



## **Free Horizon Montessori March Meeting Minutes**

**October 16th, 2025**

### **Attendees:**

Board Members: Kristy Kibler (KK), Becky Robbins (BR), Lisa Smith (LS), Matt Muhm (MM), Erin McGrath (EMG), Josh Camp (JC), Rae Lyon (RL), Elise

Staff: Donetta McDonald, Mallory Hamilton (Finance Director), Julie Hawlsey

Call to order @ 606 by Kristy Kibler, Reading of Mission, Vision and Values by Matt Muhm

### **Agenda/Reports/Minutes:**

Motion to Approve Agenda by RL. Second by MM. Motion passed.

### **Celebrations & Public Comment:**

- Miller Farm Field Trip went very well, organized and children had time to enjoy the experience.
- Recognize Elise and Mallory for supporting the campus beautification day which was very appreciated
- Recognize Lisa K and Mallory for their continued support for additional duties
- Recognize the events that occurred in Evergreen and expressed support and gratitude for all that our staff do to keep our school safe
- Fox Trot was a fun event, fundraising was very close to target.
- Recognize the challenges that our staff have with helping children settle in and noting some challenges with some of our students
- Positive feedback on the upper elementary team from parents. Team appears to be gelling.
- Recognition for the teachers and their work on making the conferences go well. Thank you to the families that donated food to support.
- Shout out to the CSN. Lots of activity and communication. Grateful for the support from the admin team for supporting the lines of communication.
- Recognition for the team, especially Mallory, in the charter negotiations these past few weeks. Her time and dedication is noted.

### **Presidents Update**

- Contract is approved by the district. Goes to State Board of Education for review and then will be returned for signature.
- Some additional agreements are still in negotiation.

- Purchased services agreement – limited negotiations and flexibility due to it being used across charters.
- Facility use agreement – blank sections are to be completed with participation from facilities committee, admin and legal.
- Building use fees are proposed to be raised – will be covered in detail in separate agenda item.
- Communicated that the district has pulled the School Resource Officers (SRO) from charter schools. This was not formally communicated to charters. Option might exist to negotiate support from Jefferson County Sherrif department for SRO support. Priority is to have support from an organization with experience working with children and focus on education.

## **Principal Updates**

CMAS scores did not land where we would prefer. Discussion led by Donetta.

Context:

- Struggling Student Groups: High number of IEP's with limited SPED support in prior school year.
- Content Challenges: Math word problems require strong reading + reasoning skills, ELA Constructed response, challenging for students with language or writing deficits. Typed responses were challenging for students.

Root Casuse Analysis:

- Poor CMAS Testing schedule. Make-ups crammed into one day.
- Staffing Shifts: Increase in private school hires unfamiliar with supporting IEP and FRL populations.
- Last school year was busy with charter negotiations, grant applications, no ops director. Need to rebalance focus back to instruction for Principals.

Noted that middle school scores skewed the overall trend down.

- Instructional shifts in middle school over the past couple of years.
- High number of IEP/FRL in middle school
- Number of new joiners, not Montessori familiar in MS

How are we responding? Executing changes in 6 week sprints. Focus on actions associated with Belonging, Constructed Response and Word Problems as focus categories. Layering on new actions in each incremental sprint.

- **District Budgeting**

Donetta shared the Budget Blueprint Video from Tracy Dorland. Will also be shared with staff.

## **Marketing**

Donetta shared the enrollment marketing activities.

## **Staff Liaison Update**

Gathered feedback from the staff. Some notes:

- Liking the 3 hour work cycle in upper El
- Excited to be back with the kids
- Looking forward to becoming a charter next year
- Focused on goals and working hard

## **Added question:**

- If we had to create a new school on mars what would be the foundational elements.
  - Outside play and learning time
  - Sensory Time Out Room
  - SEL focus

## **Budget Revision**

- Mallory took board through revised budget for 25/26 school year
- Outlined the impacts of enrollment, increased primary capacity and PPR adjustments to the budget.
- Outlined the steps taken to revise the budget and impact on the overall financial outlook for the year.
- Was able to revise the budget to maintain a positive balance.
- Request to pay some expenses out of carry forward to be approved for potential spend out of Carry Forward.
- LS motion to approve the FY26 revised budget. Seconded by RL. Motion carried. Abstained Becky Robbins.

## **Building Update**

- KK facilitated discussion on building requirements and priorities.
- KK facilitated discussion on 3 options to be modelled to facilitate decision making
- Next step agreed to ask finance committee to forecast options – Rent versus Buy options.

## **Committee Reports**

- Governance Committee: Working through policy manual against new charter agreement. Assignments added for some administrative actions to be taken.
- CSN Committee: Going smoothly so far. Fox Trot raised \$21k. Spring Fling committee has already ramped up.
- Facilities: Josh is still trying to get the facilities committee stood up
- SAC: Schedule for update at next board meeting.

## **Assignments**

Meeting Assignments:

- Finance committee requested to assess building options as discussed. Status update in December meeting.
- Access needed for Governance Committee to charter documents - KK
- Note to include signing of conflict of interest and confidentiality agreements in November board meeting. - LS
- Add approval of New Policy Manual to Agenda for future Board Meeting.
- Include UIP update in principal readout at next meeting - DMD

Motion to Adjourn made at 9.00 BR . Seconded by EMG. Motion passed.

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.

### **Sprint One (Completed)**

#### **Belonging:**

- Greeting students at the door each day
- Sticking to the daily schedule

#### **Constructed Response**

- Practicing deeper writing by citing evidence to support thinking

**Word Problems:**

- Incorporating CUBES into multi-step word problems. Had been doing that in more fidelity in prior years so refocusing on that.

**Sprint Two (In progress)**

Continue Sprint 1 activities and Layer on.

**Belonging:**

- De-clutter and calm our environments

**Constructed Response:**

- Typing

**Word Problems:**

- Word Problem Launching