fundraising efforts.