

November 29, 2017

The year has flown by and thought I would start with a quote:

"Change has a bad reputation in our society. But it isn't all bad – not by any means. In fact, change is necessary in life – to keep us moving ... to keep us growing ... to keep us interested ... Imagine life without change. It would be static ... boring ... dull." **–Dr. Dennis O'Grady**

Not unlike past years, this year has been one of change:

- This is the first full year operating on our updated Bylaws with our reduced number of board members (maximum 9). I am pleased with how engaged and efficient we are able to be with our meetings
- We welcomed one of our first alumni, Christine Jackson, and parent, Gary Care as new Directors
 - We thank Shary Baig and Natalie Kwadrans for their service to CGS and will miss their insight, expertise and the perspective they brought to our discussions
- We welcomed Principal Wes Malo in September and I don't believe his excitement has waned since day one with CGS.
- We had several major capital expenditures to improve our campuses including:
 - 2 new (to us) portables at Lakeview that were ready just in time this fall,
 - new flooring throughout Bel-Aire Campus,
 - a newly renovated staff room at Bel-Aire, and
 - a new telephone systems at both campuses (more importantly, this also improved security at the schools)

Our participation with our external partners continues and relationships are stronger between all Alberta Charter Schools as we find way to work together. Change has also come to this organization.

- The Alberta Association of Public Charter Schools (TAAPCS) has completed a governance review and new bylaws and policies were approved at the AGM this fall.
- Our Director, Geordie MacPherson, has been elected Vice-Chair of the TAAPCS Board of Directors (Congratulations Geordie).
- We also would like to thank Dianne McBeth for her volunteer service as the President (2015-16) and Co-President (6 months of 2016-17) of TAAPCS.
- The CGS Board organized a series of governance workshops for all of the Calgary-area Charter School Boards that was very well received. It was so successful that TAAPCS has established a Committee to continue this professional development more formally amongst all the Charter Schools in the province.

- Director Caroline Claussen has participated on the TAAPCS Communications Committee that is currently developing a short “white-board video” about Alberta Charter Schools. We are excited to see the final version in the new year.
- TAAPCS has had great engagement with Minister Eggen and he has stated his unequivocal support for Charter Schools in Alberta.

Although not all change is bad, sometimes it is difficult.

- We had sad news of the unexpected and sudden passing of a very dear teacher, Quan Le. He is missed greatly yet we are thankful that he was part of our school and the lives of our staff and students since the beginning. He brought joy and music to our hallways and hearts.

Although change may be necessary.... It doesn't apply to everything across the board. So what hasn't changed:

We continue to be extremely proud of the school's accomplishments. Our girls continue to excel academically.

- Academic results continue to exceed provincial averages in Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and Language Arts.
- Stakeholder satisfaction is rated *excellent*.
- We continue to be an innovative and successful charter school. We understand that CGS is a school of choice and we continue to strive to be THE all-for-girls learning environment that fosters confident, courageous, competent, and connected young women. We want families to choose us.
- We continue to support numerous opportunities for professional development for our Leadership Team and Staff.
- We intend to keep up the engagement opportunities for our parent community as well as continue the Speak Out and engagement opportunities for our girls this coming year. The Board hosted its second parent Speak Out which was well attended and positively received.
- We continue to engage with our local MLA's and the Minister of Education to promote the value that CGS and all Alberta Charter Schools have to offer.

In addition to the oversight of our annual work plan, the board continues to strengthen its internal processes and governance.

- Last year we completed our first full-cycle review of our board policies and this year we have been re-assessing our policies with a deeper lens to ensure strong governance for our organization.

- The Board is looking forward to our Strategic Planning discussions this winter and next summer. We have excellent input from Student and Parent Speak Outs as well as from staff on a focused vision. Our staff spent considerable time identifying key outcomes and I want to highlight those for you:
 1. Communication with parents is responsive and collaborative. (Reviewing the technology strategy as well as approaches to assessment and reporting of student achievement are part of meeting this desired outcome).
 2. Numeracy results exceed provincial average for all students and all girls.
 3. The Go Girls Curriculum develops socially and emotionally capable and confident young women.

We continue to be strong financially:

- We completed our second audit with KPMG.
- We balanced the annual operating budget (Additional, approved projects were funded from reserve funds).
- We continue to assess areas where we can make improvements on fees. This past year we switched to an enrichment-fee for things like field studies and off-campus learning instead of multiple charges throughout the year.
- We continue to assess strategic operational changes to reduce costs and to create efficiencies.

In closing:

Thank you to my fellow board members: I appreciate everyone for their commitment to excellence.

- Margo
- Stanley
- Caroline
- Geordie
- Brad
- Wayne
- Gary
- Christine

To our amazing team:

- Superintendent Dianne for her incredible leadership, compassion and professionalism;
- Secretary-Treasurer Wendy, for keeping our books and records straight and continued improvements to our financial systems;
- Tara for her dedication and work in the board office and we welcome Nicole.



Board of Directors
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- Thank you to our Admin Team, Learning Leaders, teachers and staff in the offices at Lakeview and Bel Aire.

We thank our School Council for the work they do throughout the year to support the CGS Community.
We thank our Honorary Council for their continued and valuable connection to our school community.

Thank you, everyone!

On behalf of the board of directors, we are extremely proud of our students and their many accomplishments. Our charter goals are to enhance girls' academic, social and emotional learning, to support teamwork and collaboration and pursuit of professional excellence are realized in our school's culture and professional practice that fosters engaged, entrepreneurial and ethical citizens.

We are grateful for the parents and families who support our girls and choose the Calgary Girls' School.

Submitted by Natalya Nicholson, President of the Calgary Girls' School Society and Chair of the Charter Board of Directors.

