



Board of Directors
Board Meeting Minutes
March 10, 2022

Free Horizon Montessori PK – 8

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

1. Meeting called to order: 6:03pm
 - a. Board members present: Doug Klof, Dan Hofmann, John Frost, Bekky Robbins, Ben Dodson
 - b. Board members absent (excused): Alison Fuhr
 - c. Staff members present: Cyndi Vosburgh, Donnetta MacDonald, Adam Garbus, Kim Erickson
 - d. Guests: Kristy Kibler, Meggin Rutherford, Megan Wells

2. Approval of agenda for current meeting, including consent agenda
 - a. Dan moves to open discussion, Bekky seconds
 - i. Unanimous approval of agenda

3. Public Comment and Celebration
 - a. Ben – out of COVID outbreak status, kudos to kids and staff for weathering the pandemic for 2 years!
 - b. John - celebrate Mr. Brandon, other facilities staff for moving all of the snow
 - c. Cyndi – thank you to all of the teachers and staff that participated in the PD Day, have a good comprehensive list of furniture, Montessori materials, that we need to order to make sure the classrooms are complete.
 - d. John – thanks to staff for hosting us for classroom visits!
 - e. Adam – parent volunteers have been awesome and super helpful.

4. Principal Update (Donnetta)
 - a. Celebrations – last week, elderly gentleman and grandson got lost in the neighborhood, Ms. Jaime found them on the campus, brought them into the office, everyone trying to figure out where he needed to go, got lost again, came back to Free Horizon. Brandon and Jesse ended up taking them home, family had only been in the country for two weeks.
 - b. As of Monday, FHM will be fully staffed!
 - c. Teachers doing a nice job getting ready for CMASS (sp?) testing
 - d. At SAC meeting last night, Star put together some results and trends from Family Engagement Survey, will do a deeper dive before next SAC meeting and before State of the School

5. Staff Liaison Updates (Kim and Adam)
 - a. Adam
 - i. Staff really appreciates the principal search updates from the BOD.
 - ii. Nice to have Star as an extra resource, will welcome being fully staffed

- iii. District PD days – some confusion about how that was working and why FHM didn't get the extra days
 - b. Kim
 - i. No updates this month! Think we're cruising along, getting ready for Spring Fling, staff party, pictures, CMASS, kids a little restless with the cold weather and snow
- 6. CSN Update (Meggin)
 - a. Getting excited for Spring Fling, will start ticket sales soon. Getting good donations, could use everyone's help in getting donations. Can buy a gift car to a restaurant and then donate it, gift baskets, etc.
 - b. Planning on another Back to School Carnival for next August
- 7. Previous BOD Assignments (Bekky)
 - a. Previous approved minutes have been posted to website
- 8. Finance Update (Cyndi/Doug)
 - a. 22/23 Budget – Second Read
 - i. Applied for Child Care Assistance Grant, that was approved, actually will qualify for closer to \$140k, will start payments this month. ~\$10k per month for next 3 months while in school, no payments during the summer, will start up again next fall. Will be applied to staff salaries at present, will carry forward to the following year. We'll end up with some additional carry forward that we can discuss how to use operationally in the fall.
 - ii. Esser III has been approved
 - iii. May be going to 1:1 technology for all grades, appears that 1st – 8th grade next year, will all have 1:1 devices. Device fees are set by Jeffco, we don't see the funds for those. \$50 fee, kept tech fees the same plus the \$50 fee, may lower fees depending on other funds.
 - iv. Childcare – hoping to add in drop-in fees, a plan for those that may need childcare only for early release Fridays
 - v. No changes to Carry Forward – may have additional pass-through from Childcare grant.
 - vi. Applying for one additional grant, could get up to another \$100k, just in application stage. If that were to come through, would solidify our year going forward and put FHM in a good financial situation.
 - b. BOD vote: Dan moves to approve the budget as presented, Ben seconds, unanimous approval of 2022/2023 budget.
- 9. Facilities Update (Cyndi)
 - a. Have submitted 3 different proposals for modifications over the summer, don't know if we will get it approved or will be able to make it work, but if we can get people out during spring break to get quotes and get things ordered, trying to make a bigger

conference room space, additional office room space, provide better tech lab space. Bookcases and book shelves for upstairs copy room, a bit of a teacher workspace.

10. Principal Search Committee Update (John/Ben)

- a. Gave 3rd principal search update to staff last Friday, went well, first external interview last week, another initial interview this week, some additional ones to reach out. Jesse and Megan review resumes to ensure they meet basic qualifications. First zoom interviews being done by Ben and Kim Oliver (community rep), afterwards will determine who we will invite on-site, still working out the details about the on-site. While Kim and Ben are conducting the first-round interviews, they are recorded, every member of the committee reviews the interview, scores the candidates, and then candidates discussed as a group.
- b. Level of Board Involvement in interview process – what interaction does the Board get in this process? Principal Search Committee discussed would like to propose a meet and greet session for Board members, Committee would like to retain ownership of the interviews themselves. Tentative schedule, during full day interview for candidates, from 2-4pm, opportunity for Board members to come meet the candidates in-person or virtually, ultimately a decision for the Board. Alison would like an opportunity to meet candidates, give a presentation about the Board and let candidates ask questions, consensus that rest of Board members did not need to be directly involved in interviews. Hoping for a recommendation to the Board by next Board meeting.
- c. Level of Jeffco Schools in interview process – Jeffco holds veto power, just making sure that we don't do something crazy or illegal, have that right, Tracy Dorland has reached out and asked to meet all the finalists, just wants an opportunity to meet them before Jeffco officially hires. Search Committee final recommendation was to ask Board what they want to do. More of an informal introduction to the candidate, would be good to just have the final candidate, after Board has voted, maybe an opportunity to gain visibility at the District level. Invite Superintendent to meet and greet, if can't make it there, leave it up to her office to

11. Board Self Evaluation Results (Julie)

- a. Principal
 - i. Improve the relationship, trust, and transparency between admin and staff as well as timely conflict resolution between either BOD members or the principal
 1. How can staff have more say in how the principal is evaluated?
 2. How has the principal evaluation changed to reflect an emphasis on getting truthful responses from staff?
 3. What processes can be put in place to improve the timely resolution of issues?
 - a. Gather anonymous feedback that we could take action on?
 - ii. Principal Search Committee should outline and document the process for future use – John: will bring this up at the next PSC meeting on Tuesday.
- b. Strategic Planning

- i. Crisis management have taken precedence over long term strategic planning – action item: put this back on the May meeting agenda, good way to orient the new Board members – have it be a goal to have it on the agenda every single meeting, even if we can't spend as much time as we'd like on it
 - 1. How can tracking of goals be improved? – setting big picture, high-level stuff, up to operational group, lead by principal to put together specifics but this may be a lot to put on a potentially brand new principal – balance of both with strategy and some easier more attainable goals too.
 - 2. Can other committees help with the tracking of goals?
 - 3. Is there a plan to reintroduce SP as a standing agenda item?
- c. Community Communications
 - i. Common theme: confusion about the community about the function of the BOD
 - 1. What can be done to improve functional awareness of the BOD – at governance, discussed to create a handout that will be sent out to new families in a packet that goes to them in May – what BOD does, what all subcommittees do, increase visibility, what the Board does; explicitly write out the differences between the BOD, CSN, Operations
 - a. Maybe to entire community and not just new families? Have an FHM leadership table, one rep from each of the three branches there
 - 2. What can be done to be more physically present? School beautification day, back to school night, staff meet and greet, bring back the Board Corner in the Fox Flash
- d. Financial Planning
 - i. Common theme: this seems to be a major strength of the BOD, inly indifference was in the 3-5 year financial needs of the school.
 - 1. What needs to happen for BOD members to have a better understanding of FHM's 3-5 year financial needs? No more pandemics! Hopeful that next year will be a bit more stable, and Finance Committee could take this on.
- e. Board Meetings
 - i. Common theme: meetings are long, boring, more constructive in-person.
 - 1. What specific ideas do you have to make meetings more efficient?
 - a. Started to move some committee updates into consent agenda, can help to move things along
 - 2. How can meetings run more in-line with the strategic goals of the BOD?
 - 3. How can more community input be integrated into the meetings?
- f. Conclusion
 - i. What action items have we taken away from this discussion?
 - 1. More real-time responses from
 - 2. Add strategic planning items to agenda in May
 - 3. Handout about the BOD to everyone
 - 4. Three branches at a table at the carnival next year

5. Bring back the Board Corner in the Fox Flash
- ii. What topics need to be discussed in more depth?

12. Family Engagement

- a. Family Engagement Survey results – in about top 20 for number of survey respondents
 - i. Trending a bit behind the district in all standards measured in the survey
 1. Conducted in Nov/Dec time frame, a LOT going on at the school in that time frame, our participation numbers are really strong this year – twice as much as we’ve had in the past, a few years ago had just 40, and this is engagement (not always the same as satisfaction).
 - ii. School trend since 2017 – U-shape developing in most of the standards from 17/18, dips and now rebounding a bit
- b. Some specific questions:
 - i. The School asks for my input about my child’s education – lower than district, but 42% of those that took the survey disagree with the statement. How do we communicate in a more effective way? How do we make families feel that they have more input in their child’s education?
 - ii. Communication - I am satisfied with the ways the school communicates with me and the school adapts to my communication needs – both lower than district level results – what are some ways that other schools that are communicating that are more effective? Not enough about the individual child? How do we gather more information about this to make changes?
 - iii. Supporting Student Success – also behind district levels: The School Shares their overall performance with families; if my child were having trouble I Would know how to get extra help; my child’s teacher has high expectations of my child (high score here, still below district level)
 - iv. Speaking up For Every Child – I know the school’s process for resolving complaints or problems (50%), school helps my child meet their goals to prepare for high school graduation and beyond – same as district this year
 - v. Sharing Power – all families are represented on the PTA and other school groups – not sure exactly what people are looking for in this area. Organizations are representative of our community – could be a bit more diverse, but aligned with diversity level of the school for the most part. I feel that I am partner with the school in making decisions that impact all decisions (53%) – historically low scoring – maybe tied to communication, really getting the community to understand exactly what the Board and committees do (i.e. Board is selecting a new principal this year, can sit on the finance committee and be involved in the budget, etc.)
 - vi. Collaborating with the Community – the school connects me to community resources (such as clubs activities, community education programs, or other community resources) – does depend on the community that you live in, tricky

- at our school because people live in a variety of places. Someone identified as a family engagement liaison; want to collaborate with Pleasant View Community
- vii. Jeffco Generation Skills – do very well on these overall and vs. district
 - c. Things we can easily do as a school:
 - i. Start the year off with a phone call and check in throughout year – talk to teachers about this, but don't give the teachers the time to do this
 - ii. Don't only communicate when something is wrong
 - iii. Communicate what will happen, not what already happened
 - iv. Ensure that families can receive classroom, school, and district communication in one place
 - d. Will be shared at the State of the School, maybe some snippets in the Fox Flash, open to ideas of how to extend it to people

13. Future BOD Meeting Format

- a. Virtual, in-person, hybrid?
 - i. Would like to see a virtual option offered, is a big equity piece
 - ii. Early in the year, have a couple meetings in-person, so new members can get to know veteran members
 - iii. Cyndi – trying to get a mimeo board for conference room, would allow us to do a virtual at the same time as the Board meeting, if all that gets approved and put in by next year
- b. How do we want to meet in April?
 - i. Would be nice to have the option for community members to observe – also may need to go into exec session
 - ii. Maybe in May do in-person with the new folks

14. Assignments

- a. Strategic planning and goals discussion scheduled for May meeting
- b. Bekky will send final approved 2/10 minutes to Lisa for posting

15. Adjournment at 9:01pm

- a. Ben moves to adjourn, Dan 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