



Board of Directors
Board Meeting Minutes
October 26, 2021

Free Horizon Montessori PK – 8

Montessori for the 21st Century - a place to learn, a place to belong

1. Meeting called to order at: 7:33PM
 - a. Board Members Present: John Frost , Doug Klof, Bekky Robbins, Dan Hofmann, Ben Dodson, Alison Fuhr
 - b. Board Members Absent (excused): None
 - c. Staff Members Present: Donnetta MacDonald, Cyndi Vosburgh, Kim Erickson, Adam Garbus
 - d. Guests:, Jesse Ornelis, Carolina Eichinger, Danielle Dixon, Sean Sands, Ellen Ivy, Stephan Pond, Amber Davis, Andrea Stacy, Ariel Himes, Jen Whitton-Trujillo, Joseph Samaniuk, Kelsey Strand, Kresta Vuolo, Linda DeBruyn, Meggin Rutherford, Roy Cherry, Tony Schiess, Leslie Rains, Jenna Layne, Cristina Sargent
2. Approval of Agenda for current meeting
 - a. Motion to open discussion of agenda: Doug, Dan seconds
 - b. Unanimous approval of agenda
3. Public Comments
 - a. None
4. Principal Update: Donnetta MacDonald, Interim Principal
 - a. Cyndi, Lisa, Jesse, Kresta, have been very helpful and supportive.
 - b. Exciting things: two tours today, virtual tour this morning, in-person tour this afternoon, 13 people
 - c. Jane recently learned there will be mid-year enrollment which is new to Jeffco, not a ton of information yet.
 - d. Excited for Friday, outside parade so that parents can watch.
 - e. Mystery History – virtual this year
 - f. Seems like there is a little bit of settling in the building, October tends to be a sort of magic time, starting to feel just a little bit more routine (Mr. Jesse agrees, last two weeks have been more smooth with student behavior).
5. Update on School Status and Division of School Responsibilities
 - a. Kresta has accepted a role of Administrator on Special Assignment. Board has been working with staff, district to work out everything.
 - b. Where we are
 - i. Donnetta has stepped in as Interim Principal as of 10/25
 - ii. Kresta is in her new role, primarily remote – has been a few meetings figuring out what that means, Kresta is still working payroll, IEP, 504, she will do work on transferring a lot of knowledge and information to Donnetta, to be a resource

for Donnetta. Accepted this position until December, at which point we will revisit the role.

1. AMS – Outline created, Kresta will finished and will get us as far as she can into Step 8. Can't go for full accreditation until we have a permanent principal in place.
 2. Compensation – Doug and Cyndi had conversations, contract put together and presented to Donnetta, includes a salary amount for the remainder of the year in addition to a job description. For Kresta, have a draft JD, today received more information regarding required information, have not finalized as of yet. Changes will not impact staff compensation and bonuses.
- c. Alison will be attending Department meetings as representative of the Board, to hear thoughts and answer question.
- i. Linda DeBruyn – staff is concerned about Jesse and Donnetta's responsibilities.
 1. Was a major consideration when we had discussions about change in leadership.
 2. Also have been in heavy communication with the district and Community Superintendent
 3. Also pooling list of Montessori resources, asked for a couple weeks to see where specific and detailed needs are. School psychologist has been an incredible resource this year, stepping in wherever she can.

6. Community Communication Plan

a. Town Hall

- i. Meggin Rutherford -parents want to know how the process will work, what the timeline looks like, how the hiring process will going to go. Maybe an email of here is the path forward, steps that we need to take, what we expect, in general terms. A lot of big decision whiplash – classrooms closings, and then this, lots of big changes, concern about stability at school.
- ii. Target audiences: Staff and FHM community
- iii. Purpose: back and forth, we can answer questions openly, dialogue piece, listen and respond.
- iv. Other options: coffee with the Board, limited to 2 Board members, could be another option? Split up into groups and do a few different question/answer sessions
- v. Dedicated section within the Fox Flash – updates specific to the Principal Search
- vi. How much do people want to hear about tactical plan going forward vs. school operations?
 1. Communication about this particular process and how the committee would be communicating with all stakeholders, Fox Flash great for this, maybe if there is a big step that could be a separate email.
 2. BOD communication with all stakeholders
 3. Admin/operations communication with all stakeholders

- vii. Reminder to everyone that we have all of the committees of the Board, that is where we talk about operational matters, as we're talking about communication, maybe work harder about getting those committee communication into the Fox Flash. Board reps could do this piece so as not to ask more of staff that sit on these committees.
- viii. Worried about information overload in Fox Flash, many people miss it, maybe a once per month update? If something significant happens in committee, let's put that update in the Fox Flash.
- ix. Try a Coffee with the Board first? See if there's an appetite?
- x. Need to discuss and set next steps before we would be able to answer questions – come up with game plan, put it out in writing and then host 1 or 2 Coffee with the Board to answer questions about plan and see where we are.
 - 1. Meggin – need Open forum, open discussion not around drop-off time – would help restore trust in the BOD.
- xi. Proposal – put an open forum/Town Hall on the calendar, at least people know it's coming.
- xii. Town Hall – mid-next week, Wednesday or Thursday – flex different times of the day for meetings, so that we can capture as many community members as we can.
- xiii. Recording Town Hall so that we could post or send out to community?
 - 1. Members who can't attend would hopefully get some questions answered.
- xiv. November 3 – Town Hall at 7:30PM, then another BOD meeting on November 11
- xv. Will continue discussion of ongoing, regular committee at the next BOD meeting.

7. Optimal Model of Leadership at FHM

- a. Background: What are we looking for? Qualities, skill sets, that the leader of our school should have. What role are we looking for that person to fill? Current model is Principal, head of school, in charge of curriculum, in charge of business aspect of school. Assistant Principal in charge of most of student-facing responsibilities. Cyndi – large business piece. Have all of the pieces covered, the start of the process should be what is optimal for our school? Other models out there, could have head of school, dean of students, someone in charge of curriculum, etc. Will not solve that tonight, want to have thorough and informed conversations and make deliberate decisions.
- b. For tonight: should those stay at BOD level or should that be for the Search Committee?
 - i. Stay with Board, essential piece of Strategy for FHM
 - ii. Great to have more insight into this from non-BOD members, potentially the committee could do the research and work to bring ideas to the larger BOD group, do we make a mini committee, give Donnetta time to be principal, to do the research and come up with ideas.
 - iii. Need information from Donnetta, from Kresta

- c. Proposal – create working group to work with Donnetta, Kresta, district (Tom) and determine what’s the best way forward, potential models. Alison and Dan volunteer to form the sub-committee, work offline to gather information. Can do working sessions that we notice, can be more than 2 board members, just have to notice and post minutes
8. Principal Search Committee
- a. Application Process
 - i. Point system for evaluation, has to be a point system component for AMS accreditation.
 - 1. Allows some flexibility on the skill set of head of school that we want to hire
 - 2. DO they have to hold a master’s degree? Jeffco “certified” Principal, or can they complete that after they are hired?
 - ii. Committee to determine the final pool, identify finalists, final interview step prior to hiring decision?
 - b. Committee makeup – need to make sure groups feel represented, but can’t be too big – but need to take on responsibility of engaging with each of the stakeholder groups, gathering feedback, etc. Board would need to approve members, per usual, after an application with just a paragraph of why they want to join, etc.
 - i. Members of the community (1)
 - ii. CSN Board Member (1)
 - iii. Staff (3): two classroom teachers plus an admin since they will have a feel of what will be best day-to-day
 - iv. Board representation – (2) John, Ben volunteer
 - v. Potentially a district representative to attend meeting?
 - c. Researching extent of resources that District can assist with
 - d. These will be public meetings, make a recommendation to the Board and the BOD votes
 - i. Would more BOD members have the ability to be part of the interview?
 - e. Tasking this committee – understand qualities that we want and moving forward with a search, lots of Montessori resources within Colorado. CO has the 7th most number of public Montessori schools in the nation.
 - f. Proposal to form Principal Search Committee
 - i. Move that the BOD form Principal Search committee, 1 member from CSN Board, 3 members of staff (2 classroom teachers + 1 admin), 1 member of the community at large, 2 members of BOD (John and Ben), tasked with understanding qualities, understanding timeline, recruitment process – John, Second by Doug, unanimous approval.
 - g. Recruitment of community member: in Fox Flash, need representation, those with skill sets and time, apply in x way. John and Ben can field initial community applications and bring them back to the BOD.
9. Assignments
- a. Alison and Dan – working session timeline for organizational evaluation

- b. John and Ben – will bring any high-level information, decisions to BOD
- c. Alison will reach out to Tom about involvement/input in the search process/committee

10. Adjournment at 9:38pm – John moves to adjourn, Bekky seconds, unanimous approval.

In accordance with the Colorado Open Meetings Law, also known as the Sunshine Law, the Board must give notice to the public anytime they schedule a meeting of more than three (3) board members to discuss business concerning the school. The Colorado Sunshine law does allow for the meetings, or portions of the meetings, to be held privately when the subject matter being discussed must remain confidential so long as no formal action is taken during the private portion of the meeting, called the "executive session". The Sunshine Law strictly defines eight (8) criteria under which a private executive session can be held, personnel discussion being one of them. The law also states the community must be informed of the meeting and the criteria under which an executive session must be called.

Bekky Robbins