



Public Board Meeting Minutes

Apr. 15, 2020

6:30-9:00 p.m.

Via Zoom

Attendees:

Board & Administration: Chair Jeff Wilson, Vice-Chair Jenny Hill, Director Sumara Diaz, Director Faruq Suleman, Director Naren Makwana, Director Rizvan Bharmal, Director Jehn Scantlebury, Director Randall Spahl, Director Sam Jin, Superintendent Roger Nippard, Deputy Superintendent Kurtis Leinweber, Secretary Treasurer Reta Morgan, Coordinator of Instruction Joan Burke, Coordinator of School Services Lorne McDonald, Director of Technology Jeff Cullen, Executive Assistant Meredith Poole

Gallery: Cindy McGlashan-Beaucage, Andrew Chu, Elizabeth Bodnar, Sarah Stilborn, Erica Oseen, Krista Lee, Mahesh Venkat, Swean Sidhu, Seema Makwana, Kiran Makwana, Punam Vyas, Lokesh Shenoy, Anthony/Renee Lim

CALL TO ORDER – 6:32 p.m.

1. Review of Meeting Agenda – Item 6.5 S/B Director Makwana.
2. **20/04/15-1CA** Consent Agenda
MOVED by Vice-Chair Hill and seconded by Director Scantlebury that the Consent Agenda for Apr. 15, 2020 be approved as presented. CARRIED.
 - Minutes of Feb. 12, 2020 Public Board Meeting
 - Minutes of Feb. 12, 2020 Organizational Board Meeting
 - Correspondence (1 letter: AE re AEP/AERR)
3. Superintendent's Report:
 - i) It is important to take note of recent timelines in relation to our current situation: the decision to close schools for an indeterminate time was made within 1 day of our being told they would remain open, and guidelines for At-Home Learning were received 5 days later, just as schools were closing for Spring Break; therefore, much of the planning (for a style of learning completely out of step with the tenets of our FFCA charter) had to be done over Spring Break.
 - ii) While we would normally be concerned with the big items of budget and staffing at this time of year, both have been delayed, and we have been forced to lay off a large number of our valued "non-essential" staff due to government funding cuts, while coping with the late release of AE's new Funding Framework. The latter will have both positive and negative effects on FFCA's budget: whereas we have now been recognized fully as part of the public system, and will therefore qualify for "Special Learning Supports" funding, other areas of funding will be reduced due to the application of a "weighted moving average" to allotments. We expect to receive the funding commitment letter from AE by the end of April.
 - iii) Feedback from Alberta Education on our AEP/AERR was excellent.
 - iv) Grant funding for our Global Competencies Research Project has been extended by one year in response to school closures.
 - v) We are eligible to apply for Infrastructure Funding through which we hope to do washroom and lighting upgrades; applications are due by April 17, so work on that is underway.

vi) Use of technology has increased enormously (e.g. Google Classrooms: 91 as of Jan. 12, 247 today; OneDrive: 376,000 files on Jan. 12, 1.7 million presently; Teams usage: 743% increase.)

3.1 COVID-19 At-Home Learning Plan – As soon as it was announced that schools would be closed, administration went into high gear to determine an equitable and supportive plan for students, and ensure that access to technology would not be an impediment. Platforms in use are Edsby, Office 365, Google and Seesaw (for younger students). As this is being rolled out, staff will be making adjustments to improve the delivery, and identifying any gaps that will have to be addressed when classes resume. Learning plans are developed in 2-week chunks until the end of June, posted at the beginning of each week, and are meant to be flexible, but follow basic time and subject expectations for K-3, 4-6, 7-9 and high school.

Note: “At-Home Learning” is distinct from “On-Line Learning”, which is a formal, multi-faceted suite of specific elements, and is not consistent with FFCA’s charter requirements.

4. Information Items

4.1 Standing Item: Administrative Procedures Update – No report, other than several AP’s are due to go to Admin Council for consideration at next week’s meeting.

4.2 Standing Item: Strategic/Education Plan Update - No report.

5. Discussion Items

6.1 **24/04/15-1RA** Q2 Report

MOVED by Director Makwana and seconded by Vice-Chair Hill that the 2019-2020 FFCA Second Quarter Financial Report be approved as presented. CARRIED.

6.2 **20/04/15-2RA** 2019-2020 Fee Adjustments

MOVED by Director Diaz and seconded by Director Scantlebury that the portion of 2019-2020 bus fees in excess of that required to meet our adjusted contractual obligations as directed by Alberta Education be credited towards families’ 2020-2021 bus fees.
CARRIED.

6.3 **20/04/15-3RA** 2021-2022 Calendars

MOVED by Director Scantlebury and seconded by Director Makwana that the 2021-2022 FFCA Calendars be approved as presented. CARRIED.

7. Committees

7.1 Charter Board Committee of the Whole - No report.

7.2 Executive Committee – This committee met once in early April to consider the agendas for the Working Session meeting and this Public Board Meeting.

7.3 Communications & Community Relations Committee (CCR) – The committee met on April 8 but has no report at this time.

7.4 Policy & Performance Review Committee (PPR) – The committee met on April 8 and will be commencing work to review their Terms of Reference, relevant policies and their quarterly budget report.

7.5 Audit Committee – This committee would under normal circumstances be meeting during April to discuss matters such as risk assessment and IT controls; work will resume at an appropriate time.

7.6 TAAPCS Board Rep Report – Executives of the provincial association met with Minister LaGrange by conference call on March 18 to discuss education funding, the Choice in Education Act, and other topics of significance to charter schools. Their Spring General Meeting will be held, likely through Zoom, on May 2.

7.7 Director Highlights – Vice-Chair Hill: connection through her day job to Director Jin, who responded to the COVID -19 crisis with donations from his Subway outlet; Director Jin: the opportunity to be able to contribute as mentioned; Director Scantlebury: the capability of the FFCA tech department to be able to respond to this situation so effectively; Director Bharmal: the development and initiation of the At-Home Learning program; Director Diaz: the work done and team spirit developed at the Board Retreat; Director Suleman: how well tonight’s meeting has come together; Director Makwana: all the efforts, in the midst of so much uncertainty, of Kurtis, Reta and team regarding next year’s budget; Director Spahl: the technology involved and his own ability to function with it; Chair Wilson: the April 10 signing of a provincial document ensuring Special Learning Supports Funding for FFCA, which represents a significant milestone in our evolution.

Special Highlight: COO Leinweber: the willingness of administration to cut their Spring Break to 4 days and engage, under the stellar leadership of Joan Burke, in the unfamiliar and extensive work of developing the FFCA At-Home Learning Plan.

8. Open to Gallery – Comments/questions related to: the timing of distribution of Learning Plans, the evaluation of year-end outcomes, preparation for a second wave of COVID-19, what elements are included in the one hour per day recommendation (i.e. uploading of assignments?), monitoring compliance with At-Home Learning recommendations, technology access, impact on post-secondary acceptance for Gr. 12 students, the difference between On-Line and At-Home Learning, the potential development of bad typing habits in the absence of key-boarding instruction, the cancellation of PD days, the potential for some type of town hall meeting with parents, and the distinction between Committee of the Whole and Working Sessions.
9. Chairperson’s Remarks – Chair Wilson expressed his full confidence in the Board and FFCA, and commented that the actions taken in response to this unprecedented situation are a testament to the character and leadership inherent in our organization. *“The bigger the storm, the brighter the rainbow at the end.”*

ADJOURNMENT: 8:04 p.m.

NEXT PUBLIC MEETING: May 13, 2020 @ TBC

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS: