

**Minutes of
Connect Charter School Society, Board of Directors Meeting
May 17, 2016 at Connect Charter School**

Board members present: Denise Kitagawa (C), Harold Lemieux (PC), Dave Robinson (VC), Wendy Baillie, Joni Carroll, Tim Edwards, Susan Gaetz, Jennifer Hittel, and Mackenzie Regent.

Board members absent: Mark Blake, Luana Comin-Sartor, David McKenzie, Gavin Peat, Jeff Turner and Dr. Norm Vaughan.

Staff present: Susan Chomistek (Superintendent), Darrell Lonsberry (Principal), Dr. Phil Butterfield (Assistant Principal) and Myra Penberthy (Secretary Treasurer).

Ms. Shergill & Ms. Groeller and two grade nine students, Nadine and Ghada, presented "Agents of Change" a social justice initiative, and their projects related to the elective. The elective students and teachers will be visiting the Canadian Museum of Human Rights in Winnipeg Manitoba. The Board was very appreciative of the outstanding work of the elective students and teachers, as well as their passion for their work.

Board Chair Ms. Denise Kitagawa declared a quorum and called the meeting to order at 6:11 pm.

Motion 58.15 by Jennifer Hittel,
THAT the May 17, 2016, Board agenda be approved as amended.
Carried

Motion 59.15 by Tim Edwards,
THAT the Board approves the April 12, 2016, Board of Directors' meeting minutes.
Carried

Mr. Dave Robinson presented the External Collaboration committee's terms of reference.

Motion 60.15 by Mackenzie Regent,
THAT the Board approves the Terms of reference of the External Collaboration Committee as amended, and revoke the terms of reference dated September 21, 2010.
Carried

Ms. Penberthy presented the Connect Charter School Society 2016-17 Budget to the Board in conjunction with Ms. Regent from the Audit & Finance committee. The Audit & Finance committee reviewed the budget at their meeting on May 13, 2016, and provided input for the Alberta Education Budget Report.

Motion 61.15 by Dave Robinson
THAT the Board approve the 2016-17 Connect Charter School Society operating and capital budgets.
Carried

Motion 62.15 by Harold Lemieux
THAT Mr. Darrell Lonsberry's resignation is accepted with profound regret.
Carried

Motion 63.15 by Joni Carroll,
THAT the Board approve amendments to the following policies, to become effective upon proclamation of the Education Act:

1. Policy 1.04 Roles and Responsibilities of the Board;
2. Policy 1.05 Role of the Board member;
3. Policy 1.06 Board meetings and
4. Policy 6.01 Student Records.

Carried

Motion 64.15 by Susan Gaetz,

THAT the Board approves new Policy 1.07 Petitions, to become effective upon proclamation of the Education Act.

Carried

Motion 65.15 by Harold Lemieux,

THAT the following contracts be approved:

1. a full time continuing teaching contract for Ms. Tarysha Haugrud effective August 15, 2016;
2. a full time continuing teaching contract for Ms. Cynthia Nilsson effective August 15, 2016;
3. a full time temporary teaching contract for Ms. Brittney Gilisbockel effective August 15, 2016 until June 30, 2017;
4. a part time continuing teaching contract for Ms. Shannon Mitchell-Flek effective August 15, 2016;
5. a full time continuing education assistant contract for Ms. Jessica James effective August 15, 2016;
6. a full time continuing education assistant contract for Ms. Leane Riley effective August 15, 2016;
7. a full time continuing education assistant contract for Ms. Dawn Davis effective August 15, 2016.

Motion 66.15 Harold Lemieux,

To accept Mr. Mike Neufeld's resignation with regret.

Carried

Secretary Treasurer & Audit & Finance Committee Report, Myra Penberthy

- Secretary Treasurer's Report in Appendix "A".

Motion 67.15 by Susan Gaetz,

THAT the Board approves a contract with Maplewood computing Ltd. for a PASI compliant student record information system.

Carried

Health and Safety Report, Darrell Lonsberry

- A member of our caretaking staff is returning to work for 2 hours per day, 4 months after his accident.
- An incident at Kamp Kiwanis was handled in a safe, proactive, caring and appropriate manner.
- This school year we have had 24 incident reports involving students. Any time there is first aid or medical treatment an incident report is created.

Leadership Team Report, Susan Chomistek, Darrell Lonsberry & Phil Butterfield

- Ms. Susan Chomistek presented the leadership team report in Appendix "B".
- Ms. Chomistek also presented a superintendent's report on the charter school superintendent's meeting in Edmonton.

School Council, Jennifer Hittel

- There was a presentation to parent council regarding the parent summit, which is also in the dropbox.

Communications, Wendy Baillie

- No report.

Research & Innovation, Dr. Phil Butterfield.

- Two projects have been completed and three more are underway.

External Collaboration, Dave Robinson

- Minutes of the last meeting are in Appendix "C"

Governance, Denise Kitagawa

- Process for hiring a new principal is underway.
- Governance committee report is in Appendix “D”.

Facilities, Tim Edwards,

- No report.

School Operations, Denise Kitagawa

- No report.

The meeting terminated at 8:03 p.m.

Denise Kitagawa, Board Chair

Appendix “A”

Connect Charter School Society Board Meeting May 17, 2016 Secretary Treasurer’s Report

April 30, 2016 Financial Statements

The April 30, 2016 Connect Charter School Society financial statements were presented to the Audit & Finance Committee at our meeting on May 13, 2016. The financial reports showed a very favorable cash position due to the receipt of student fees for the 2016/17 school year. The net surplus is in a positive position and we are on track for a net breakeven for the year ended August 31, 2016.

Student information record system PASI compliant

We have chosen to go with Maplewood Computing Ltd., as our vendor of choice for our new PASI compliant student record information system. Power school did not respond to our repeated attempts to review a demonstration of their system until we had already arranged training and conversion with Maplewood.

Although we did not receive a demonstration we are pleased with our choice for the following reasons:

1. Responsiveness of Maplewood to our request for a review of their system and the ease with which they were able to present to us remotely.
2. Cost of the system: Maplewood, an initial cost of \$2,550 (initial license and hosting), **annual fees of \$900** (ServicePlus and hosting), plus training. SchoolLogic (our prior system) was a total of **\$3,198 (for last years annual fees)**. PowerSchool was a total of \$5,400 (initial license and set up fee), **annual fees of \$6,700** (annual hosting and subscription fees), plus training. As you can see Maplewood is the most economical choice.
3. Calgary Board of Education has decided to convert to Maplewood for its student record information system.

Currently we have training scheduled for Ms. Shewfelt on May 12, 2016. Nola’s feedback is that she is very happy with the conversion to the new system.

Monthly reporting to Alberta Education

Alberta Education has requested that all School Jurisdictions prepare quarterly financial reporting, the first reporting period being June 30, 2016 for the end of their first quarter. We will be preparing our template monthly as the quarterly periods do not align with our quarters. Therefore there is a template to prepare monthly which will total to the three months. In order to submit for the first quarter we will have to prepare accruals for the end of June.

Below is an excerpt from a statement by the Deputy Minister, Ms. Lorna Rosen:

“It is the desire of the Government of Alberta to report monthly financial information to the people of Alberta. This will allow the finance community to be more strategic in how information is provided to decision-makers, and it will help with evaluating government projects regarding the allocation of resources to those projects. School boards are part of the consolidated reporting entity of Alberta Education and the Government of Alberta and school board spending accounts for approximately 90 per cent of Alberta Education’s total consolidated expenses.

Therefore, we will be requiring each school board to provide us with specific operational information. For the first year, this will be on a quarterly basis, and for subsequent years on a monthly basis. A draft template, similar to the Fall Update that school boards complete each November, is attached. This information will be used by Alberta Education to meet the monthly reporting requirements of Treasury Board and Finance.

The quarterly reporting will commence for the period ending June 30, 2016. School boards will be required to submit the template to Financial Reporting and Accountability by the 15th day of the following month. The first submission will be July 15, 2016 with the next submissions October 15, 2016 and January 15, 2017. Starting in April 2017, the template will be required each month and will be required by the 15th day of the following month.

Thank you for your support and co-operation as we move forward with this new reporting initiative. Alberta Education is fully aware of the concerns raised by school boards, but is cognizant of the reporting needs of the Government of Alberta. We will continue to work with all school boards in order to meet the needs of all Alberta users of financial information and to provide the best, most reliable financial information.”

Respectfully submitted,

Myra Penberthy

Connect Charter School Society

Board Meeting

May 17, 2016

Appendix “B”
Connect Charter School Superintendent/Leadership Team Report
Board of Directors Meeting – May 17, 2016

1. Exemplary Teaching, Learning, and Leadership in Connect Charter School

Outdoor and Environmental Education and Leadership are descriptors in our Exemplary Learning, Teaching, and Leadership Frameworks. Spring is an incredibly busy time at Connect Charter School as many of our outdoor and environmental education programs take place. All of the grade 6 students participated in a winter camp at Ribbon Creek in January and February, where they cross-country skied, built quinzees, and practiced winter survival skills.

The remainder of our classes are immersed in multi day experiences over the next two months. At the grades 4 and 8 levels, the students went to Kamp Kiwanis. Under Mr. Cadman’s leadership, over 200 students were able to participate in very positive learning experiences. Leadership development for the grade 8 students was a key component at Kamp Kiwanis, and the students worked with the grade four students as leaders and mentors. Additionally, the grade 8 students participated in Reverse Orienteering, food preparation, and other activities in the outside environment. The grade 4 students had an initial scavenger hunt and exploration of the forest, participated in science activities using the natural environment as their classroom, and practiced their yoga in the forest. Both groups played the Animal Game, participated in trail games and other activities, went on night hikes, had campfire activities, and had a talent show. As this was a modification of the spring activity for these grades, there will be extensive debrief sessions with parent volunteers, students, and staff. It is our belief that we must continually improve the programs that we offer to our students.

The grades 5 and 7 students have just returned from Fort Steele, which had strong historical and environmental contexts. As part of the leadership development at Connect Charter School, the grades 8 and 9 students play leadership roles at many of the camps. These leaders were trained and supported through the efforts of Mr. Cadman, Ms. Shergill, and Ms. Haige, one of our student teachers and an alumni of our school. They received training and guidance before going on the camps, and were supported by teachers and Mr. Pegg while immersed in the activities. We have found this has a powerful impact on both the leaders and the younger students. We are very appreciative for Mr. Petronech’s leadership and guidance at Fort Steele. Working collaboratively with the teachers, Mr. Sweet, and Mr. Pegg, he spends countless hours making sure all details were managed. As the administrative representative, he is at Fort Steele for the entire two weeks ensuring that everything runs smoothly for the 200 students who attend.

All of our grade 9 students will be going to Rivers Edge near Water Valley for a culminating experience to celebrate their six years at Connect Charter School and their time developing skills and attitudes with regards to leadership, environmental awareness and stewardship, and competence in outdoor education skills. They will be participating in archery, on a high ropes course, in orienteering activities, in community building activities, and in field and gym games. There will be a celebration dance in the evening for the students. The students are **very** excited to be involved in a different initiative that has all of the students together for one of their final activities at our school.

Under the areas of **Meaningful Curriculum Implementation, Communication and Leadership** and addressing one of the four key goals within our Board Strategic Plan of **Enhancing Research, Innovation and Collaboration**, we were very pleased when Ms. Shergill and Mrs. Bailey’s proposal was accepted for the IDEAS Conference, sponsored by the University of Calgary and Galileo. The goal of the conference was to create opportunities for research to inform practice

and practice to inform research in the areas of assessment, in particular designing for innovation. The audience for the conference was comprised of researchers, administrators, and teachers. The topic, *An Exploration of Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Relationships* fell under the conference theme of Indigenous Education. The session was extremely well attended and many positive comments were received after the session. It was the perfect forum to share the work that has won national recognition with the Governor General's Award. We are hoping this will also help inform university professors, teachers, and administrators throughout the province when the Teaching Quality Standard, the School Leadership Quality Standard, and the School Authority Leadership Standard are proclaimed with the added competencies and indicators in **Applying Foundational Knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit**. Through *Discovery Education*, Ms. Shergill was invited to present at *Ignite Your Passion for Discovery Calgary*. This groups hosts a variety of community driven events that support ongoing professional learning. This is an innovative way to connect educators within our city, and it was a real honour that Ms. Shergill was approached. We appreciate Mr. Petronech's leadership in honouring the work that is done within our school and in forwarding Ms. Shergill's name.

2. Update on Superintendent Interviews for 2015

I have completed the interviews for all staff and approximately half of the parents. Mr. Lonsberry and I will be setting up student interviews in the next few weeks. I will compile the qualitative information and will present the Executive Summary to the Board. It is always an extremely positive exercise to receive the feedback, and I look forward to completing and sharing the final documents.

3. The Association of Alberta Public Charter Schools (TAAPCS)

October 6/7, 2016 Regular Meeting (Calgary)

May 25, 2016 School Leadership Learning Initiative (Calgary)

June 10, 2016 EAC (Red Deer)

Appendix “C”

External collaboration meeting April 27 2016 Connect Charter fishbowl

Attendees: Darrell Lonsberry, Phil Butterfield, Scott Petronech, Susan Chomistek, Debora Scott-Pylypiw, Lori Wilhelm-Einsporn, Gavin Peat, Dave Robinson (Chair). Regrets : Norm Vaughan

The meeting was called to order at 4:15PM

Agenda was accepted as distributed

1. Review and edit terms of reference
2. Review of current ECC related activities and staffing
3. Discuss external collaboration in a fiscally constrained world. Where are our priorities and biggest bang for the effort.
4. Other?

Meeting minutes

1. Discussed and proposed changes to the existing Terms of reference. Will be sent out to committee members for a final audit prior to proposal to the board and attached to these minutes.
2. Current. Staffing of ECC responsibilities is currently shared amongst staff and administration. There are currently ad hoc efforts by teachers and administration to split the role into manageable tasks. We have been able to maintain our efforts towards both Pre-service teachers and Connect Charter tours. Developing new educational contacts and devoting the deep thinking time helpful in creating sharing opportunities of our unique pedagogy has been more difficult. Future. Dedicated ECC staffing possibilities rely on funding gained if we secure inclusive education grants for our charter (funding an educational assistant will likely have priority on those funds). It is also possible that 2017-18 school year resource restructuring might allow for existing staff to dedicate some time to ECC.
3. Going forward we strategized around ways to connect with our key audiences.
 - Politicians and Government – growth opportunity
 - Alberta Education – growth opportunity
 - Other Schools and School Jurisdictions - ongoing growth opportunity
 - Post Secondary Institutions – monitor and make sure we find the proper balance point for these interactions. Discussion centred on how we could create useful connections that would benefit all parties involved. Alberta Education has recently undergone an HR overhaul as has the governmental educational bureaucracy. It is more critical than ever to ensure our unique message is heard at multiple levels. Ideas that we could spearhead to satisfy our charter mandate include:
 - Shift to smaller group personalized PD that is an exchange of information, ideas and strategy as opposed to the large impersonal conventions that have traditionally defined this skill growth area. Two way exchanges of ideas would benefit both parties.
 - Creating vignettes that can be held up as examples of successful new pedagogy at Connect.
 - Re-visit teacher exchange and secondments.

Action items: draft up modest changes to Terms of reference. (group input) Reflect on details for strategies to further discussion our next meeting in May 2016.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:50PM

Appendix “D”

Connect Charter School Governance Committee Board Report – May 2016

The committee is meeting Tuesday, May 17th at 4:30 pm to finalize the process we will follow to select a new Principal for Connect Charter School and to confirm the associated roles and responsibilities of Board members and Superintendent Susan Chomistek. A verbal report will be provided at the Board meeting.

Highlights from the May TAAPCS Meeting:

- o Susan Chomistek, Phil Butterfield and Denise Kitagawa attended the TAAPCS banquet and regular meeting on May 5 and 6.
- o Three MLAs attended the first part of the meeting on May 6: Honourable Robert E. Wanner (MLA for Medicine Hat and The Speaker of the Alberta Legislative Assembly), Erin Babcock (MLA for Stony Plain) and Shaye Anderson (MLA for Leduc-Beaumont). Mr. Anderson brought greetings from Education Minister Eggen; he spoke of the importance of education, the government’s commitment to stable and, predictable funding as seen in the recent budget, and choice in education.
- o New Horizon’s shared a video documenting their 20 year celebration. This served as a reminder that our 20 year celebration will be coming up in 2019(?).
- o FFCA presented the results of research on East versus West teaching methodologies in a physical education setting. They partnered with Dr. Larry Katz, Professor and Director of the Sport Technology Research Centre, Faculty of Kinesiology at the U of C. Professor Katz is looking for other schools who would be interested in participating to expand the sample size.
- o Marie Rajic, from Hill and Knowlton, the communications firm that TAAPCS engaged to assist the organization with a strategic direction, presented information and an update that concluded with a mini Government Relations 101. Hill and Knowlton recommends collaborative negotiation based on a detailed understanding of the government’s values and needs and that clearly relates any lobbying not just to the government’s stated agenda but also to its deeper interests and needs.
- o Consultant Becky Kallal presented the results of her review of TAAPCS governance and operations. She asked several conversation-provoking questions intended to clarify the purpose of TAAPCS and the respective roles and contributions of charter school directors, superintendents, secretary-treasurers, principals, etc. in relation to TAAPCS. Strong and diverse opinions were expressed. Based on input from those in attendance, Becky, Dianne McBeth and the rest of the TAAPCS executive will be working with Garry Anderson to draft updated bylaws, etc. for discussion at the next TAAPCS meeting to be held in Calgary on October 6 & 7.