



Board of Directors  
Board Meeting Minutes  
June 17, 2022

Free Horizon Montessori PK – 8  
Montessori for the 21st Century - a place to learn, a place to belong

1. Meeting called to order: 9:08am (John)
  - a. Board members present: Doug Klof, Kristy Kibler, John Frost, Ben Dodson, Brian Simms
  - b. Board members absent (excused): Bekky Robbins
  - c. Staff members present: Cyndi Vosburgh, Donnetta MacDonald
  - d. Guests: none
  
2. Approval of agenda for current meeting, including consent agenda (John)
  - a. John moves to open discussion
    - i. John – pull AMS documents out of consent and vote at the end of the agenda
    - ii. Kristy moves to approve agenda, removing AMS consent agenda item, Doug seconds, unanimous approval
  
3. Public Comment and Celebration (John)
  - a. John – We made it successfully through the school year.
  - b. Cyndi- Wrapped up AMS materials project, we now have equitable classrooms. Thanks for the CSN donation. Early Education Grant. Karen & Jen are leaving. Jen for a year. Her job is posted and we are interviewing replacements.
  - c. Ben- Fantastic Kinder graduation ceremonies
  - d. John- Ms. Tracy is moving on. She has been such a gift to the school.
  - e. Cyndi- Megan Wells did a great job organizing graduations and after school activities.
  
4. Principal Update (Donnetta)
  - a. Facilities Walkthrough- Promising timeline
    - i. Tech Space Update- bids are coming in for construction and furniture should be final by next week.
  - b. Staffing
    - i. Upper El lead teacher interviews are happening, not a ton of candidates, one highly recommended teacher applied but not montessori trained. Ms. Shannon has decided to stay.
    - ii. AP Position- Lisa Kingston guided the interview team (Starr, Ellen, & Megan) We had 7 applications, 4 candidates (2 external, 2 internal) (2 principal lic. 2 not) The process included a panel with mock teacher reviews and challenging scenarios that examined their skills and knowledge around parent interactions, staff supervision, student safety and federal obligations. These narrowed the pool to 2 candidates and the position will be offered to Mr. Jesse who scored far higher than anyone. There was some surprise at the lack of knowledge around federal obligations in the two licensed candidates. There is still some back and forth around the title of Dean or AP. The district is asking for the title of Dean since

Jesse is not a licensed principal. John- does the staff support Jesse in this role? It has not been announced yet but the interview team had high praise about how Jesse has stepped up this year, that he is knowledgeable and humble in his professionalism. He has handled a lot while Donnetta was out and asked Lisa for feedback on how he handled tough scenarios. Jesse is taking summer classes to target gaps in his education and experience. Doug- Thanks Donnetta for your work and thoughtfulness. Her leadership style to help others grow.

- iii. Lower EL- Only other teaching position vacancy.
  - iv. Hiring still more 3-day assistant positions, receptionist, and instructional coach. Jane is being asked to grow her role and take on more. Yay Jane!
  - c. Enrollment- We are closing the ½ day preschool class and keeping last year’s classroom closures. We have reasonable waitlists in primary and middle school. With Jeffco closing schools in the fall this might change. By maintaining our current enrollment levels we are in a good position to sustain our current model and offer pay increases. Corrine will be back next year and continue to drive our school marketing and communications.
5. New Board Member Consideration (John)
- a. Julie P is currently the president of the governance committee. She is interested in filling our 7th and final vacancy for the 22-23 school year. She has submitted a letter of intent.
  - b. Brian moves to add Julie to the board, Ben seconds, unanimous approval.
  - c. Julie joins the meeting.
6. Prior Board Goals (Doug)
- a. John- Reading of the Mission, Vision & Motto, apologies we neglected to do this earlier in the meeting.
  - b. Doug
7. Strategic Planning and Board Goals
- a. Review of Board responsibilities
    - i. Determine & promote the mission of FHM
    - ii. Select, support and review the performance of the principal- What does this mean? Board president and Principal meet biweekly
    - iii. Ensure effective organizational planning through the development and annual review of a strategic plan.
    - iv. Manage resources effectively
    - v. Enhance FHM’s public standing
    - vi. Insure legal and ethical integrity and maintain accountability
    - vii. Recruit and orient new Directors and assess board performance. -We need a board policy manual review to weed out operational responsibilities that fall outside of board purview and overlap with staff responsibilities.
    - viii. Ensure FHM is operating in a manner that is responsive to both district requirements and members of FHM- Where does accreditation fit into this?
  - b. Goals that seem to be appearing are- working with the governance committee on streamlining our guiding documents, finding a way to better align with the district and

take advantage of their resources, creating a culture of continuous improvement. Sorting out challenges in integration with Jeffco. Creating a culture of asking about Jeffco resources. Staff training in Jeffco, help the staff feel encouraged to attend and that training is necessary

- i. Doug- We should be setting our own path. We don't want to be a district school, what is the actual goal. Seems like there is a bit of mistrust in the staff from our charter school days. The district often doesn't know what to do with our innovation status.
- ii. Doug- What about lead teacher retention? Lead teacher retention is important but if we look at Montessori intent, the 3 year cycle is more about the child and the environment, less importance on the lead teacher. There is a gap in finding Montessori trained teachers for the older grades, this creates a hiring challenge. We do have a parental expectation that teachers commit to a 3 year window with their child.
- iii. Strategic goal: We should be delivering Montessori education in every classroom. How do we measure this? What is the actual goal? Instructional leadership team, accountability?

8. Lunch Break (John) 12pm-1pm

9. Resume Strategic Planning and Board Goals

- a. We need goals that cover improvement culture, family engagement, operational, financial, communication, academic rigor and performance, board operational tightening up.
- b. Kristy- These goals need to be longer term, lofty goals that a board 5 years from now can still use to develop annual goals underneath. This will keep the high level progress we are aiming for clear and allow us to get clear about the 12 mth work. Most strategic plans live with an organization for 5-10 years. Lets get 3 strategic goals nailed down and then flesh out the short term.
- c. Draft Goal #1- Promote a continued culture change that reflects the FHM mission.
  - i. This goal reflects and supports the change in leadership from last year. It gives Donnetta a strategic goal to intentionally and actively change the culture of the school.
  - ii. Love & logic training, community building and buy-in, family engagement, promoting volunteerism, admin & ILT could provide the board 2-3 high impact ideas, maybe in Sept?, support and integrate more deeply with the CSN, make the CSN board liaison official.
- d. Draft Goal #2- This one would capture our expectations around academic rigor, delivering a strong Montessori education and community trust and confidence in our ability to do that.
  - i. Test scores are part of this equation even if they dont marry perfectly with the montessori model. We need to help teachers better communicate and present data when community member expectations are missed.
  - ii. Training and professional development, ILT can develop a plan, AMS accreditation, SAC committee, communication around the school testing and academic goals

- iii. We are committed to the Montessori model but not as an end unto itself.
- e. Draft Goal #3- Insure the operational sustainability and longevity of FHM.
  - i. Clear need to streamline our policy manual and bylaws, 5 year financial plan from school admin, working closely with governance committee we have 2 board reps this year, explore how to open a line of communication with the principal around sensitive issues within the scope of sunshine laws.

10. Public Comment Discussion (John)

- a. How do we handle public comment at board meetings?
- b. 24 hr prior sign up before the meeting. Forward any signups the rules and expectations.
- c. Town hall?

11. Update from Cyndi

- a. Conference room construction has begun using a combination of CSN, SRO30, budget, and carry forward funds. Cyndi \$5K, Donnetta \$25K

12. Assignments

- a. Kristy to send minutes to Bekky to edit and review.
- b. Kristy and John to review language for strategic plan

13. Adjournment at 3:55pm

- a. Ben moves to adjourn, Brian 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*