



Free Horizon Montessori July Retreat Meeting Minutes

July 15, 2025

Attendees

Board Members: Josh Camp, Kristy Kibler, Rae Lyon, Erin McGrath, Matt Muhm, Bekky Robbins, Lisa Smith (absent)

Staff: Donnetta MacDonald

Call to order @ 12:18 by Kristy Kibler, Reading of Mission, Vision and Values by Matt Muhm

Agenda/Reports/Minutes

- Motion to adjust Agenda by Bekky. Second: Rae Lyon. Passed.

Public comment/celebrations

- Donnetta: JeffCo is in the building working on the upstairs plumbing issue
- Rae: The decision for the GSC grant has been postponed until August 1
- Kristy: Acknowledgement for grant committee, particularly Mallory

Framing our Time & Icebreaker Discussion

- Team check in

Board Role in Strategic Planning Discussion (Kristy)

- UIP serves as the FHM strategic plan (published on the JeffCo website)
 - o Includes ~5 data-based goals
 - o Can be revised throughout the year and can include a Montessori goal
 - o Required to submit a new UIP annually
- SAC uses data – testing results/surveys – to create goals for the school
 - o Surveys: staff, student, parent, principal eval x1 annually
 - o Tests: CMAS, MAP, DIBELS
 - o SAC reports to the Board and must meet quarterly
- Kristy proposed adopting the UIP as the Board's strategic plan
 - o There's already community and staff buy-in for the UIP
 - o Board may need to hear from the SAC more often as the UIP is being developed; integrate the SAC more into the Board will facilitate stronger leadership
 - o Proposal will keep Board focused on school goals
 - o Shift process to be more Board-centered organizational goals
- Matt agreed on this approach
 - o Last year, SAC chose to take a more active role in the school community

- Reduce the hoops Donnetta must jump through to allow more time to focus on students, staff, community
- Do we need to have some longer-term goals as a Board to support the school?
Example: sustainability of the building, how current location affects growth
- Rae suggested a growth plan for school/what are we doing that's measurable to sustain/grow enrollment as a long-term goal
- Becky asked whether we want to grow and what growth looks like
 - Suggests regular SAC updates to the Board
- Donnetta suggested long-term goals
 - Home school enrichment option
- Add UE classroom
- UIP integration into Board structure – principal eval, calendar alignment with SAC reporting, policy manual updates
- Better implement UIP into Board oversight and process for Principal evaluation
- UIP timeline

Board Goal Setting Discussion (Kristy)

- Longer-term goals for the Board (separate from the UIP)
 - Enrollment growth/sustainability marketing/community outreach (finance committee)
 - Facilities (facilities committee)
 - Financial oversight (finance committee)
 - Legal compliance (governance committee)
 - HR – JeffCo manages
- Recruitment/succession planning
- Build out Board committees
- Enrollment growth
- Facilities plan – primary wing, location change
- Policy review – manual, handbooks, bylaws, Principal eval revamp, feedback mechanisms

GOALS

1. Promote stability and quality of BOD through year-round recruitment efforts with staff and community (long-term)
Measurable outcome: Competitive election in 2026
Strategies:
 - Develop a nomination process
 - Staff involvement via staff meetings and nomination form
 - Recruit for Facilities Committee/Capital Improvements
 - Board visibility at school – meet/greet through existing events
2. Beautification and creation of a welcoming physical environment
Measurable outcome: Fully staffed committee and vision (include response for staying in current building)
Strategies:
 - Board discussion of location change

- Landscaping/exterior
 - Outdoor classroom space
 - Primary improvements
 - Renaming and relaunch facilities committee
3. Diverse strategies for stabilizing budget needs
Measurable outcome: Defined plan for diversifying funding plan
Strategies:
- Deliver outline of plan in October
4. Prepare policies to ensure legal compliance and prepare for year 1 Charter
Measurable outcome: Attorney review of policies in May
Strategies:
- Governance committee to review policy manual
 - Finalize recall policy
 - Rewrite Principal evaluation policy and plan
 - Develop feedback mechanism for staff and community
 - File for 501c3 status
 - Submit Board training evidence to JeffCo by Sept 15, 2026
 - D&O insurance for Board
 - Review Sunshine law calendar compliance

Charter Contract Negotiations Discussion/Vote Kristy/Bekky 10

- Kristy noted that we will be the only charter school in JeffCo without 501c3 status and she’s been advised by our attorney to apply. Cost: 1 hour attorney time to review application
- Kristy made a motion to apply for 501c3 status, Matt seconded the motion, Discussion resulted in a need to find more information of tax implications, Motion did NOT pass.
- Charter Board training evidence due to JeffCo by Sept 15, 2026
- Obtain appropriate D&O insurance
- Obtain waivers from Tayo
- Submit enrollment priorities to JeffCo by September 15, 2025
- Education of students with disabilities by August 1, 2025
- District administrative support matches financial obligations of the district.
- Liability agreement between the school and district for students with disabilities.
- FHM to seek a credit from JeffCo for disability funding and English language learners.
- Quarterly installment of PPR from JeffCo works for FHM.
- Budget for board legal fees, \$20K budgeted.

’25-’26 School Year Prep Discussion Kristy 30

Month	JeffCo activities	Board activities	Board meetings
July	District goals	Board planning retreat	July 15
August	CMAS data available	Board forms Principal eval committee/ last year review	August 14
September	UIP 1 st submission	Principal presents previous year review	September 11

October	UIP final for current year	SAC presents UIP to Board; UIP final (current year) Finance presents funding strategy plan	October 16
November		Board reviews Principal goals	November 13
December		Mid-year eval/ contract negotiation	December 11 virtual
January	Surveys distributed	Principal contract issued	January 8
February			February 5
March	Principal survey results		March 12
April	Family survey results		April 16
May			May 14
June		Principal year-end review/survey results/report Board member voting	June 11

Assignments: Follow-ups Discussion Review of assignments and status

- @Josh to present funding plan at October meeting
- @Kristy
 - a. Explore tax implications of filing for 5013c status, need to file a 990 form
 - b. Ask Mallory about compliance with TABOR reserve
 - c. Ask Mallory about budgeted amount for legal fees
- @Donnetta
 - a. Review July 14 Tayo email for waiver requirements/SPED license grace. Discuss facilities use fee and use agreement.
 - b. Email Mallory and Sioban about enrollment policies to JeffCo by September 15.
 - c. Contact Kelly Klatt for student with disabilities compliance for August 1st deadline.
 - d. Ask Lisa to update board meeting dates and add meeting minutes
- @Lisa
 - a. Explore Board Zoom account with the same URL for the year
- @Bekky
 - a. Email Donnetta clips from charter contract for follow up
- @Rae
 - a. Send Kristy and Lisa the meeting minutes

Adjournment: Bekky made a motion to adjourn meeting at 4:13PM, Erin seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 4:13PM.

Parking lot

- Revamping principal evaluation process
- Receive anonymous staff feedback
- HR performance review policies – annual review of policies to align with HR law
- GoCo Funding for outdoor classroom improvements

Submitted by: Rae Lyon on behalf of Lisa Smith, Secretary

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.