



**Board of Directors  
January Board Meeting Minutes  
January 11th, 2024**

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

**1. Call to Order (6:02p) (John.)**

- Attendance
  - Board Members: Kristy Kibler, Julie Predki-Weber, Julie Becker, Erin McGrath, Matt Muhm, Erin McGrath, Lisa Smith
  - Absent:
  - Staff: Megan Wells, Donnetta MacDonald, Lisa Kingston, Julia Holsey, Suzanne Diekman, Mallory Hamilton
  - Community:

**2. Approval of Agenda + Consent Agenda items (John)**

- Matt moves to approve
  - Erin seconds
  - Motion carries unanimously

**3. Public Comments and Celebrations**

- Megan + Mallory - thank you for Box set-up and retrieval
- Julia H -
  - kids happy to be back and normalizing smoothly (at least LE)
  - Ms. Mallory sang for students coming back to school
- Kristy -
  - Megan W - lots of her work goes unnoticed - goes to all district meetings and shows her face to represent FHM
  - Mr. Matt New music teacher is doing great things
- Megan W
  - Staff development days before break was great - writing coach came
  - MS has had better expectations established
  - Enrollment process is experimenting this year, thank you for everyone embracing new ideas
- Suzanne - kids in the middle of spelling bee - can send 2 students to district
- John - Mierra MS science fair just happened

**4. Principal Updates (Donnetta)**

- Enrollment - trying new things, seems to be working well -
  - MS night went well
  - Wonderful night of kindergarten went well (some people move Kinders to neighborhood school)
  - Sioban and Donnetta meet regularly to discuss
  - Things look positive -
    - kinder looking good this year - we are in charge of lists now instead of district
    - UL looking good too
  - Tours full - 37 people in last tour
- Students seem to be normalizing well this year - less discipline issue than prior years

- This is busy meeting week - district meeting, John BOD meeting, principal options meeting, and this BOD meeting
- Tracy Dorland - district meeting
  - Jeffco has lowest salary scale in front range peers
    - District is doing focus groups to discuss this
    - Bonds that passed in Jeffco did not include inflation when other school districts did
  - Jeffco still struggling financially
    - District is cutting 20 instructional assistant positions
- Met with option schools to try and find ways to market option schools
- Lisa + Donnetta - has been working on budgeting + calendar
  - Set out intent on return forms - more direct questions
  - One not returning - One retiring

#### **5. Staff Liaison Update (Julia H)**

- What is your communication style
  - Lots of constant themes
    - Straight forward with authenticity and respect
    - Assume positive intent
    - Timely and direct for planning purposes
  - January 24th - spelling bee volunteers - can email Julia H.
- What are some recent celebrations/challenges
- Friday meeting for winter MAP scores - they did go down
  - It was hard to hear b/c teachers working hard
  - Montessori Peaks is performing better - teachers can go to MP to see what they are doing
- People took the intent to return form as passive aggressive
  - Some asked if these questions were legal
  - Teachers take as admin perceives that teachers not meeting expectations
  - It was proposed that Donnetta have department meetings to address these concerns

#### **6. CSN Update (Megan W + Lisa S)**

- 2 main updates
  - 1 = quick retro on last term
    - Staff Appreciation lunch
    - CO gives day - raised above \$2,500 goal
    - Approved party in Jan/Feb
  - New mission statement in Nov
  - Kristy helping with policy manual
- Next meeting - Jan 16 th - policy updates and events
  - Fox trot
  - Staff appreciation
  - EOY picnic

#### **7. President/District Update (John)**

- Meets weekly with Donnetta as a sounding board and make board aware of what is going on
- Open channel of communication between Donnetta and board
- Kristy + John met with district about diapering policy
  - Not much to discuss there - we have our policy/license that we cannot change

- District concern that we run our pre-school as a separate entity, so district has no say in policy yet holds all the liability
- We have asked for memo about legal concerns
- Turned into innovation plan update

#### 8. Innovation Plan Update (John)

- Pushed renewal date to Nov 2024
- Donnetta - District probably wants to get a handle on our assessment data and enrollment
- John thinks district has other bigger fish to fry
- Mike F + Kristy/John meeting in mid-Feb after Tracy D. meets with Jeffco Board (lots of new members)
  - If district has any changes with innovation status - they will give us plenty of time, most likely through the next school year
- New school board members need to be educated on innovation schools

#### 9. Facilities Update (Julie B + Megan W)

- Team at school has done a great job working with district to plan for Bond work (2018 passage) - with inflation things costing more than anticipated so not everything can be done
- Megan W. has a presentation
- What has been done - we had 1 million dollars (new building is 30 mil for context)
  - Replace old carpet - update security cameras - some of old playground equipment
- District will cover secured vestibule front entry - but they are asking us to cover some things
  - Megan is looking to push back on some items
- Elementary playground removed b/c deemed unsafe, so would like to get that replaced
- *District is covering:*
  - *Vestibule remodel will model Mitchell Elementary Secure vestibule*
  - *Fire panel + room signage update to make safer*
- What district wants us to cover:
  - LED lighting changes based on priority level 1 and level 2
  - Sinks, casework/cubbies, and toilets
- There is hesitancy to put these funds forward if we don't know we are staying in this building as a district school
  - Can we negotiate that any money we put forward will go towards any leasing costs that are possible in the future
  - It will be cheaper to do it in all at once
- We can make an amendment to the MOU - Tracy D would have to sign it after district legal looks at it
  - Can we meet with Mike + Tracy to discuss this and see if they are open to give us some sort of guarantee that we can recoup this money
- Julie B moves for the board to immediately begin negotiating an agreement with Jeffco to secure the requested funds in the event that our innovation plan is not renewed.
- Matt seconds
- Motion carried unanimously
- John + Kristy will help Donnetta, Megan, Mallory to get this moving
  - John will help Megan with talks to district Director of Facilities

#### 10. Budget 1st Read (Matt/Erin/Mallory)

- Budget is conservative
- Any changes to student fees/costs?
  - Cutting some costs from 23/24 school year where Mallory sees possible - reduce fees to family by spending down the carry forward (trying to reduce fees to families as much as possible)
  - Increased student fees:
    - PK increases - all other grades decreased
  - BAC - rounded up to the nearest \$5 - 1.7% increase
  - Proposed a freeze with PS3, raised PK4 due to universal PK
    - If raise PS3 would raise above 1k, which could be sticker stock and they pay the most anyway
    - Increase PK4 to better align with universal PK
      - a. \$50/month for 5 day - 5%
      - b. \$25/month for 3 day - 3.5%
- Mallory being more conservative with enrollment number projections for next year
- Julie P moves to approve 2024/2025 1st read of budget - Lisa S. seconds
  - Motion carries unanimously

**11. Donnetta's contract - executive session (John)**

- John moves to move into executive session - Julie P. Seconds - motion carries unanimously
  - §24-6-402(4)(f), C.R.S., Personnel matters, identifying the person or position to be discussed.

**12. Vote on Donnetta's contract (John)**

- Kristy moves to approve Donnetta's contract for 2024/2025 school year - Julie P. 2nds
- Motion carries - John abstains because he negotiated contract - everyone else votes yes

**13. Governance Committee Proposed Policy Manual Changes**

- Table to next meeting

**14. Assignments - (Julie P)**

- John will give weekly updates for facilities updates
- John to work with admin to start district negotiations
  - Kristy to support where needed
- All BOD members to review proposed Governance Committee proposed policy manual changes ahead of next meeting

**15. Adjournment - (John)**

- John moves to adjourn - Julie P. seconds
- Motion carried unanimously at 9:30p

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.

*Julie Predki-Weber*

Secretary

