

**Minutes of  
Connect Charter School Society, Board of Directors Meeting  
Dec 6, 2016 at Connect Charter School**

**Board members present:** Denise Kitagawa (C), Dave Robinson (VC), Susan Boughs, Susan Gaetz, Ron Koper, Roman Lohin, Christy Newson, Gavin Peat, Mackenzie Regent (via Skype), Michelle Rousseau, Hyacinth Schaeffer and Linda Trinh.

**Board members absent:** Mark Blake, Joni Carroll, and Jennifer Hittel.

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

Board Chair Ms. Denise Kitagawa declared a quorum and called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Motion 32.16 by Hyacinth Schaeffer,  
THAT the December 6, 2016, Board agenda be approved.  
Carried

Motion 33.16 by Dave Robinson,  
THAT the November 22, 2016, Board of Directors meeting #1 and #2 minutes be approved.  
Carried

Motion 34.16 by Gavin Peat,  
THAT the Board approves the final 2017/18 Connect Charter School calendar and gives tentative approval to the 2018/19 Connect Charter School calendar.  
Carried

The Calgary Board of Education performed a safety audit of the Connect Charter School premises and has made some recommendations regarding the entryway and Indoor Activity Centre. Dr. Phil Butterfield discussed the front entry related recommendations, with Calgary Board of Education approved consultant Mr. Curtis Drul, from Neoteric Architecture. Neoteric has submitted a proposal to develop three redesign options, for the main office area, to give greater visibility to the front door.

Motion 35.16 by Denise Kitagawa,  
THAT the Board approves the expenditure of up to \$5,000 to develop options in response to the Calgary Board of Education safety audit recommendations, including engaging Neoteric Architecture to develop three options for reconfiguring the main office and associated preliminary costs estimates.  
Carried

Motion 36.16 by Gavin Peat,  
THAT the Board approves the 2016/17 year signing authorities of Denise Kitagawa (C), Dave Robinson (VC), Mackenzie Regent, Susan Chomistek, Dr. Phil Butterfield, Scott Petronech, Satwant Shergill and Myra Penberthy.  
Carried

Susan Gaetz presented the policy changes and gave thanks to Susan Boughs and Roman Lohin for their work on the policy amendments.

Motion 37.16 by Susan Gaetz,  
THAT the Board approves the amended policies: Policy 2.03 Crisis Management, Policy 3.01 Fees, Policy 4.08 Employee Conduct, Policy 6.05 Student Admissions, and Policy 6.07 Student Assessment and Evaluation.  
Carried

Update on staffing included a staff member who has a leave request for the adoption of a child

Health and Safety Report, Phil Butterfield,

- We continue to work through the Occupational Health and Safety report as well as the Safety Audit with the CBE.

Leadership Team Report, Susan Chomistek, Dr. Phil Butterfield and Scott Petronech

- Ms. Susan Chomistek presented the Leadership Team Report in Appendix "A".

Secretary Treasurer & Audit & Finance Committee Report, Myra Penberthy

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

Meeting terminated at 6:50 pm.

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Denise Kitagawa, Board Chair

## Appendix “A”

### Connect Charter School Superintendent/Leadership Team Report

#### Board of Directors Meeting - December 6, 2016

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

**Environmental and Outdoor Education** is a key component of our charter and a descriptor in our Exemplary Learning, Teaching and Leadership Frameworks. Promoting environmental and global awareness to inspire our students to become informed and active citizens is a key goal. This year’s winter camps have been an opportunity to continue to build capacity within our staff. As has occurred in past years, all of our grade six home room classes will have an opportunity to participate in a three day, two night winter camping experience at the Kananaskis Hostel. With support from administration and the Outdoor Education Portfolio leader, Mr. John Cadman, homeroom teachers will plan and run most of the outdoor experiences. Guides have been hired through a local business to facilitate some of the activities such as cross country ski instruction and the cross-country ski tours. At the school level, the organization for these trips has taken place over the course of the last few months. Online resources are available for students and their parents, and the information night is always well attended. Using the expertise within our school and taking responsibility for more of the teaching component has saved approximately \$7000. This cost saving enables us to keep the fees at a similar level to last year for our students and enables a minimum of two staff to be on site at all times. We are really pleased with the changes in the program and look forward to a positive experience for our students.

Two more electives this term under the area of **Environmental and Outdoor Education** are a grades 6/ 7 Winter Outdoor Education elective and a grades 4/5 Active Appreciation of the Outdoors elective. The grade 6/7 program focuses on being comfortable in the outdoors, learning how to cook in a winter environment, and learning how to cross country ski. The grade 4/5 elective focuses on basic outdoor skills and introducing students to essential practices of being prepared to participate in the outdoors. Once the skills are developed, the students will participate in a day trip in the Kananaskis country. The grade 6/7 elective will participate in an extended skiing trip, led by Jared McKenzie.

Two further descriptors on our Exemplary Learning, Teaching and Leadership Frameworks are **Engagement in Learning** and **Collaboration**. Mr. Kevin Sonico, our Math & Science Portfolio leader, is part of the University of Calgary IOSTEM (the Imperial Oil Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics education initiative) 2016 cohort. This group meets four times per year to learn about specific and concrete ways to design engaging lessons that foster deep mathematical and scientific thinking. Their first meeting focused on using models through simulations, which supports students in seeing, understanding, and explaining the complexity that exists around them. By using simulations, teachers also encourage students to gather data and use mathematical and scientific reasoning to come to conclusions.

Part of the **Board’s Strategic Plan** focus this year involves positive working relationships with our universities. Two of the descriptors in our Exemplary Teaching, Learning and Leadership Frameworks are **Collaboration** and **Leadership** and fostering positive working relationships with our university partners. On December 1, 2016, Susan Chomistek was a guest lecturer for Dr. Amy Burns in her class, *Education 430 – Pragmatics of Teaching and Learning*. One of our alumni, Meghan Brown, was a member of the class, and she spoke of her positive experiences at our school. Susan and Phil have also been invited to participate in a working committee in the new year looking at current issues and challenges around pre-service teacher field experiences at the Werklund School of Education.

## 2. Peace Festival

Each December our school hosts an event called Peace Festival. Peace Festival is our winter celebration that takes place through various activities over the last two weeks of school before the winter break. It is a celebration of hope and peace in our school and local community, through activities that encourage caring, passion, and empathy. Further, it is a recognition and awareness of our role as global citizens to act responsibly and ethically. The theme this year for Connect Charter School is *Mindfulness and Gratitude*. Grade 9 students will lead and organize activities for students that are fun and impart an important message connected to the theme.

Organized by our grade 9 students, each home room in the upper grades will be putting together a backpack of items to donate to Stephen's Backpacks. A Calgary-based organization, "Stephen's Backpacks for Children in Need Society" provides homeless and at-risk children with needed essentials. In each backpack will be hygiene items, school supplies, and even information about how to write a resume and learn proper nutrition. As a staff, we are also participating in the same activity, and we, too, are donating items to fill backpacks. Since 2006, more than 36,000 children have been given a gift of hope from "Stephen's Backpacks Society" ([www.stephensbackpacks.com](http://www.stephensbackpacks.com)).

On Thursday, December 15, there will be a film screening of *Paper Clips* (6:00 to 9:30) and access to the **Peace Festival Market** featuring goods from Nepal benefiting HANDS Nepal. This event is being organized and facilitated by the Agents of Change elective students. Peace Festival activities will be held in the gym on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, December 13 to 15, and all proceeds will go to the Calgary Food Bank. Thank you to Jaime Groeller, Jason Avramenko, Cynthia Nilsson, Garrett Kutcher, and Margaret Leland for their efforts in organizing the students to take on this leadership opportunity, which is of great benefit to our students and to our local and global communities. In addition to these activities, there will be a Speakers' Series, which will run from Monday, December 5, through to Wednesday, December 14, where we will have guest speakers from a variety of organizations sharing their work in the community. Board members are welcome and encouraged to attend any of the activities that are being held!

## 3. Student Teachers

A cohort of eight pre-service teachers in the fourth year of the education program at Mount Royal University will be starting their final 16-week practicum on January 16, 2017. Over the course of this placement, the student teachers will gradually increase their teaching load to 100% while also completing two course modules. The modules will be facilitated at Connect by MRU staff including Connect parent, Dr. Kevin O'Connor, and Dr. Gladys Sternberg, and will lead to the development of a capstone project for the pre-service teachers. Together with the University of Calgary cohort, under the supervision of Claude Oppenheim, and our two returning pre-service teachers from Ambrose University, who are returning in February, Connect will be host to 13 pre-service teachers in the new year. In addition to these placements, we will be hosting some Educational Assistant students from MRU.

## 4. The Association of Alberta Public Charter Schools (TAAPCS)

January 20/21, 2017 - TAAPCS Regular Meeting – Red Deer  
May 11/12, 2017 – TAAPCS Regular Meeting – Valhalla Charter School  
Feb. 24, Apr. 17, June 9 – Executive Advisory Council – Red Deer

**Connect Charter School Society  
Board Meeting  
December 6, 2016  
Secretary Treasurer’s Report**

**Draft Financial Statements**

The financial statements for November 30, 2016 will be shared with the Audit & Finance Committee via email prior to December Christmas break. The Board will review the statements at the January 2017 Board meeting. We are predicting to be on budget for yearend.

**Audit**

The financial statements were sent to Alberta Education on November 28, 2016. They were sent both via email and priority post to ensure that the hard copies arrived at Alberta Education by the deadline date of November 30, 2016.

**ASBOA**

I attended the November 25, 2016 Zone 4 meeting in Lethbridge. Items on the agenda were: actual vs annual full time equivalents (FTE), SRB software system uses and adoptions, ASBOA website a refresher on what is there, Zone business and the 2018 ASBOA conference which our Zone 4 is hosting. We also had an Alberta Education update and bargaining committee update. We had very vigorous discussions and there was a record number of attendees.

I also attended the issues forum on December 1, 2016. This was an opportunity to hear Minister Eggen speak as well as his Deputy Minister, Dr. Curtis Clarke. They emphasized stable and predictable funding as well as funding for enrollment, curriculum review and development which would be a 6-year process, discussing the Education Act more in the new year, the carbon levy which will not leave schools in a deficit position, a commitment to reduce school fees in the next 2 years. Alberta Education also spoke about monthly reporting to Alberta Education on our financial results which will be in place by May 15, 2017.

I would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Respectfully submitted,  
Myra Penberthy