



Board of Directors  
Board Meeting Minutes  
September 10, 2020

Free Horizon Montessori PK – 8

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

1. Meeting called to order at: 6:06pm
  - a. Board Members Present: Alison Fuhr, Clark Frye, Doug Klof, Bekky Robbins, John Frost, Leslie Arboleda, Diane Fox
  - b. Board Members Absent (excused):
  - c. Staff Members Present: Kresta Vuolo, Miera Nagy, Cyndi Vosburgh, Jennifer Levy, Kate Powell (Staff Liaisons)
  - d. Guests: Tony Schiess (parent), Nicole Steinbach (parent) Jenna Layne (parent)
  - e. CSN: None
  
2. Approval of Agenda (including item 3, Consent Agenda) for current meeting: motion to approve by Leslie. Second by Clark. Unanimous approval with no amendments.
  
4. Public Comment and Celebration:
  - a. Kids back in the building! Great job by staff for implementing Restart (in-person and remote) at FHM.
  - b. Welcome to the team, Cyndi.
  - c. Kresta –
    - i. Grateful to Jenny Reigel delivered individually wrapped treats to the staff during last week of remote learning.
    - ii. CSN hosted a successful parent happy hour.
    - iii. Jennifer Levy and Jane Connard – incredible enrollment effort. Typically in August, 30 in, 30 out – had 75 out between Aug 1 and Aug 18, able to fill more than 20 of those spaces.
  - d. Cyndi – excited to join the FHM team.
  
5. Staff liaison update
  - a. Seconding celebration of having students back in the building.
  
6. Principal Update
  - a. Emphasize how much work the staff put in for the start of school this year.
  - b. Summer flooring project – final punch list walk-through yesterday, hopefully done by end of week.
  - c. Chalkboard removal/white board replacement done
  - d. Sent final selection of cubbies, predicting 5-6 week production time, and then shipped and installed, hopefully before Thanksgiving.
  - e. Enrollment

- i. Approved budget with 385 FTE and PPR \$7,457.56. Currently, enrollment at 348 FTE, PPR \$6944.32 (5% reduction below 2019-20). Possible for the state to do a rescission and pull back the money.
  - ii. If we had all spaces filled, would have 501 students, 400.8 FTE. AS of August 2, 488 spots filled (393.8). August 18, 413 enrolled (348.06 FTE). September 9, 436 enrolled, 364.-6 FTE. Net loss of 52 students (29.74 FTE) since August 1.
  - iii. Could see additional fluctuations.
  - iv. Official count window, 9/24-10/8.
- f. Budget – majority of shortage is mitigated by attrition and not filling vacancies. Have filled required positions, currently recruiting a school counselor. Able to offer positions to everyone who wanted to return.
- g. Staff
  - i. Chris Caruso - interventionist position
  - ii. Danielle Small - Speech Language Pathologist. Services are delivered remotely as she lives out of state. Position is still posted for a local hire.
  - iii. Instructional Leadership Team – staff who served were awarded stipends and additional contact days. This was not funded this year.

## 7. Finance Update

- a. Summary/Background: approved a budget earlier this year, didn't know what options for parents would be, pushed out any updates to the budget until we knew more. Targeted in mid-September, after school had started. Proposed revision to the 2020-2021 budget. First read today, second and final read (and vote) next month.
  - i. What do we know today? Increases/Decreases to enrollment.
  - ii. What do we not know? What kind of options are we looking at for next semester? Re-elect to in-person or remote?
  - iii. Kresta and leadership have been able to reduce the budget by over \$500k without involuntary terminations or furlough days.
  - iv. Last year budget: access to COVID relief fund grant – had \$160k in grant money that was applied to last year's budget, additional \$20k to be applied for COVID-related expenses for this year. Pre-grant award, thought we would be ~\$200k short. With grant ~\$50k deficit, though it's been a moving target.
    - 1. Miera – previously had been on maintenance trajectory, and now enrollment numbers change every day, and PPR was cut by over 4%. Went from \$2.8 million modified PPR, to \$2.5 million. PK down to an enrollment of 67, projected tuition is halved from previous estimates. Any changes we see could take that number up or down. Revenue stream has gone from \$3.5 million projection in January to \$2.9 million. Reductions: holding unfilled position. Holding in-person primary classes to 20, only need 1 assistant.
- b. Decision requested:
  - i. ASK: authorize the use of up to \$100,000 of Carryforward funds to be utilized for the 2020-21 school year to offset anticipated revenue shortfalls to help prevent involuntary terminations, furloughs, reduction in salaries.

ii. Will vote on this ask after the second read next meeting.

8. 2020-2021 Principal Evaluation

a. Alison + Leslie are on the committee

b. What staff survey will we administer this year?

i. Options (aiming to administer survey(s) at the October 15 staff development day):

1. Existing: Previous survey that the BoD has put together, has not changed in the past 2. If we use that again this year, would have benchmarks. 20 questions, 20-25 minutes, more staff/principal relationship focused.

2. District survey: Now have option of using district-provided principal evaluation survey, encompasses a broader scope of principal position. Would have no historical data for comparison. Distributed in December the same time the family survey is sent out, which is late for our process. Aim to provide feedback to Kresta during the December meeting. Matches up well with state standards and elements and encompasses more of the job that the principal does. Survey is 58 questions, some are type-in questions, will take more time. Generally administered in December, could we manually administer this survey?

3. A year or two where we do both? To maintain some ability to compare to previous years but can also determine if the district survey gives us more valuable information; this option would be quite lengthy for staff.

ii. Decision:

1. Plan A – give board Survey October 15, as in previous year. Leslie and Alison will approach Matt Walsh to see if we can do the district survey at the same time. If we cannot move up district survey, move forward with Plan B.

2. Plan B – give board survey October 15, also administer the district survey as planned by district and then determine how we can use it going forward.

c. Process – aiming for a 360 review, so feedback from everyone (parents, staff, BoD, etc.)

i. BoD expectations: Leslie and Alison will give an update next meeting. Nothing required of full BoD until December when we formally deliver the evaluation.

ii. Leslie and Alison will administer the survey, do Zoom interviews with select employees (new, existing, staff, teachers, admin). Also interviews with parents and the CSN president is always interviewed. Work with Lisa Kingston, who will choose staff members, based on categories of people requested by the BoD to make sure all kinds of staff/teachers are represented. Parents selected on a stratified sample based on how long they have been involved with FHM, those who seem satisfied vs. those that do not, etc.

9. SAC Member Appointment

- a. Judy Leuring – requesting to chair the SAC. Former FHM employee, also has grandchildren attending FHM.
- b. Plan to review committee appointments and that committee pages are up to date. Shifting updating of website to the Principal's secretary (Lisa), Cyndi good backup if Lisa is not available.

#### 10. Classroom Visit Alternatives

- a. Summary – continuation of conversation from August meeting, waiting on staff input. Purpose of the visits is to help the BoD establish a relationship with staff and teachers, see what day-to-day looks like. Last year, BoD sat in on classes throughout the school, which can't happen at this point in the year. How can we make that connection this year?
  - i. Staff liaisons – could make virtual attendance, Susan [Vallier] putting together some kind of video to share with families. Have members of BoD 'become students' for a period of time? What does it look like to be a student doing remote learning? What does it look like and how does it feel to students?
  - ii. Can we take advantage of efforts that are already underway, blend those two things? What does a day in the life look like at FHM?
  - iii. Timing: wait to see what Susan comes up with, what kind of footage already have to create compilations. This may give us what we want for this unique year. Video update in November, potentially in-person or 1:1 in December?
  - iv. Could staff liaisons reach out to fellow staff/teachers about having BoD in-person? Can staff liaisons lead where this goes? Kate and Jen will discuss with staff.

#### 11. FHM BOD Communication Goals

- a. Board calls to the community
  - i. Data source – has CSN collected data for a directory?
  - ii. Clark reached out to CSN president about teaming up on this.
  - iii. Previous years, CSN did this to reach out and welcome new families, would be really great to even just focus on that.
  - iv. Similar, could do a letter that admin could send on behalf of BoD to new families? Could be a good time to recruit committee/BoD members.
  - v. Sending letter out to community at large would be valuable, especially during this challenging time.
  - vi. BoD communications focus
    - 1. Fox Flash Updates
    - 2. Monthly Coffee Chats
    - 3. Letter to new families – Alison will draft a letter, BoD members to give active feedback. Aim to send prior to October 1? Particularly impactful this year for new families, and families/students that may be attending school for the first time this unique year.
  - vii. Comments from guests: requests to the BoD and admin that communication to parents/families is expanded going forward, and not just for new families.

Complaints that the normal/regular avenues of communication are not sufficient for families to feel engaged with FHM.

- b. Fox Flash updates – also advertise the next virtual coffee
  - i. Budget update – high level overview, budget was approved in January, here’s what’s changed, here’s what we want to do to cover any gaps.
  - ii. Summary of the BoD goals that we have established for this year.
  - iii. Any updates from the SAC, which will meet between now and the next BoD meeting.
- c. AMS Accreditation/Update Innovation Plan
  - i. Innovation plan – needing to outline process and timeline. Innovation plan expires in May, we’ll need to make sure we are in compliance getting update approved by May 5. We are Jeffco’s first Innovation school, may not have an established timeline, but need to reach out. In other counties, not as in-depth as Charter renewals. May be challenging to get them to engage and develop a formal policy. Kresta will be working with district to update this.
  - ii. AMS Accreditation – meeting on Friday to make committee assignments. BoD commitment to understand the AMS Accreditation process. Kate served on AMS committee last year, will update us next board meeting on the process (either as an agenda item or a document added for 10/8 consent agenda). Challenge this year, is gathering documents on policies and procedures (may be some that are called for in Accreditation guidelines, but don’t currently exist). Bekky will attend committee meetings, update the board, reach out as needed.

## 12. Board Institutional Knowledge

- a. SAC is setting their next meeting, Alison and Clark, as liaisons, will work on what data/tools/performance metrics they have available that we can use.
- b. TLCC-Colorado will be administered this year
- c. Early in the year, not much data to share yet.
- d. Also tasked with updating the UIP annually, which will be brought before the BoD as well.
- e. Last September, BoD had an all-day session on scope of what things we can include to address strategy over the next 8 years. Large spreadsheet feels like it needs a little more work before it can be used in a strategic way, a lot of ideas, need to be grouped, brought together at a higher level. Need to ensure that there is a long-term strategy in place. How do we want to go about doing that? Value in continuing the work that we started last year? Set aside time in current BoD meetings? Form a sub-committee? Give it to a separate committee? Carve out an hour in meetings down the road and work on it.

## 13. Assignments

- a. Leslie and Alison (Principal Evaluation Committee) will approach Matt Walsh to see if we can administer the board survey as the same time as the district survey.

- b. Staff liaisons (Kate and Jen) will find a date or two that would work best for potential visits to classrooms.
- c. Alison will draft a welcome letter to new families to be sent from the Board.
- d. BoD members to review AMS documents available on SharePoint
- e. Kate will update BoD on the AMS process

14. Adjournment at 9:24pm

- a. Motion to adjourn – John motions, Leslie seconds
  - i. Unanimous approval. Next meeting October 8.

*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*