

March 2017 Regular Board Meeting Highlights

International Women's Day - Chair Natalya Nicholson opened the meeting by reminding everyone of the importance of celebrating women and honoring those who have inspired, paved the way, and given hope to others. She noted that CGS exists to support girls and young women in becoming confident and innovative leaders in a complex, global environment. She also reviewed the correspondence and the Board's letter to parents regarding the fees and transportation announcement in the Throne Speech of March 2.

Margo Purcell, Vice Chair reported on the work of the Policy and Governance Committee. She highlighted plans for the parent **Speak Out** on Wednesday, April 5 at the Lakeview Learning Commons from 6 – 8:30 pm. The evening will begin with a light supper and ice-breaker activities, followed by three round table, facilitated conversations related to the Board's work on the Foundation Statements – vision, mission and values.

Dianne McBeth noted that her Superintendent's Report was included in the agenda package. She commented on Bill 1 an *Act to Reduce School Fees* which apparently excludes public charter schools. The Association of Alberta Public Charter Schools has asked Minister Eggen to clarify the Bill's intentions with respect to charter schools because the introduction of a two-tiered funding system for public schools is of great concern to the Association.

Stanley Wong reported on the Finance Committee's review of the 2nd Quarter Financial Report, the Fees Schedule 2017-18, and various capital projects. These items were also in the agenda.

TAAPCS: Dianne reported on the status of the new Bylaws for the Association which have now been submitted to Corporate Registries. She also noted that the TAAPCS Fees and Communications Committees will be meeting this month to prepare recommendations for the May meeting in Valhalla. Directors Wayne, Geordie, Natalya, and possibly Margo will be attending the meeting.

2nd Quarter Financial Report: Secretary-Treasurer Wendy Juergens presented the Quarterly Financials by the four envelopes. Instruction is in a deficit and projected to show a year-end deficit. Plant Operations and Maintenance, Transportation and Board & System are currently in surplus but transportation is projected to end in a deficit due primarily to expected increases in fuel costs. The year-end projection is close to budget which is overall a positive situation. The details are in the agenda package.

Calendar 2017-18: The school year calendars are approved two years in advance so Calendar 2017-18 was circulated and approved in the spring of 2015. However, the Board approved a minor change, a "tweak", to accommodate the biennial TAAPCS conference. The calendar anticipated the conference would take place the third week of October, but the actual date set this fall by the host school (Aurora Charter) is the fourth week. The calendar adjustment is as follows: Friday, October 20 and Monday, October 23 are professional development days. These **two PD dates will change to: Friday, October 27 and Monday, October 30**. The amended calendar will be posted to the website. The Board also received confirmation that the next school year meets all the requirements for the minimum instructional hours.

Capital Plan Priorities: Wendy reviewed the three-year capital plan priorities that reflect the Board's plans for student accommodation (enrolment trends and cap) and the condition of the CGS facilities. The priorities include 1) lease funding for NGCA (must be annually requested and approved by AB ED) 2) Funding to support a feasibility study re: consolidating the two campuses at one site to achieve efficiency and reduce operating expenses 3) major modernization of Lakeview (and expansion if supported by the feasibility study) 4) major modernization of Bel Aire. The utilization rates at both campuses are at or near capacity. Alberta Education and AB Infrastructure approve modernization and new school projects based on several criteria to determine priorities for the limited

funding. Health and safety as well as enrolment growth are key factors. Based on the priority ranking, it is not likely that either school will be an immediate “high priority” for modernization.

On a very positive note, Alberta Education approved two replacement modular units at Lakeview. The required paperwork was submitted to AB Education and now CGS is waiting to receive approval for the documents to go to tender. The replacement units will link to the newer units and the old ones will be removed with site restoration to follow. The modular must be operational by this September as a condition of the funding approval so CGS is anxiously waiting for approval to move the project to the next stage.

The Board also considered and approved funding from its reserve funds to support the flooring project at Bel Aire. Last summer flooring was replaced in two classrooms, but the deep cleaning in all classrooms revealed a need to remove and replace all the flooring. The project will be undertaken this summer so students and staff can expect a “new” look to Bel Aire this fall. Time permitting, some work will also be done in the school office and staff room. This work is primarily cosmetic and updating for more efficient work spaces.

School Fees: The Board approved the proposed fees for 2017-18. **An information letter with more details will be forthcoming to parents.** In summary, there is no change to the Instructional Resources or Technology Fees (the adjustment last year eliminated buy-outs for parents and thus reduced the overall costs by about 30% over each of the two usage periods: grade 4-mid 6 (iPad) and mid 6-9 (laptop). The lunch supervision fees are set by the external service provider, not the Board, however the fees reduced significantly last year and will not change this coming year. Transportation will increase by a slight amount based on the new services contract. The daily bus ride compares favorably to the youth pass for Calgary City transit: 2.25/ride for the City and 2.28/ride for CGS. Unlike a city bus service, there are no mid-ride transfers, riders are provided a seat rather than standing room, and they are picked up outside the school doors. Only our registered riders are permitted on the CGS buses.

Enrichment Fee: This item deserves some elaboration! A change this year is to establish a single fee that will cover all “extras” like field trips, concert and program tickets, graduation, special speakers. The Enrichment fee will eliminate all the frequent requests for “special events/trips” that enrich learning. The amount was determined by looking at the average costs for these events over the past three years. Further, the “one stop” will significantly reduce the Chase Payment fees as well as the labour costs involved in managing the data entries. The information letter noted above will provide further details of this fee.

Budget 2017-18: Wendy presented a power point summary of the budget building process. The presentation explained the drivers for the various kinds of grant funding and the projected revenue based on current enrolment of 588. As well, Wendy reviewed the four envelopes and the various pressures in each. The purpose of the presentation was to ensure all Directors have shared understanding of budget principles, revenue and expense assumptions, and accountability for public funds. The GoA is expected to announce the provincial budget in late March which means the Board will be considering its budget at the April meeting.

Governance Policy Review: The Board continued its regular policy review by looking closely at Policy 6 Role of the Vice Chair and Policy 7 Charter Board Operations. The purpose of regular policy review is to build shared understanding, evaluate the effectiveness and need for the policy, and to support compliance in board decision-making. The Board affirmed these two policies to remain in force with no changes.

Note: Highlights is primarily an internal communications document. The official record of the Board's Regular Meeting on March 8, 2017 is in the Minutes which will be presented at the next meeting. Questions or comments are always welcome. Contact the Superintendent at Dianne.mcbeth@calgarygirlsschool.com or by calling 403.252.0702.