

**Minutes of  
Connect Charter School Society, Board of Directors Meeting  
December 12, 2017, at Connect Charter School**

**Board members present:** *Dave Robinson (C), Roman Lohin (VC), Denise Kitagawa (PC), Susan Boughs, Joni Carroll, Jennifer Hittel, Ron Koper, Mangesh Kumthekar, Christy Newson, Dr. Kevin O'Connor, Gavin Peat, Mackenzie Regent (Skype), and Hyacinth Schaeffer.*

**Board members absent:** *Michelle Rousseau and Linda Trinh*

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

*Three Grade 4 students, Ethan, Gabby, and Leah, and their teachers Ms. Katlin Haigh and Ms. Caitlin Price, presented on the new recycling and composting project which the grade 4 students have taken the lead on. The Board was very appreciative of the presentation and asked the students some insightful questions to which the students responded with thoughtful and detailed answers.*

Board Chair Mr. Dave Robinson declared a quorum and called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Dave Robinson asked the Directors if there were any conflicts of interest. None were declared.

Motion 30.17 by Ron Koper,  
THAT the December 12, 2017 Board meeting agenda be approved.  
Carried

Motion 31.17 by Denise Kitagawa,  
THAT the November 21, 2017 Board of Directors meeting #1 and meeting #2 minutes be approved.  
Carried

Motion 32.17 by Denise Kitagawa,  
THAT the Board approves the 2017/18 signing authorities of Dave Robinson (C), Roman Lohin (VC), Denise Kitagawa (PC), Mackenzie Regent, Susan Chomistek, Dr. Phil Butterfield, Dr. Chris Hooper, Shashi Shergill and Myra Penberthy  
Carried

Motion 33.17 by Hyacinth Schaeffer,  
THAT the Board approves the 2018/19 Connect Charter School calendar.  
Carried

Motion 34.17 by Jennifer Hittel,  
THAT the Board approves the Learning Bar contract for services ending August 31, 2020.  
Carried

Mr. Ron Koper showed a video on public charter schools in Alberta, developed by the TAAPCS Communication Committee. Local talent was contracted for the art, voice over and production and could be contracted to create a complementary piece specific to Connect. The following links will take you to the 2 and 4 minute videos: <https://youtu.be/GQjkcJ2CuZs> <https://youtu.be/iCnstwIAS1U> [The TAAPCS Communication Committee is working on a coordinated rollout, planned for January 2018.](#)

Mr. Koper also led a discussion on Board self-evaluation how to initiate a process at Connect. The Governance Committee will meet and use the ideas generated from the discussion to determine next steps.

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

- See Appendix “A”
- Link for Dr. Butterfield’s presentation on Experiential Education at the AEE conference:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XpNZj\\_uDNF4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XpNZj_uDNF4)
- We received a donation from Edmonton Community Foundation for outdoor and experiential education programs. It was suggested that a presentation be given to the Edmonton Community Foundation to give them an overview of the program.

Occupational Health & Safety Report, Susan Chomistek

- See Appendix “B”

Secretary Treasurer & Audit & Finance Committee Report, Myra Penberthy

- Appendix “C”

Governance, Dave Robinson

- Governance Committee has not met.
- The Honorable Minister Eggen visited the school Thursday December 7, 2017 with MLA Anam Kazim, and the visit went very well. It was an excellent opportunity for the students to showcase our school.

Health, Safety, Environment and Security, Roman Lohin

- OH & S reporting form is in a format that the Board supports
- Board oversight action items are complete
- We will keep the committee open for a period of time.

External Collaboration & Research & Innovation, Dave Robinson

- There is a focus to make connection with post-secondary institutions beyond the Faculties of Education
- A University of Calgary meeting on January 12 is planned, with Hyacinth Schaeffer, Dr Phil Butterfield, Dr. Lindsay Reid, and Dr. Nancy Chick from the University of Calgary. Both Dr. Reid (Vice Provost, Teaching and Learning) and Dr. Chick (Director, Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning) are interested in discussing possible research collaboration with Connect with the focus on improving and enhancing teaching and learning.
- With students involved in EXPO in the community, there are multiple opportunities to enhance external collaboration with communities. The ECC will explore ways in which external connections can be captured, documented, and engaged further.

School Council, Jennifer Hittel

- There was a meeting prior to the Parent Summit
- Approval for the calendar and a great discussion ensued
- There will be a coffee event to promote communication and interaction between parents and council

School Operations, Roman Lohin

- The first meeting with the new committee will be on December 18, 2017

Facilities Planning & Utilization,

- A meeting will be called in the new year

Communications, Joni Carroll

- ACAD student did an amazing job with the AERR/3 Year Plan Report
- Parent Ad Hoc committee has been doing a great job.

Fund Development, Ron Koper

- No meeting but Terms of Reference have been developed.

The meeting terminated at 8:35 pm.

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Dave Robinson, Board Chair

## Appendix “A”

### Connect Charter School Superintendent/Leadership Team Report

#### Board of Directors Meeting - December 12, 2017

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

**Engagement in Learning and Parents as Partners** are descriptors in our Exemplary Learning, Teaching and Leadership Frameworks. On December 5, our Connect Charter School Parent Council is presenting the first of four sessions for the Parent Summit series. The theme for the evening is *Supporting Student Success: Resiliency and Inclusive Practices*, and the speakers are Chris Hooper, Abby Saadeh, and Jared McKenzie. These sessions have had great attendance in the past, and we are very grateful for our engaged parents and to the staff for sharing their areas of expertise.

Under the descriptors of **Exemplary Collaboration and Leadership**, Shashi Shergill was nominated to participate in the Elections Canada Advisory Circle of Educators. This group is made up of teachers, administrators, and ministry officials representing each province and territory across Canada. The role of the advisory circle is to work with Elections Canada on their Civic Education Renewal program. Shashi is the Alberta representative and has been nominated for a three-year term. At the inaugural meeting of the group they considered a number of different curriculum materials and lesson ideas, through an inquiry based pedagogical approach. Connect teachers and students will also have the opportunity to pilot some of the curriculum material before it goes into circulation. We are very proud that Ms. Shergill is the Alberta representative for the advisory group.

**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. Every year there are changes made to refine and enhance the program. The staff are very excited about the upcoming trips!

*Bridges to Teaching* students from the University of Calgary program were in our school again this year. **Collaboration** is an important descriptor in our frameworks. The Bridge to Teaching (Bridge) program is an intensive and accelerated teacher education program that prepares passionate, caring, and experienced foreign-trained teachers to teach in Alberta schools. The program is offered through Graduate Programs in Education, at the University of Calgary. During the Bridge Program, participants focus on how to teach the Alberta Program of Studies in ways that engage students and how to assess students' learning in fair, formative and summative ways. Participants examine various educational policies and pedagogies that affect teaching and learning in Alberta and explore how the expectations for teachers and students compare to those in their previous country. These teachers are often new to inquiry-based learning and appreciate Connect’s unique approach and enjoy how vibrant and effective learning can be when students are immersed in experiential learning environments. Feedback from the Bridges’ students and faculty was extremely positive, and the faculty member is using Connect as a case study in an upcoming book.

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. Dr. Chris Hooper was a guest lecturer in Gavin Peat's class and Susan Chomistek was a guest lecturer for Dr. Amy Burns for the class, *Education 430 – Pragmatics of Teaching and Learning*. 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. This is the third annual meeting of this working committee.

## 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 We Are This Place. Grade 9 students will lead and organize activities for students that are fun and impart an important message connected to the theme.

On Wednesday, December 13, there will be a film screening of *Bee Nation*, a film about an Indigenous spelling bee, 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 from Monday Dec. 18 to Thursday December 21 and all proceeds will go to the Calgary Food Bank. Thank you to Jaime Groeller, Jason Avramenko, Cynthia Nilsson, and Patrick Tam 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 11, through to Thursday, 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. The Association of Alberta Public Charter Schools (TAAPCS)

TAAPCS EAC Meetings: Meeting with Deputy Minister Curtis Clarke, January 11, Regular meetings Jan. 12, 2018; Apr. 13, 2018; June 15, 2018  
TAAPCS Spring Meeting: May 4/5, 2018

## Appendix “B”

### Connect Charter School - December OHS Report

Criteria	Description	Response/Status
External Impacts/Updates	Nothing to report	
Risk Management	Added Cyber Insurance to plan	
Safety	Nothing to report	
Health	Nothing to report	
Security	Nothing to report	
Emergency Preparedness	Following school policies and procedures	
Litigation or potential issues against the organization	Nothing to report	
Compliance to Audit Reports	Continuing to develop procedures and processes for Safety Audit	55 addressed (November - 44) 17 in process (November -26 ) 1 to be addressed (November - 3)
Trends	Nothing to report	

**Connect Charter School Society**  
**Board Meeting**  
**December 12, 2017**  
**Secretary Treasurer’s Report**

**Audit & Finance Committee**

The Audit & Finance committee will be reviewing the November quarterly financial statements prior to the January 9, 2018 Board meeting. They will also be reviewing their terms of reference to ensure that they are accurate and relevant.

**Secretary Treasurer’s meeting**

Secretary treasurers from Alberta Charter Schools meet quarterly. On November 30, 2017 we met at Westmount Charter School and were hosted by Mr. John Liu. Items on the agenda included, a presentation by Ross Patton and Ken MacDonald from Morneau Shepell, on our Sun Life Financial employee benefits plan, and what to expect for the upcoming year. We can anticipate a 10% increase in benefits costs. We also shared school updates, discussed new related party transaction reporting, short term disabilities, and personal days for employees.

**ASBOA Meeting**

November 24, 2017 the school business officials from Zone 4 met to plan our ASBOA conference from May 6-9, 2018. There are a lot of details, to work on and it is important to start the process early. Our theme for this year will be “Reaching the Summit”.

**ASBOA Issues Forum**

On December 7, 2017, I attended the ASOBA issues forum. The following were areas that were covered by Alberta Education representatives.

- 1) Budget 2018/19
  - Pre-budget consultation will be the week of December 11, 2017. There will be a two-hour session with members of ASBOA, by invitation only.
  - Education is a priority with this government, they have supported and funded enrollment
  - Cost containment is the directive for all departments, they have to rein in discretionary spending and not fill outstanding positions. Discretionary spending (including travel) is to be reduced by 10%
  - Frozen salaries have been refrozen for all non-union employees to September 2019
  - Biggest expense is salaries, if you are looking at cost effectiveness or reductions then salaries have to be a part of the discussion
- 2) Bill 28, School Amendment Act, 2017
  - Will be effective September 2018, there will be a ride distance which may vary by grade
  - Allows the Education Minister to encourage / require cooperation between Boards
  - School choice is a large topic around funding of transportation
  - Lowering the eligibility criteria to 1.6 km requires a greater lead-time, than March for September 2018
  - If you lower the eligibility criteria, the costs will increase
  - Grant funding has not increased over the past few years, carbon tax is impacting the cost of fuel
- 3) Financial Reporting
  - There was a reduction of reserves across all school jurisdictions at August 31, 2017
  - Monthly reporting will be expanded to include IMR expenses, IMR expected capitalization, IMR capitalized to date
  - Fee policy is back on the table with government
- 4) Accounting Standards
  - New PSA standards were reviewed, including changes to: PS 2200 Related party transactions, PS3210 Assets, PS 3320 Contingent Assets PS 3380 Contractual rights, PS 3420 Inter-entity transactions
- 5) Other Topics
  - Other topics includes Provincial brokering purchasing model, to gain cost efficiencies, equity and efficiency
  - Teacher Employer Bargaining Association (TEBA) was discussed, (August 31, 2018 the current contract with teachers expires)

Respectfully submitted,  
Myra Penberthy