

**Minutes of  
Connect Charter School Society, Board of Directors Meeting  
October 17, 2017, at Connect Charter School**

**Board members present:** *Denise Kitagawa (C), Dave Robinson (VC), Mark Blake, Susan Boughs (in part), Joni Carroll (Skype), Jennifer Hittel, Ron Koper, Roman Lohin, Christy Newson, Gavin Peat, Mackenzie Regent and Michelle Rousseau, and Linda Trinh.*

**Board members absent:** *Susan Gaetz and Hyacinth Schaeffer*

**Staff present:** *Susan Chomistek (Superintendent), Dr. Phil Butterfield (Principal), Shashi Shergill (Assistant Principal), Dr. Chris Hooper (Assistant Principal), and Myra Penberthy (Secretary Treasurer).*

**Guest present:** *Mr. Mangesh Kumthekar*

*Ms. Brittney Glinsbockel presented on her elective “Sew for a Cause”. The focus on student leadership and service learning resonated as well as the tremendous response from our parent community. The Board was very supportive of the elective, and enjoyed the presentation.*

Board Chair Ms. Denise Kitagawa declared a quorum and called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

Motion 5.17 by Roman Lohin,  
THAT the October 17, 2017, Board agenda be approved.  
Carried

Ms. Denise Kitagawa requested Directors declare any conflicts of interest with respect agenda items. There were none.

Motion 6.17 by Mark Blake,  
THAT the September 12, 2017, Board of Directors meeting minutes be approved.  
Carried

Ms. Myra Penberthy presented the Fall Budget Update. Ms. Mackenzie Regent added the Audit & Finance committee perspective.

Motion 7.17 by Gavin Peat,  
THAT the Board approves the Alberta Education fall budget update.  
Carried

Ms. Myra Penberthy presented the Draft Quarterly Financial Statements and Ms. Regent added comments and insights from the Audit and Finance committee. The Board expressed their appreciation for the hard work to complete all the working papers for the audit to Ms. Krista Brenner, Ms. Nola Shewfelt, Ms. Susan Miller and Ms. Myra Penberthy.

Motion 8.17 by Mackenzie Regent,  
THAT the Board approves the Draft August 31, 2016 Financial Statements.  
Carried

Motion 9.17 by Ron Koper,

THAT the Board approves the following meeting dates: **2017:** Nov 28 (Board Recognition Dinner), Dec 12, **2018:** Jan 9, Jan 26 & 27 (Board advance), Feb 13, Mar 13, Apr 10, May 8, June 12, June 29 (Staff Appreciation Lunch), Sept 11, Oct 16, Nov 20, 2018 (AGM).

Carried

Ron Koper reviewed the Terms of Reference for the Fund Development Committee and fielded questions.

Motion 10.17 by Ron Koper,

THAT the Board approves the Fund Development Committee Terms of Reference as amended. The amendments include: Under composition, three members appointed annually, one of the members will be recruited from the Connect Charter Parent Society (if possible). Reports are submitted to the board and other stakeholders as appropriate.

Carried

The Board reviewed the Southland Contract for inclusion of services for MyBusStop App and after a vigorous discussion, decided to spend some time reviewing the contract wording at the Governance committee meeting, on November 7, prior to seeking approval at the November 21, 2017 Board meeting.

Motion 11.17 by Dave Robinson,

THAT the Board approves a probationary contract for Mr. Rajwinder Singh as Facilities Manager effective October 25, 2017 until July 31, 2018.

Carried

Health, Safety and Risk Management Report, Dr. Chris Hooper,

- The fall camps are now complete, the physical education field trips, as well as the first round of EXPO.
- There were no major incidents. All minor incidents were recorded and reviewed. Policies and procedures, and best practices are shared with staff.

Leadership Team Report, Susan Chomistek, Dr Phil Butterfield, Shashi Shergill, Dr. Chris Hooper

- See Appendix "A"

Provincial Achievement Tests Summary, was given by Dr. Phil Butterfield as well as the EXPO activities to date. The Board was impressed to hear and see the extensive list of activities that the students were involved in, which included Weaslehead activities, all the fall camps and extensive field trips.

November 9, 2017 at 10:30 a.m. the Board is invited to the Remembrance Day service. Also, Friday, October 20<sup>th</sup> in the afternoon, the Greenhouse grand opening and EXPO launch will take place.

Governance, Denise Kitagawa

- Governance Committee Report is in Appendix "B"
- Superintendent's review is substantially complete.
- Ron Koper gave an update on TAAPCS (The Association of Alberta Public Charter School) group.

School Operations, Roman Lohin

- There was a preliminary meeting of what we want to achieve during the year.

Communications, Joni Carroll

- Communications Committee met regularly via conference call
- Connect Charter School's submission with regards to potential amendments to the School Act was forwarded to Alberta Education via the Minister.

School Council, Jennifer Hittel

- Teacher appreciation treats were provided by parents on October 5<sup>th</sup>. The teachers were very appreciative of all the work by the parent community.
- Gear swap - October 5-6, 2017
- Volunteer signup website looks like a great tool and will be rolled out by the end of the school year

Secretary Treasurer & Audit & Finance Committee Report, Myra Penberthy

- Audit & Finance Committee Meeting Minutes in Appendix "C" & "D"
- Secretary Treasurer's Report in Appendix "E".

External Collaboration & Research & Innovation, Dave Robinson

- Meeting is planned for October 18, 2017

Sustainable Funding, Ron Koper

- Ongoing work on committee organization and planning.

Facilities Planning & Utilization, Mark Blake

- Appendix "F"
- Mr. Blake gave a very comprehensive summary of the meeting.

The Board met in-camera.

The meeting terminated at 8:50 pm.

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Denise Kitagawa, Board Chair

## Appendix “A”

### Connect Charter School Superintendent/Leadership Team Report Board of Directors Meeting- October 17, 2017

#### 1. EXPO

We had a very successful first round of EXPO trips with our traditional outdoor and environmental education three to five night excursions. We are very pleased with the success of the first round. Once again, we had absolutely incredible parent participation, and our staff provided strong leadership in the planning and implementation of the programs. This was our second year with the grade four trips to Camp Riveredge, and the feedback has been very positive, even though there was much needed rain in Calgary. Some of the students said the rain was a highlight of the trip, as they loved hearing the rain on the tents and just standing as the rain fell gently on their rain coats. The students were introduced to the Animal Game, to campfire, and to other traditions with Connect camps. For our first camps for grade four students, the location is just phenomenal. Both grade five pods were both supposed to go to Waterton. The first pod was able to get there, climbed Bear’s Hump, went on a boat tour across Waterton Lake, saw bears and bald eagles, and covered some of the outcomes in the science curriculum. One of the students said the best part was staying in a lovely cabin with friends and the beautiful view from the boat into American land. As a result of the fire, the second group could not go to Waterton, and instead they went to Camp Sweet, where they participated in many of the same activities, but in a different ecosystem. The grades six and seven students also went to Camp Sweet and were immersed in many of the familiar and much appreciated traditions that are associated with Camp Sweet. Both groups worked on building community, and fostering leadership, collaboration, and communication skills. For the grade six students, they needed to practice their knowledge and use resources to stay warm and dry! The Animal Game connected to the trees and forest unit, which addressed the trophic levels of the animals and the position they occupy in the food chain. Students also studied the layers of the forest and examined different species of trees and applied their knowledge of native trees by observing needles, leaves, pine cones, bark, and other parts of the trees, which are outcomes in the grade six science unit – Trees and Forests. The grade six students were introduced to different flora and fauna that were in the immediate surroundings. Students observed land formations related to the science unit, Planet Earth. We are very fortunate to have the expertise of Mr. Sweet and the other teachers at this wonderful location! The grade eight students went to Owl Camp, which is located in the Bow Valley across from Bow Valley Campground and adjacent to YMCA Camp Chief Hector. This location offered great views of the front ranges of the Rockies as well as close access to wetlands, forests, and grasslands. It is the second time we had used this venue, too, and it was an extremely positive experience. The first group of students were able to go whitewater rafting, and it was an incredible experience. The weather was too cold for the second group to participate in this, so this has been deferred to spring. For the grade nine students, the trip to Bamfield was another incredible experience. The weather was phenomenal, and the students enjoyed their immersive activities at the Bamfield Marine Science Center. One of the students commented that they appreciated how the “place was connected to the learning.” Some of the objectives that are covered while at BMSC are from the high school science curriculum, and we find that this is another way we prepare our students as confident learners when they leave our school. The students felt that the learning

experience was very much worth the money. The food and the dorms were great and the trip was well organized. The student perspective is always very valuable and appreciated. Thank you to all of the parents and staff for ensuring that our students have worthwhile and meaningful outdoor and environmental education experiences and to the Board for their ongoing support and commitment. We would also like to thank Mr. John Cadman in his role as Outdoor Education Portfolio Leader for his extraordinary efforts and commitment to ensuring that high quality programs exist for all students and that input is gathered to continually improve the outdoor and environmental program at Connect Charter School.

We are now entering our second round of EXPO trips. Our grade nine students all participated in *Get Out the Vote* where they went to Mount Royal University and to the University of Calgary to encourage students to vote in the upcoming municipal elections. Part of the grade nine social studies curriculum is the important influences that government and economics have on our lives. The focus is on the rights, roles and responsibilities of citizens in decision-making processes. This real-life learning experience has proven to be very positive for our students. The students went to Barrier Lake Biogeosciences Institute with the University of Calgary to investigate and contribute to long range students and factors which influence the composition of boreal forests. They also went to Fish Creek Provincial Park to learn about the history of First Nations land use, modern land use, and to assist in flood clean up from the 2013 floods. Service leadership is another very important component of the education of our students.

The grade six humanities project called **2017 Municipal Election Connect Engages** was also part of our focus over the past several weeks. This project offered students a genuine opportunity to bring two of the main components of the Grade 6 Social Studies curriculum to life and have them experience what it means to participate in the democratic process. They had the opportunity to speak with a number of candidates who were invited into the school. The students have really researched the issues well and are quite knowledgeable about the issues in this election. It will be interesting to see the results of the vote, which took place on October 5. In the past, Connect students have very closely aligned with municipal, provincial, and federal results. <http://connectengages.weebly.com> There was an article about Connect Students in Metro. <http://www.metronews.ca/news/calgary/2017/10/03/calgary-students-set-to-vote-in-ward-11.html>

The grade five students went to the Ralph Klein Park for immersive and guided activities in environmental science which included a classroom session, a guided walk, and other outdoor activities designed to bring the grade five science unit Wetlands to life.

There will be an EXPO Kickoff Celebration and official greenhouse unveiling on October 20 from 2:00 to 3:15. This will also celebrate our partnerships with Mount Royal University and the Lakeview Community Association. All directors are welcome to attend.

## **2. Exemplary Teaching, Learning, and Leadership in Connect Charter School**

One of the descriptors within the Exemplary Learning, Teaching, and Leadership Frameworks is **Collaboration**, promoting and supporting a culture of collaboration in our school community and beyond. Thanks to Joni Carroll, we have a practicum student from the Alberta College of Arts and Design at Connect for this term. Alyssa Mcauley, who is in her fourth year of study at ACAD is completing a project to create a set of cohesive presentation templates for staff to use for developing presentations associated with Connect Charter School. These templates will appropriately coincide with Connect Charter's current brand image and in addition,

integrate the school's EXPO program into the designs to help further the association of EXPO and Connect Charter. We are really excited to see the results of her efforts.

**Leadership and Collaboration** are two of the descriptors within the Exemplary Learning, Teaching, and Leadership Frameworks. Peer mentoring is now underway. More than one hundred fifty students in grade 7, 8, and 9 have applied to be peer mentors this year. This is an amazing demonstration of our culture of mutual respect and our desire to care for each other. The contribution these students make in our school community is invaluable. Once a week, peer mentors meet with their students to work together on areas such as reading, writing, math, assignment completion and also to offer friendship and guidance. After fall break peer mentors will be meeting with their student for the first time. This day is always filled with excitement and anticipation! Having a peer mentor is an amazing way for youth and children to feel connected to their community and feel a sense of belonging. Mentors also begin developing their leadership skills that will inevitably transfer to many other areas in their lives. We are so grateful to all of our peer mentors this year. They help to make our school a caring and supportive place for everyone.

Under the descriptors **Student and Staff Wellness**, the Physical Education Department is nearing the completion of the first field experiences rotation. All classes have completed full day cycling and boating experiences on the Glenmore reservoir and Bowness Lagoon. As a school, we have ridden approximately 500 kilometers of Calgary pathways and roads in August and September. A special thank-you to all of the parent volunteers who helped out with our trips. We could not provide the programming we have without our exceptional parent community.

**Engagement in Learning and Environmental and Outdoor Education** are two more descriptors in our Exemplary Learning, Teaching and Leading Frameworks. On September 29, 2017, students in our climbing club were introduced to outdoor top rope rock climbing at Wasootch, which is in Kananaskis across from Nakiska, Two Association of Canadian Mountain Guides (ACMG) and Mr. John Cadman and Mr. Greg Neil, who also have ACMG certification, taught a lesson on how to safely belay and lower a climber. Students worked in teams of three, a climber, a belayer, and a back-up belayer as they practiced their skills. The costs associated with the ACMG guides were covered through an Outdoor Adventures Access Grant, which was developed to provide experiences with Canadian Mountain Guides to school age children. This was a very positive experience, and we are fortunate our students have access to experienced experts.

Under the descriptors, Research Focus and Collaboration, Chris Hooper attended the Alberta Research Network Meeting in Edmonton on October 5. The ARN supports and enhances collaboration, communication, implementation, and mobilization of evidence-based and research-informed policy and practice dedicated to the improvement of learning for every student in Alberta. It is a coalition of researchers, policy makers, and practitioners who are interested in improving the way research evidence is collected, accessed, and used across the K-12 education system.

### 3. Terry Fox Run

Connect's Terry Fox Run took place on Friday September 29th at North Glenmore Park. Under sunny skies our students took to the pathways to run for someone they may know who has been touched by cancer. Many students and staff chose to run for Felipe Calasin, our Facility Supervisor who was recently diagnosed with cancer. Felipe has been devoted to caring for our school since 2003 and took great pride in

ensuring the school was always impeccably clean and well maintained. Felipe is a very important part of our Connect community, and it was an honour to dedicate the run to him.

#### **4. Education Plan and Annual Educational Results Report**

Members of the leadership team have been involved in making reference to the board's strategic plan as well as feedback that has been received from students, parents, and staff through surveys and interviews as a report on the past school year and an education plan for the next three school years is prepared for submission to Alberta Education. The Education Plan and Annual Educational Results Report will be presented for approval at the November 21, 2017, meeting of the Board of Directors. We are very fortunate this year to have the expertise of one of our parents, Ms. Therese Miller, as part of the design process. Therese has expertise in design and publications, and we are grateful that she would lend her talents.

#### **5. Remembrance Day Ceremony**

The Remembrance Day Ceremony will be held at our school on November 9, 2017, at 10:30 a.m. We would like to invite any Board members who are able to attend to join us.

#### **6. Alberta Education and the Association of Alberta Public Charter Schools (TAAPCS) Meetings**

October 13 – Executive Advisory Committee – Red Deer

October 27 and 28 - TAAPCS Annual General Meeting - Edmonton, AB

## Appendix “B”

### Connect Charter School Governance Committee Report for October 17, 2017 Board Meeting

#### ***Highlights from October 3 Governance Committee Meeting***

- Recommendation that the Board approves the Fund Development Committee terms of reference
- So far, two parents have expressed interest in standing for election to the Board; deadline for other interested parents to notify Governance Committee is Oct 31<sup>st</sup>
- A few Directors have asked to change their committee involvement following the AGM; if you wish to make a change and haven't already done so, please advise Dave or Denise ASAP
- Two recommendations to strengthen our governance practices: consistent reminders re: requirement to declare any conflicts of interest and regular “in camera” Board discussions (see related background materials in the October meeting Dropbox folder)
- Discussed Board minutes vs Board materials and the purpose of each
  - Board materials - retained in Dropbox as a permanent record of the materials which informed Board discussions
  - Board minutes – continue to strike an appropriate level of detail and ensure clarity, in the context that minutes are published to the Connect Charter School website (to proactively satisfy the requirement of *School Act* section 75(1) and align with common School Board practices)
- Thanks very much to Hyacinth for volunteering to join with those members of the Governance Committee who will work with Ron to plan our 2018 Jan 26-27 Strategic Advance
- The committee expressed great appreciation to Denise, Hyacinth, Ron, Joni, Jennifer, David McKenzie (alumni parent and member of our Communications Committee) and Susan C. for contributing so much time, energy and expertise while simultaneously meeting the tight deadline for submissions
- Thank you to all Directors who provided feedback for the 2016/17 Superintendent's Review. The review is expected to be complete by October 17<sup>th</sup> and will be retained on file with the Secretary-Treasurer; please advise Denise if you would like to read a copy of the review.

#### ***Environmental Scan***

##### **Relationship Building and Advocacy**

- Three MLAs have been invited to the Oct 20<sup>th</sup> greenhouse/EXPO celebration; at least one will attend
- Connect Charter School prepared a written submission in response to the September round of Alberta Education stakeholder consultations re: potential changes to the *School Act*
- Education Minister David Eggen visited Aurora Charter School in mid-September. Now that the *School Act* stakeholder consultations are complete, Denise will extend another invitation to Minister Eggen to visit Connect Charter School, highlighting EXPO and our related outreach activities.
- Another invitation to “meet” Connect Charter School has been extended to MLA Deborah Drever

##### ***TAAPCS October Meetings in Edmonton***

- Public charter school superintendents will be meeting with Education Deputy Minister Dr. Curtis Clarke on October 27 (research and innovation mandate)
- AGM on October 28

##### ***Other news from Alberta Education***

- In The Loop newsletter September edition is available [here](#)  
***In the News (primary source = <http://www.asba.ab.ca/education-news/>)***
  - [Alberta Education review: CBE has room to save on transportation costs](#)
  - [Education minister overruled proposed busing fee hikes at seven school districts this fall](#)
  - [Indigenous students account for biggest jump in rising graduation rates at Regina Public Schools](#)
- [Alberta to outlaw outing of GSA students, education minister says](#)



## **Appendix “C”**

### **Audit and Finance Committee Meeting**

**Sept 28, 2017 7:30 – 8:35 am**

**Attendees: Mackenzie Regent, Christy Newson, Gavin Peat, Susan Chomistek, Phil Butterfield, Myra Penberthy**

The agenda was reviewed and approved.

The minutes from the June 9, 2017 Audit & Finance committee meeting were approved.

### **Fall Budget Update**

- The committee reviewed the fall budget update, a requirement by Alberta Education, to be submitted prior to November 30, 2017.
- There were no changes.
- The fall budget update was approved, noting that there were 620 students budgeted for and we will have 618 students.
- The fall budget update will be presented to the Board at the October 17 meeting to be approved by the Board.

### **August 31, 2017 Draft Quarterly Financial Statements**

- The August 31, 2017 Quarterly Financial Statements were reviewed and approved.
- The Statement of Financial Position was reviewed in detail. There is an increase in our cash position from last year, due primarily to an increase in deferred revenue and our net revenue of \$128,000. Deferred revenue increase, is due to increased Enrichment fees (\$525 to \$575/student), and the designated fundraised money, which will be used for matching funds, when we receive the CIP grant in December.
- The variance analysis detailed the reasons for the positive variance of \$128,000.
- The Cash Flow Forecast is positive and will sustain us without liquidating any GIC's until January 2018.

### **Audited Financial Statements (AFS) August 31, 2017**

- The Alberta Education template was reviewed. The Notes to the Financial Statements will be available for review by the Audit & Finance Committee by Thursday October 5, 2017.
- A teleconference to review the AFS is scheduled for October 12, 2017 at 8:00am.
- The meeting with the auditors will occur on November 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:30am.

### **Insurance Policy**

- The insurance policy is in the dropbox, for review by the committee.
- Cyber insurance will be added. Myra is obtaining a quote from Lloyd Sadd.
- Insurance was identified as being fluid, whereby additional needs will be addressed as they occur over the year.

Prepared by,  
Myra Penberthy

## **Appendix “D”**

### **Audit and Finance Committee Meeting**

**Oct 12, 2017 8:00 am – 8:45 am**

**Attendees via conference call: Mackenzie Regent, Christy Newson, Gavin Peat, Susan Chomistek, and Myra Penberthy**

The agenda was reviewed and approved.

The minutes from the Sept 28, 2017 Audit & Finance committee meeting were approved.

### **Audited Financial Statements (AFS) August 31, 2017**

- The Committee reviewed the Alberta Education template and the Notes to the Financial Statements.
- There were a number of great suggestions for improvements, as well as some timely corrections.
- The changes will be submitted to the auditors by email.
- The meeting with the auditors will occur on November 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:30am.

Prepared by,  
Myra Penberthy

## **Appendix “E”**

### **Connect Charter School Society Board Meeting October 17, 2017 Secretary Treasurer’s Report**

#### **Audit & Finance Committee**

The Audit & Finance Committee met on September 28, 2017 at 7:30 am. Please refer the minutes of the meeting. The Committee also met via teleconference on October 12, 2017, at 8:00 am. The minutes of this meeting are in the dropbox as well.

#### **ASBO International Conference**

I attended the ASBO conference in Denver Colorado from September 21-26, 2017. The professional development was excellent and very comprehensive. The subject matters included: The Potential Impact of Marijuana Legalization Laws on Schools, Seven Tips for Effective Next Generation Fiscal Leadership, Making School Finance Understandable, Become an Exceptional Business Communicator, The Charter of Ethical Leadership, Earn a Reputation of Excellence Through Your Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, Present with Confidence and Why School Referenda Fail: Research and Best Practices for Success. Of course there were amazing keynote speakers as well: Aron Ralston, the hiker who was trapped by a boulder, and had to cut off his own arm with a multi-tool, after five days in a Utah canyon (played by James Franco in the movie “127 Hours”), was my favorite.

Thank you very much to the Board for supporting me in this exceptional opportunity, to attend the ASBO International conference.

Respectfully submitted,  
Myra Penberthy

## Appendix “F”

### Connect Charter School Facilities Planning and Utilization Committee Minutes and Report

#### Attendees:

Mark Blake  
Roman Lohin  
Dr. Phil Butterfield  
Susan Chomistek

**Location:** Dr. Butterfield’s Office - Connect Charter School

**Meeting started:** 4:00 p.m. MDT Wednesday October 16, 2017

#### Proposed Agenda:

- Update on facilities issues from Phil.
- Review of EXPO status year to date and any possible requirements from facilities.
- Review committee terms of reference for updating at AGM

#### Discussion

Phil updated the committee on the latest status of the facilities issues within the school.

- The gym floor and stage was completely refinished over the summer break and it looks fantastic.
- The remaining paving of the asphalt curtain around the lockers and garbage cans on the south side of the school was not completed over the summer. While it is not an urgent priority, it should stay on the school’s facilities “to do” list.
- The school’s greenhouse was acquired and constructed over the past few months. It is a fantastic addition to the school’s facilities infrastructure. There is an unveiling celebration on Friday October 20, 2017 and the whole school community is invited.
- The contemplated changes to the routing of visitor traffic through the office (including card-locks for the side doors and a camera and buzzer system for front door) are still a priority issue for the operations, safety and security of the school. Given the lack of budget to complete these upgrades at this time the committee has decided to finish some final research on the subject and prepare a final proposal for review with the Board.
- Connect’s current Facilities Supervisor, Felipe Calasin, is sadly suffering from inoperable cancer. His presence and contributions are going to be dearly missed. Initial interviews for a new Facilities Supervisor are underway and a motion to hire will be brought to the Board in due course.

Phil then updated the committee on the school’s experience with the first couple months of the EXPO program.

- EXPO has gotten off to a very strong start in the first couple months of this school year.
- Early experience has highlighted the need for a “mobile learning lab” which combines the transportation capacity of a bus together with capabilities and function of a ‘learning laboratory’.
- These first couple months have enabled Administration to create a complete set of requirements that will go into the design and purchase of the mobile learning lab in the coming months.
- There are no immediate facility needs to support EXPO.

## **Decisions and Next Steps**

The following decisions were made during the meeting:

- Administration will review current policy and recommendations from CBE, Calgary Catholic and other charters in regards to safety security and visitor access. The objective of this review is to have the Facilities Utilization and Planning Committee finalize a proposed approach to the issue card locks and visitor access/routing.
- The Committee will review the environmental scan and data collection undertaken by Tim Edwards to determine possible uses and next steps.
- The Committee will continue to look for and enable incremental changes and improvements to the school facilities.