



FCMS Board Meeting  
December 17, 2015

**Present:** John Sanderson, Lorie Federman, Frank Vincent, Eric Danielson, Nancy Tellez,  
Parents: Andrew Knight, Laura Dustin, Anneke Toomey.

**Mission, Vision, and Values:** Read by Ms. Federman

**Consent Agenda:**

Included in the Consent Agenda:

- Approve agenda for today's meeting
- Adopt meeting minutes from the November 19, 2015 Board meeting
- *During the legal review of the enrollment policy adopted at the November 19, 2015 board meeting, language giving priority to founding families was inadvertently dropped from the policy. The original language on founding family priority was re-inserted to give these families the same priority as founding board members.*

The enrollment policy was taken off the consent agenda for discussion later in the meeting.

**Motion:** Mr. Sanderson moved to pass remaining consent agenda items.

Ms. Federman seconded.

Motion passed.

**Community Comment:**

Mr. Knight addressed facilities issues. Appreciates the work that has been done by Ronnie Estelle and others on the Facilities committee.

Mr. Knight expressed concerns regarding the following:

- Ms. Estelle was given "a lot of authority" by the Board; Who is on the Facilities committee? Facilities need to have a link on the website, as SAC does, so that there is transparency regarding the work of the committee.
- Four volunteers were asked at the July Board meeting to make a list of places we've looked at; was that done?
- \$5,000 allotted for Facilities committee needs to be documented.
- Facilities committee follow-up: Were other leads followed up on besides Westminster Church?

- Have the primary teachers seen the second facility? If not, why? Others besides Ms. Estelle should be involved in the final lease agreement.
- Documentation: Mr. Knight requested that the Facilities committee “show their work” for transparency. Mr. Knight stated, “We are under a spotlight”.

Mr. Sanderson thanked Mr. Knight for his comments. Public comments will be addressed at another time.

**Head of School Report: Mr. Vincent:**

- Enrollment: FCMS is full as of January 1. The last 3-year-old slot is filled. Elementary may be slow; few spaces available. Running ad in *Recreator* with focus on preschool ages for new classroom. Preschool ages usually come in summer. There is a lot of interest in the school.
- Bond: there is potential for us to get some of the bond money. We can put a wish list in for bond money; has to be something the District can use and keep in the warehouse in case we do not get the funding. Our CDE grant ends this year. We requested in order of priority: tables, chairs, shelving, library furniture, cafeteria tables, small computer lab materials. Total: ~ \$67,500. We may have a good chance of getting this, as we have been conservative with the wish list.
- PARCC test: PARCC was new last year. We were able to do it on paper. State released averages. Mr. Vincent sent letters out to parents with numbers. There is more analysis and critical thinking on this test. This is a baseline test; no school is held accountable for these numbers. Test scores are being sent out tomorrow. PSD mis-coded one of the students’ tests, which Mr. Vincent is working on remedying with PSD. Over the next months we will be looking at how the students did, and how they tested on Common Core areas. Montessori students are not tested traditionally; rather teachers observe their progress daily. However, we do want to make sure they meet the state standards.
- No Child Left Behind (NCLB):  
Mr. Vincent shared his thoughts on the Federal decision to disband NCLB. Stronger focus on research is good, and compatible with Montessori’s emphasis on developmental education and observation.  
Reducing the disparity of socio-economic status is a goal for Colorado.  
We will be held accountable for our UIP as we grow and get a more diverse population.

Federal power established by NCLB will be decreased, and this is a good thing. Ms. Tellez shared: She served on the state assessment task force last year; federal government had a lot of power. Now, the challenge will be for the state to make good decisions in conjunction with educators. Testing needs to be done in a meaningful way that is good for children.

Mr. Sanderson: We should put our scores on the website.

Mr. Vincent: We have to be careful that parents who are looking for solutions to their children's problems do not enroll solely because of our high test scores.

- Mr. Vincent also shared the Annual Report that has been printed for distribution, with kudos to Lexie Croft for her many hours of graphic design work.

**Facilities Update: Mr. Sanderson:**

As we expand our facility, we need to get approval from PSD. Facilities committee meets roughly twice a month. A memorandum has been sent to PSD regarding our plans for the school years 2016-17 and 2017-18.

We need more space, and it is at a premium in Fort Collins. We are also time-constrained. 4 scenarios have been pursued:

- buy and build; currently there are 3 conversations in process. Won't happen this year due to finances.
- Commercial properties: 80 to 90 have been pursued; 3 have been visited that met our education codes and location needs. To date, there are no commercial properties on the market that will work for a variety of reasons. Our architect is being paid for his time, and has done pro bono work for us until recently.
- We have explored the possibility of adding modular units to our current facility. This is a conceivable solution, however, finding the modular is its own challenge. They are \$100,000 each. Utilities are an extra cost. Furthermore, the church may not want modular buildings. Our goal is to be in a long-term facility in 2018; we want to minimize the investment until we get a permanent location.
- The facilities committee visited approximately 50 churches and they are largely too encumbered by other needs for space.
- The big work is getting permits.
- We are planning on 25% growth next year in enrollment; 20% the following year.
- Staffing is challenging in two physical locations. There needs to be an administrator at all times in each building. Jessica Knight will be at the Primary facility as a licensed director.
- Budget: Operations projection \$25,000 surplus in 2016-17; over \$100,000 surplus in 2017-18.
- The League of Charter Schools advises us to use our surplus on our permanent facility.
- As soon as we get temporary facilities, we will have facilities committee focus on permanent facility.
- Mr. Danielson asked about ADA compliance: Is that expenditure on top of tenant improvement? Mr. Sanderson: yes. Because it is a temporary facility, our permit might be approved without having to do ADA improvements if we

are ready to implement a written plan, with cash in reserves, in case a student or student's relative has ADA needs.

- Westminster does not have the cash for the fire system. We can make the investment up front, and then structure the lease so that we can pay ourselves back over time. Mr. Vincent stressed the importance of being ADA compliant.
- Mr. Sanderson will give the document to PSD to look over.
  - ICRC is going to clear their items out of the office for FCMS starting in January, with \$100 added to the lease for use of the entire office space. It has until now been shared.

**Motion:** Mr. Danielson: The FCMS Board authorizes the Chair of the Facilities committee, Ronnie Estelle, to move forward with negotiation on a lease with ICRC at the monthly rate of \$4600, a 2.2% increase over Fiscal Year 2016, with the understanding that this rate includes the entire office space and will apply to both Fiscal Year 2017 and Fiscal Year 2018. Further, the Board approves modifying our current lease agreement to give FCS exclusive use of the office space for an additional payment of \$100 per month from January through June 2016.

Ms. Tellez seconded.

Motion passed.

**Financial Report: Mr. Danielson:**

Amendments to FY16 budget since July 1:

- Dues and memberships up
- \$3500 interest for loans was unanticipated
- Before/aftercare added to budget
- Extracurricular expenses are miscoded and will be fixed
- Custodial services up
- Salaries have gone up
- Workman's compensation has increased
- \$5,000 for architect
- Technical support is a new addition to budget
- Increased advertising to \$3500
- CDE year 2 is on current budget; it is spent and has been received

There is a projected surplus of \$9,000 at end of year.

**Motion:** Mr. Sanderson moved to adopt the revised Fiscal Year 2016 budget dated December 16, 2015.

Mr. Danielson seconded.

Motion passed.

**School Safety Report: Mr. Vincent:**

Day-to-day safety:

- There are 22 pages in Staff Handbook on safety, related to hazards, prevention, first aid, medication administration, evacuation, etc. These policies are reviewed and discussed by the staff every year.
- Background checks are done on all people working with children, including parents.
- Office staff monitors arrest records
- Adults are in view of children wherever they are. Younger children are escorted to the bathroom.
- Mandated reporting of child abuse and neglect.
- All staff trained in signs of abuse and neglect.
- Doors are locked. Adults let people in.

#### Bullying:

- In Preschool: talk about appropriate ways to communicate with others
- Elementary: Daily class meetings that are non-judgmental, where children discuss issues and resolve them in front of the group. This develops a safe community to discuss problems.

#### Crisis Response:

- Mr. Vincent went to a PSD program on Crisis Response.
- Clear, simple procedures are important. Every staff member is told to call 911 and not wait.
- There are different responses to differing situations. In an emergency, children need to know that they should be quiet and do that which is requested by staff.
- There are procedures in place at FCMS that will not be announced to the public for security purposes.
- Every class has a radio in case phones are not available.
- Police will inform staff of what to do.
- Crisis Response and Management book is in the office for all to see.

Mr. Sanderson mentioned the Claire Davis School Safety Act, which *recognizes that a duty of reasonable care exists with respect to schools and school employees to protect students, faculty, and staff from reasonably foreseeable violent acts within school facilities and during school-sponsored events\**. We would have to demonstrate that reasonable care has been taken; it is not clear what “reasonable care” means. Individual teachers could not be sued under this Act. Additionally, *a very high bar...must be met before ANY claim can be brought\**.

\* Fact Sheet on Colorado General Assembly Senate Bill 15-213

#### **Fundraising Committee:**

Mr. Sanderson wants to encourage the enthusiasm that is coming from the parents, and asked Ms. Tomei to share her perspective:

We should post the meetings.

Anneke Toomey, guest and chair of the Parent Volunteer Committee:

- Guidance is needed from the board re: fundraising. Should PVC meet its own needs? How much is too much? What should the goals of a fundraising committee be?
- Teacher appreciation gifts: should they be a separate entity?
- Do we need a focused fundraiser for teacher emergencies? (deaths, illness, etc.)
- Ideas for fundraising: Playground, Entrepreneur Club (structure a loan program for projects), etc.

Ms. Tellez commented that Ms. Toomey is asking the right questions about goals and expectations.

Mr. Vincent suggested that the PVC have its own nonprofit, and its fundraising activities, which it could give to the school or use for its own activities. In other schools that Mr. Vincent has been associated with, the HOS had to be on the committee as a voting member to make decisions about money. They could control income without asking the board. It would be operated independently; by having own nonprofit, they could solicit funds from big donors.

**Motion:** Mr. Sanderson moved:

As there has been considerable interest in fundraising at FCMS including several recently successful fundraisers, the FCMS Board hereby establishes a Fundraising Committee, with Nancy Tellez as Board Representative to the Committee. The Board requests that the committee:

- to determine its membership and process
- to describe its relationship to the Board, staff, and parents, including the PVC
- to work with the Head of School and the Board Treasurer to determine the best way forward with managing finances related to the full range of fundraisers (e.g., for the PVC, Facilities, sales of items such as on the web site and from the Entrepreneurs Club).
- to create an annual plan for fundraising
- to describe how we can create a spirit of giving among parents who have personal capacity, and
- to address the relationship if any to major philanthropic fundraising for facilities.

Mr. Danielson seconded.

- Discussion: PVC's role in fundraising, where and how to spend private dollars.
- Ms. Toomey: How are these committees populated? Who will chair?
- Ms. Toomey will contact Ocean as a contact for parents for the Fundraising committee.

Motion passed.

**SAC report: Ms. Federman:**

Went over process for new Parent Board member:

Mr. Sanderson has invited parents to apply for the position in his monthly letter, with a deadline of January 5 for all applications.

The Parent Council, made up of Susan Tsunoda and Kate Muldoon, recommends 2 applicants to Nominating Committee, made up of Mr. Sanderson and Ms. Federman.

The PC also serves to recruit parents for the position and network with staff for recommendations.

The Nominating Committee interviews the recommended candidates and makes a recommendation to the Board at the next meeting. The Board then votes on the candidate.

**Enrollment Policy: Mr. Sanderson:**

- Mr. Sanderson added language from Enrollment Policy regarding founding parents, which was inadvertently deleted from last approved policy.
- A kindergartner was admitted 1 ½ years ago and now wants admission, as the policy stated that admission is guaranteed for two years. This would potentially affect already enrolled children and needs to be changed.

**Motion:** Mr. Sanderson moved that the FCMS Board adopt the revised enrollment policy dated Dec. 15, 2015, amended to include students enrolled during the 2014 enrollment period in the first priority.

Mr. Danielson seconded.

Motion passed.

Mr. Sanderson moved the meeting be adjourned.

Mr. Danielson seconded.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorie Federman

Board Treasurer and interim Board Secretary