



Board of Directors  
Board Meeting Minutes  
August 13, 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: 6:04pm
  - a. Board Members Present: Diane Fox, Clark Frye, Leslie Arboleda, Doug Klof, Bekky Robbins, John Frost
  - b. Board Members Absent (excused): Alison Fuhr
  - c. Staff Members Present: Kresta Vuolo, Miera Nagy, Shannon Aasheim (Staff Liaisons)
  - d. Guests: Tony Schiess (parent), Cindi Vosburgh (will start Sept.8 as Dir. Finance and Advancement)
  - e. CSN: None
  
2. Approval of Agenda (including item 4, Consent Agenda) for current meeting: motion to approve by Bekky. Second by Doug. Unanimous approval with no amendments.
  
4. Public Comment and Celebration:
  - a. Great information coming from leadership of the school
  - b. Miera – past two weeks, had reps from HCM (doing long term campus development plan, people on roof, boiler room, classroom, engineers, architects, landscape architects) gathering baseline data. Next step is to determine when is a good time for us to engage community.
  - c. Kresta
    - i. Over 300 families virtually attended the FHM Restart Town Halls, between all three meetings
    - ii. Staff back in the building after 5 months, very positive vibe.
  - d. Thanks to Kresta for outside of the box thinking prior to our special meeting last week, proposing elemental pre-k pilot program.
  
5. Staff liaison update
  - a. Liaisons not present, staff discussed the need for staff liaisons, open invitation to staff to serve in this role. Hopeful we will have liaisons next week.
  
6. Principal Update
  - a. Enrollment – by Friday, 50% of families chose fully remote – 35 students did not answer survey. Jane and Jen have been working to physically reach out to families, have heard from all but 1.
    - i. Lots of families that withdrew to formally homeschool children.
      1. Will turn to waiting list, but don't anticipate will fill all slots as many families may decline.
    - ii. 4 Primary classrooms, 3 In-person for Lower EL, 3 IN-person Upper EL,
    - iii. Remote classes will be bigger

- iv. All classes are 20-21 students
      - v. 1 Ed Assistant supporting all remote
      - vi. Primary classrooms will have 1 assistant instead of 2
    - b. Jeffco offered employees a 1-year break in service (not paid) 4 staff members taking advantage.
    - c. Jeffco allowed staff to apply for fully remote teaching assignment, to Jeffco HR. We had 6 employees that formally applied, 3 scored in range that would warrant consideration, 3 did not.
    - d. Are teachers comfortable with all of the protocols? Yes and no, cannot gather in-person, but following all recommendations and policies from Jeffco Public Health. Outdoor spaces identified for lunches; specials will see same students for two weeks at a time to minimize their exposure levels. Trying to work to minimize everybody's exposures. Staff are "cohorting" as well to minimize exposure to staff outside of their cohorts.
7. 2020-2021 Principal Evaluation
- a. Summary/Background: Per policy manual, this part of the process involves having a committee of two people and additionally utilizing an outside evaluator to help with that process. Due to current circumstances, not sure if we should engage outside evaluator.
    - i. Identify committee, then they could meet separately and return with a proposal.
      - 1. Limited to 2 members, one has to be BOD President (Alison will take one seat).
      - 2. Time commitment is pretty extensive, interviewing staff, parents, if there is an outside consultant, they do some of that, administer a survey, put into report. Usually business hours. Last year, outside consultant cost \$3499.
      - 3. Leverage info from Principal's survey from the superintendent?
      - 4. Poll – who would want to hire outside evaluator?
        - a. Doug – if we can't get feedback from superintendent, none of us are qualified to fully do this ourselves, maybe not a full outside evaluation.
      - 5. Committee members: Alison and Leslie
  - b. Next steps
    - i. Alison will coordinate next meeting and steps to bring the proposal together.
8. Classroom Visit Alternatives
- a. Last year, participated passively in classrooms for one day. Rotated through classrooms, teachers knew we were coming.
  - b. This year – in-person visits not likely. Other options – joining classrooms remotely, waiting until later in year.
    - i. To go into classrooms – Kresta would need permission because visitors are not allowed in the building. If approved, would probably only be able to observe one classroom and not room to room so that we minimize exposure. Also have

virtual, will have remote classrooms, and also teachers are prepared to present lessons to students at home from school.

- ii. Third option – Do something with remote this fall, plan to do something live in the spring? Important that we are present in the school. Would this be overwhelming to staff? Teachers and staff do appreciate seeing the BOD involved. Children also enjoy having the opportunity to share what they are doing. Wait until later in semester, so that they are used to new procedures (as well as students) before visitors come in.
  - iii. Maybe delay this, focus on other long-term goals.
  - iv. Maybe less disruptive to attend virtually but would be valuable to us as a board to have an idea what is going on in school as everyone is trying to adjust, what do new processes look like when the students are in classroom and trying to learn. We know what a Montessori classroom looks like, but no good vision of what a Jeffco Restart Montessori classroom looks like. Would be good for us to understand, see what students and teachers are experiencing to make sure that we're making the best decisions for students and staffs.
  - v. Typically, Montessori calls for 4-6 weeks of no visitors to establish relationships and routines before visitors come in. In past, volunteers have not been allowed in class until after October.
- c. Summary – interest, but caution about moving too soon, also consider norms established in the past. One option might be to revisit this after the school year has begun, waiting to hear staff perspective.
  - d. If we went in in one month, what's happening at any given time may be different than other times. May be wise to expect whatever is happening at a given time may not be reflective of what happens all the time.
  - e. Kresta will run this by staff, this would be something staff liaison would respond to.
  - f. Tabled until September meeting

## 9. Finance Update

- a. 2020-2021 Budget
  - i. Too many moving parts to have any update, delayed revisiting budget until September and have a solid enrollment number. Will resume discussion next month.
- b. 2019-2020 Budget
  - i. Have applied for grant related to COVID expenses, we were awarded. In General Fund, were anticipating negative. Preschool tuition came in about \$150k under budget. COVID grant that we received, was a positive amount of \$161k to apply to 2019-2020 with \$20k still available for upcoming year. At the end of the day General Fund ended with \$50k negative variance, which we will fill with carry-forward.
  - ii. Campus variance - ~\$160k carry-forward but tied to individual accounts so not as easy to spend. Have to stay true to how the money was collected.
  - iii. Enterprise - \$30k negative variance, will use Enterprise carry-forward to cover.
  - iv. All in – positive variance of \$85k (mostly from Campus)

## 10. 2020-2021 FHM BoD Goals

- a. Summary – make some progress in firming up what BOD goals are for this school year.
  - i. 4 goals, 3 operational and 1 that's only for BOD:
    - 1. Communication
    - 2. AMS Accreditation
    - 3. Updating Innovation Plan (has to happen)
    - 4. Building Board Institutional Knowledge
  - ii. Can we build knowledge outside of formal goals? I.e. via more outreach to the SAC? Could we strike it from the goals set?
    - 1. Make a standing agenda point instead of a formal goal?
  - iii. Kresta would like for AMS Accreditation to stay a priority of the board. Bekky has volunteered to attend AMS committee meetings, will bring updates back to the BOD, including BOD asks, if any.
  - iv. Innovation Plan will happen with or without BOD, does BOD play a role? Will need SAC, will provide BOD policy, by-laws, etc. Challenge is that so much is unknown. Have not been through a renewal before (neither has JeffCo). Should we move this to a standing agenda item? Will be Kresta + Cyndi, and likely Donnetta will aid in the process.
  - v. Establish all of these as BoD goals as many won't be intensive involvement on the part of the BoD.

## 11. FHM BOD Communication Goals

- a. Sharing of BOD summary from these meetings in social media
  - i. Bekky can compile, send to Susan Vallier – can include in FoxFlash or school-facing update.
    - 1. BoD corner in the FoxFlash, once a month would be meeting updates, weekly theme for what the board topic is for other three weeks. Running conversation?
    - 2. Come up with 3 or 4 bullet points after every meeting, share via all of these venues, kick-off virtual coffees with same bullet points.
- b. Virtual Coffees
  - i. Hesitant to schedule it over the summer since there were so many unknowns about the school year. Going forward, goal is to have one per month. Community attendees mostly want to know what's going on with admin team, CSN.
  - ii. Doug take next steps to get the next one set up.
    - 1. Week of September 14 would allow for enrollment fluctuations to settle, and an opportunity to introduce long-term planning items.
- c. Gathering data on how we are doing in communication with families (in progress).
- d. Handing out candy in carline (not actionable at this point). Maybe just presence would be appreciated, holding up a sign at carline and front door? Welcome back, so glad you're here, etc.

- i. If CSN is doing the directory again, BOD members could ID some names, call them, reach out individually cold call, introduce ourselves, check in. Just calling to see how you're doing. Might be a good way to make a sincere connection.
  - 1. Partner with CSN board? Reaching out to see how you're doing, invite you to upcoming virtual coffee, BOD or CSN meeting. Would be many fewer calls to parents. Clark will reach out to CSN and start that discussion.

#### 12. AMS Accreditation

- a. Multi-year initiative, working on Step 7. Is there anything that the BOD can support specifically in this phase of this accreditation process?
  - i. Current step is all about business operations, policies, procedures, budget development process of the school. BoD may be able to provide some supporting documents for this step. If most things are controlled by one individual, ensuring that you don't leave the organization vulnerable due to one person's oversight. In some cases, just finding actual process document to submit to AMS. Staff may not know which person from business/governance side of the school holds the information to bring forward.
  - ii. Too early in the school year to determine if staff committee will be the same or will need to be reconstituted.

#### 13. BoD Institutional Knowledge

- a. Re-connecting with SAC to initiate that discussion, understand how we can proceed in a way that helps elevate our knowledge so that we can help the community at large.

#### 14. Assignments

- a. Kresta – discuss with staff BoD classroom visits.
- b. Doug – will set up coffee chat, aiming for week of September 14.
- c. Bekky – Write up some bullet points for Facebook/FoxFlash -aiming to get communication out tomorrow regarding registration, BoD comm would likely be lost during back-to-school period. Likely start FoxFlash soon.
- d. Clark – reach out to CSN to partner on calling/checking in on the FHM community.

#### 15. Adjournment at 7:52pm

- a. Motion to adjourn – John motions, Diane seconds
  - i. 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*