



Aurora School Ltd.
Board of Directors – Public Board Meeting
May 16, 2016

RATIFIED

- 16-05-16-01 Call to Order and Roll Call**
Meeting called to order at 6:08 p.m. by Dr. Shamir Mukhi, Board Chair
- Present:** Dale Bischoff, Rebecca Harrison, Susan Mallory, Shamir Mukhi, Steven Penney, Qumber Rizvi
- Absent:** Rehana Devji, Marla Leganchuk, Holly Maccagno
- Guests:** Peter Dang, Ian Gray, Lorrie Makepeace, Janet Rockwood
- Parent Guests:** Parag Arvikar, Admas Berhe, Ellen Fung, Paola Mayo, Doris Shannon, Olena Vovk, Oleh Vovk
- 16-05-16-02 Agenda**
Motion to accept the May 16, 2016 agenda as presented, made by: Rebecca Harrison
Seconded, Carried.
- 16-05-16-03 Board Meeting Minutes**
Motion to accept the April 18, 2016 Board Meeting minutes, as amended, made by: Steven Penney
Seconded, Carried.
- 16-05-16-04 Guest Reports**
- **Elementary Principal’s Report**
Ian Gray, Elementary Principal presented the Report from Administration on Technology to the Board for information and discussion. Highlights include:
 - ◆ Learning & Technology Policy Framework
 - ◆ Jurisdictional Technology conference
 - ◆ Aurora Learning Commons
 - ◆ Technology VisionThe Board asked on the status of the wait list program. It is tentatively planned to roll out in August and will be operational by October 30. Consists of two parts, pre-registration form and required documentation of proof of citizenship and current report card. We are planning to add a small management fee to complete pre-registrations in the new program.
 - **Middle School Principal’s Report**
Janet Rockwood, Middle School Principal presented the Report from Administration on Athletics to the Board for information and discussion. Highlights include:
 - ◆ New Athletics & PE Coordinator for 2015-16
 - ◆ Increased PE time for Grades 7 – 9
 - ◆ Increased & variety of extra-curricular sports teams
 - ◆ Stronger PE program
 - **Parent Petition**
Parent representatives following up with the Board on the petition presented to the Board of Directors at the April 18, 2016 Board Meeting. They wish to address the Board on how they plan to hear the voice of parents as per point #10 of the Aurora Charter Evaluation. Point #10 states:

“Many students, parents and teachers at Aurora aspire to increased opportunity for “voice” in decision making. As this aspiration is consistent with the Aurora Board’s priority on improving communication channels, the board must develop and clarify the structures it will use to communicate more openly with stakeholders. In its focus group and survey data collections, the evaluation team found that many school stakeholders – particularly school teachers, but also students and parents – want increased opportunities to learn about board plans and directions and to offer feedback prior to board action being taken. The board must build on its initial efforts to build alliances and create regular opportunities for dialogue with the key stakeholders at the school.”



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Parents wondered how the Board planned to hear parent voices and also how they would get information out to parents. The Board responded that they are also parents of students at Aurora School. Their collective goal is the same and are trying to create a positive environment for our children and create transparent communications. A Strategic Planning Committee has been struck which will establish a structure to facilitate representation by stakeholders, teachers and the Board. This new Committee will discuss how Aurora will shape itself for the next charter renewal process. Communication is very important and the Board recognizes its need to understand parent perceptions when it makes decisions and establish trust. Sometimes the Board has to make difficult decisions that parents might not understand. To help parents understand some of the issues in front of the Board, it was suggested that a current “Questions” section might be added to the school website could assist communication between the Board and Parents.

Parents suggested that circulating the Board meeting agenda prior to the monthly meeting might encourage parents to attend. Another suggestion was that the Board might host a blog to get information and ideas out. The Board Chair also asked parents to email ideas to the board and or to bring their concerns forward for Board consideration.

16-05-16-05 Financial Report

- **Financial Update**

The Superintendent presented the Transportation Costs Analysis to the Board for information and review, on behalf of the Secretary Treasurer. The Superintendent recommends that we increase bus fees slightly for 2016-2017 by \$50 for the first student in the family (\$650) to a family maximum of \$1800. The Kindergarten bus fee rate would drop slightly to \$400. Next year the GPS pilot would continue to be free to all bus students and that the GPS service was completely optional. It was also noted that we are projecting the addition of another bus for 2016-17. The Superintendent stressed that transportation fees needed to be approved soon so the 2016-17 annual transportation budget could be finalized.

- **Cleaning Contract**

The janitorial contract is expiring and we will be calling for proposals shortly. It was noted that we may need to do a call for proposals for Maintenance & Management Services as well if we become aware that title to the school property transfer is imminent. The superintendent has meetings scheduled with Alberta Education and Edmonton Public School (EPSB) central office staff regarding the expiring Aurora lease.

16-05-16-06 Superintendent’s Report

Board Strategic Planning Process

- When the new committee was struck there was hope that perhaps the general meeting required to change the *Articles of Association* could accomplish several suggested changes. However, the change process is looking like it will not happen quickly. Because the School Council expressed interest in holding their elections in September, the superintendent recommended a stand-alone issue “parent members” meeting that could move to delete the School Council operational procedures from the Articles of Association Appendix. It is hoped that the School Council will promote the special meeting and assist the Board to get sufficient attendance to meet quorum requirements.

ACTION ITEM: The Superintendent, in consultation with Communications Chair Rehana Devji, will contact the School Council Chair to facilitate a membership meeting in September with School Council.



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- *Communications/Newsletter, FAQ, school website.*
A need has been identified for the creation a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document on the website so parents may be involved in school issues. It was suggested to also include a link to the Board Chair's report in the school newsletters. It is important that we have procedures in place to make sure it works and is kept up-to-date. It was suggested that it could be helpful to include a link to TAAPSC website in the Aurora website. While we have a blog, no-one has updated it nor is there anyone responsible for this communication function. Perhaps the communication function falls naturally in tasks associated with the new position of Director of Technology. This topic has been TABLED to the next Board meeting and should be considered by the Technology Committee. The Board Secretary will add the TAAPCS link to the website.

ACTION ITEMS

The Superintendent to create a Communications FAQ for the School Website.

The Board Secretary to create a TAAPCS link on our school website under Governance.

- *Service Awards*
The Superintendent proposed the Board host a Year-end Staff Dinner on June 29 in the evening to wind up the school year and honour our retirees and service award recipients. The Board supports this idea. The Superintendent will report back at the next meeting in June of the details of the gala event which will be coordinated by Susan Mallory.
- *Capital Planning / Alberta Infrastructure Meeting*
The Superintendent is attending an important meeting with Alberta Infrastructure and Capital planning tomorrow at Aurora School. They will be touring the new construction along with having discussions on possible funding assistance for Phase 2 (elementary) development and whether they will consider supporting an Aurora high school.

16-05-16-07 Board Committee Reports

- **Communication/20th Anniversary Celebrations**
20th Anniversary Celebrations Committee Report – Superintendent.
We had hoped to set a June date, however due to construction delays the official school opening will need to be moved to August. The date recommended by the committee is August 31, beginning in the afternoon with students. We will need the support of School Council and parent volunteers to assist with the celebrations. The celebration afternoon will be designed to include cultural and educational presentations for students. The Minister of Education will be invited to attend grand opening. We want all the children in attendance for grand opening ceremonies. Because many parents cannot attend an afternoon event, there may also be another evening event "open house" for parents, perhaps by partnering with a Meet the Teacher evening event.

[Motion to approve August 31 as the date for Grand Opening celebration made by: Steven Penney](#)
[Seconded, Carried.](#)
- **Teacher Board Liaison Group Meeting (TBL)**
The first TBL meeting started with discussion on meeting format and attendance requirements. Teachers want the Board to adopt a Parent Code of Conduct. This committee provides an opportunity for teachers to communicate to the Board issues of importance to them.



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The first suggestion put forward by teachers at the new TBL is that they want the Board to adopt a Parent Code of Conduct. Teachers feel that parents need to treat teachers with respect in their workplace. A TBL teacher representative will bring the draft policy to the next Policy Committee meeting, after which it will go to School Council for input. It was stated that the Policy Committee might suggest changes to the draft policy or wait for feedback from the School Council. It was noted that there is a Board Code of Conduct for Members policy but has a different focus than the proposed TBL policy. Another item arising at the meeting was that teachers are looking to have a strong voice in the creation of the staff survey and this was the basis of the TBL Committee agenda for their next meeting.

- **Transportation Committee**

At the last meeting, Amit Anand and Manish Patel met with the committee to hear a progress report on the GPS pilot. The results from parents surveyed on the EZ en-Route GPS tracking program were presented to the Board and are very favourable. The survey return rate was over 50%. The Board Chair supports tracking the bus but questioned the ethics of tracking students. The Chair suggested the committee look at other vendor options.

- **Policy Committee (January 18)**

The following policies were presented to the Board for approval.

Motion to approve Policy Package (BP 4000, 4010, 4020, 4050) for third and final reading, made by: Steven Penney
Seconded, **Carried.**

Motion to approve Policy BP 2100 for first reading, made by: Steven Penney
Seconded, **Carried.**

- **Growth Committee**

Parking Lot Update. The committee met last week to hear Arrow Engineering present parking lot location options, rationale for parking designs and report on their traffic study. Some concerns noted were the current lack of parking and student safety at the current staff parking lot exit. We do not meet the requirements of city code for number of parking stalls or drop zone car places. Arrow Engineering ruled out parking lot development on the schools east side as roadway is too narrow and does not have good sightlines. The only feasible location for increased parking development would be on the west side of the school grounds. For student safety purposes a new parking lot entrance was also needed to take cars away from the elementary school entrance. A parking lot proposal will be presented at the next Board meeting. To keep parents informed, the Superintendent will create FAQ for parking plans. The Board accept a recommendation of the study and it was noted that we cannot start the elementary modernization until parking lot issues are solved.

Motion to accept the parking lot recommendations in principle, made by: Rebecca Harrison
Seconded, **Carried.**

ACTION ITEM: The Superintendent will prepare a Parent FAQ on parking lot development.



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Shumka Space

The Secretary Treasurer and the Superintendent have signed a contract with the Architect to design plan the elementary phase 2 modernization as presented at the previous Board meeting.

New Grade Seven Class

The addition of a grade seven class last year was discussed but put on hold because construction was behind schedule. When the new building opens we will have the space to add a new grade seven class. It was noted that we will have 98% substantial construction completed by August 1.

Motion to approve a new grade seven class, made by: Steven Penney
Seconded, **Carried.**

Technology Committee

The March meeting was cancelled and has not yet been rescheduled.

ACTION ITEM: The Superintendent will contact the Technology Committee Chair to set a date for the next meeting.

16-08-18-08

Board Chair Items

a. Emergency Management Plan

The Board Chair expressed concerns over whether our emergency plans are in place and that drills are regularly practiced. The Superintendent will ask Ian Gray to provide an update on EMP and drill practice at the next Board Meeting.

ACTION ITEM: The Superintendent will ask the Elementary Principal to provide an update on our Emergency Management Plan and drill practice at the next Board Meeting.

b. TAAPCS Meeting

The Board Chair reviewed the TAAPCS meeting. He noted it was a very good meeting and that the MLAs attending sent the message the government supports status quo on Charter Schools. Research was presented from Foundations for the Future and U of C joint project on Balance through Physical Activity. New Horizons updated on their upcoming 20th anniversary plans.

c. Legal Advice on Petition

The Board is reflecting on the parent petition and what they can learn from it. It raised concerns over whether we have any policies to address these kinds of situations and most importantly how we can protect our students. The Superintendent raised the point that parents have a right to petition or protest. However, parents do not have the right to approach children at Aurora for any reason. We must protect our students from any sales advertisements, religious marketing or parental petition materials. Further parents do not have the right to represent any materials they are distributing as being supported by the school. Children should not be subjected to political pressure by any parent on school property. No school would permit parents to lobby students on



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school property or to encourage disrespect of a governance decision made by a lawfully elected Board.

Only the Principal can approve materials to be distributed to students or parents. In this recent case of the parent petition, the principal did not allow distribution of the petition to students inside the school. Additionally, the superintendent directly requested that the parent not involve students in the petition distribution. If parents refuse the lawful requests of school officials to refrain from making unauthorized contact with Aurora students, the Board may consider obtaining legal advice to exercise its lawful rights to protect children by legal means available.

d) 20th Anniversary Video

Our first video viewed extensively and was well received. The Board was asked to support the development of a four to five minute video clip on their reflections on the past 20 years. The Superintendent will engage a videographer to video students, teachers and parents of Aurora on site, and to gather photos (particularly historical) that might fill in gaps for inclusion in the video. The video will premiere in August.

ACTION ITEM: The Superintendent will work on the development of the Board video that demonstrates school highlights that can be shown at the 20th school anniversary celebration.

e) HR Update

The job posting for the Elementary Principal has closed and hiring process has begun.

Motion to go in camera: Steven Penney
Seconded, **Carried.**

Motion to go out of camera: Steven Penney
Seconded, **Carried.**

16-05-16-08

Calendar Dates to Remember

- May 20-21Google Conference at Aurora School
- June 4Grade Nine Grad. (Rehana Devji, Rebecca Harrison, Dale Bischoff & Shamir Mukhi? will attend)
- June 7-8?Budget Review. (Need to set date for special budget review meeting. Board members to email dates they are available to the Superintendent.)

ACTION ITEM: Set special board meeting date on the Budget Review from dates emailed by Board members as to their availability.

16-05-16-09

Next Board Meeting

June 20Board Meeting (6pm)

Upcoming Board Meetings

- September 19Board Meeting
- October 17Board Meeting
- November 21Board Meeting
- November 24AGM* (7pm) *Tentative



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16-05-16-11 Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the May 16, 2016 Board Meeting at 9:37pm, made by: Qumber Rizvi

Submitted by: _____
Susan Mallory, Recording Secretary