AURORA ACADEMIC CHARTER SCHOOL

BOARD COMMITTEE

Board of Directors
Annual General Meeting

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

Date: November, 21, 2024
Time: 7:00 PM
Location: AACS Online

Attending:
Zahida Hirani-Saran(Board Chair)
Fauziat Raji
Constance Amenaghawon
Ajoke Omage
Adadayo Ojeleye
Jennifer SIngh
Kerry-Ann Sitcheron
Ian Gray (Superintendent)
Khryssa Genery (Recording Secretary)

Items

1. **Land Acknowledgement** **7:06PM**
   a. The Land acknowledgement was read by the board chair(Zahida Hirani-Saran, Board Chair)

2. **Call to order, acceptance of the Agenda (Zahida Hirani-Saran, Board Chair)** **7:07PM**
   The Annual General Meeting was called to order by the Board Chair Zahida Hirani-Saran at 7:01PM. Quorum was acquired at 7:06PM.

   a. Motion to approve the agenda of the AACS Annual General Meeting of November 21, 2024.

      Moved by Fauziat Raji
      Seconded by Kerry-Ann Sitcheron

3. **Ratify the minutes of the AGM meeting of November 23, 2023 (Zahida Hirani-Saran)** **7:09PM**
   a. Motion to ratify the minutes of the AACS Annual General Meeting of November 23, 2024.

      Moved by Constance Amenaghawon
      Seconded by Ajoke Omage

4. **Welcome – Annual Report from the Chair of the Aurora Board of Directors (Zahida Hirani-Saran)**
   a. **Board Updates**

   7:11PM

   The Aurora Charter Schools Board focused on key initiatives during the fiscal year from September 1, 2023, to August 31, 2024:

   Policy Updates: Regular updates aligned school policies with the mission and goals.

   Skyrattler Lease: Secured a 10-year lease for Aurora's third school.

   Mental Health & Wellness Grant: Supported weekly clubs for Grades 4–7, teacher-led activities, and partnerships with the Sherbrooke Community for programs like the Green Shack, senior meet-ups, lunch-and-learn sessions, and community presentations.

   Counseling services were provided by Aaron Block, a registered psychologist, through recess conversations, one-on-one sessions, teacher consultations, PD sessions, and mental health resources for students and staff.
   Mental health modules were developed for Grades K–12 and teacher PD.
   A Wellness and Flourishing Survey, conducted by Dr. Hammond, gathered input from 300 students in Grades 3–12.
   Academic Opportunities:

   Dual-credit courses with NAIT included Human Anatomy (online) and Applied Medical Sciences (hybrid).
   For 2024–2025, 14 courses will be offered through Lethbridge Polytechnic.
   Strategic Planning: Six sessions were held to develop a five-year plan for Aurora Traditional Schools, with the finalized plan available for stakeholder review.

b. Challenges the board has faced

There is a need to increase stakeholder engagement as the Board works to ensure that all stakeholders feel engaged and heard. Another key challenge was the timely sharing of updates and information. However, the Skyrattler lease process demonstrated notable improvements in communication, as updates were conveyed efficiently and effectively. To address these issues, the Board has focused on maintaining consistent communication through newsletters and meetings. These efforts aim to ensure that stakeholders are informed about key developments and decisions.

c. Community Call-out

The Board emphasizes the importance of community and stakeholder involvement. The Board encourages all stakeholders to hold the Board accountable by raising any questions or concerns they may have. The Board remains committed to providing updates and sharing information about facilities construction and other key developments. The Board announced that Aman Construction has been acquired to lead a significant project, with construction expected to be completed before July 2025. This timeline will coincide with the Board's vision for the students to attend Skyrattler in August 2025. The Board continues to advocate for capital funding to build new schools, renovate existing facilities, and expand resources. Aurora is actively pursuing a potential fourth site.

5. Audited Financial Statements (Constance Amenaghawon, Director of Finance)

The Director of Finance presented the audited financial statements for the fiscal year ending August 31, 2024. A comprehensive overview of the financial position was shared, including operations and associated highlights. Financial assets, including cash and cash equivalents, increased to $6,359,385 in 2024 from $4,297,123 in 2023, reflecting improved liquidity. Accounts receivable decreased from $124,114 in 2023 to $81,726 in 2024. Total financial assets for the year amounted to $6,441,111 compared to $4,951,324 in the prior year.

a. Liabilities

Liabilities were also reviewed, with accounts payable and accrued liabilities totalling $1,453,100 in 2024, an increase from $310,388 in 2023. A short-term grant of $338,943 for transportation contributed to deferred contributions, significantly impacting the liabilities. The total liabilities rose from $1,456,208 in 2023 to $1,853,438 in 2024. Net financial assets after liabilities stood at $4,587,678 in 2024, demonstrating a marginal improvement over $4,495,118 in 2023.

b. Non- Financial Assets

Non-financial assets were discussed, with the capital assets reported at $4,215,120 for 2024, a decrease from $5,096,929 in 2023 due to amortization. The total non-financial assets for 2024 were valued at $4,492,410, down from $5,242,894 in the previous year. Net assets before capital contributions were $9,080,088 in 2024. The accumulated surplus for the year was reported at $7,600,349, reflecting a decrease from $8,212,774 in 2023 due to spending not yet amortized.

c. Statement of Operations

Constance also reviewed the Statement of Operations, highlighting revenue sources and expenses. Total revenue for the fiscal year was $13,713.961, slightly higher than the $11,503.683 reported in 2023. Government of Alberta funding accounted for $12,531,499, with additional income from student fees, yearbook sales, and donations. Expenses were primarily allocated to instructional costs, with $8,769.860 spent on Grades 1–12 instruction. Other expenses included Kindergarten salaries and administration, as well as maintenance costs related to infrastructure, such as cable furnaces. The annual operational deficit was $612,42,5, which was significantly lower than forecasted, indicating careful financial management.

d. Questions from the Floor (Facilitator: Zahida Hirani-Saran)

Several questions were addressed by the Board about the availability of financial statements online, to which it was confirmed that they are accessible on the school's website. Suggestions that financial documents could be made available prior to meetings to enhance transparency. Questions raised about the deficit, asking whether it is projected to grow or shrink, strategies to reduce it, and its impact. Constance explained that the deficit may grow slightly as government support decreases but noted that efficient budget management and additional funding opportunities are being explored. Challenges arising from the deficit, such as limited resource flexibility, are being mitigated through strategic planning and reimbursements for major expenses like flood repairs. Last question from the floor discussed how the Aurora Philosophy is being maintained as new schools open and staff join. Leadership responded by outlining ongoing efforts, including a robust onboarding program for new staff, restructured professional development aligned with core values, and a strategic plan focused on culture and academic growth. Consistency across schools is further ensured through enhanced assessments within the charter association and clear documentation of policies accessible to all staff.

6. **Directors Election (Ian Gray, Election Officer)** **8:02PM**

a. **Introduction of the Board of Director Candidates:**

i. Ajoke Omage

ii. Ritesh Grover

b. **Election Candidates**

i. **Ajoke Omage**

Ajoke Omage, a current board member, expressed her intention to remain on the board. She emphasized her dedication to supporting the positive growth of Aurora Charter Schools and the surrounding community. Ajoke highlighted her commitment to being a pillar of the board, contributing her time and effort to the decisions and progress that benefit both the school and the community. She noted her passion for ensuring the well-being of the students and their families through her continued service.

ii. **Ritech Grover**

Ritech Grover, Vice President of an insurance company and parent of two children at the school, shared his vision for the board. He highlighted the opportunities and strengths he has observed at Aurora, emphasizing the importance of fostering overall development for students and effectively utilizing the resources available to the school. Ritech underscored his commitment to transparency and openness, aiming to strengthen the connection between the school and its families.

c. **Vote** **8:14PM**

The voting link was shared for the attendees to submit the candidate of choice.

d. **Vote Outcome**

i. Successful candidate**: Ajoke Omage**

e. **Message to the Candidates**

Thank you to the candidates for all your hard work, dedication and support in the growth and development of Aurora Academic Charter School

7. **Questions From the Floor (Zahida Hirani-Saran)**

The Board addressed inquiries regarding the grade assignments for the new location in Skyrattler, specifically whether openings would be available for Grade 1 due to the extensive waitlist for that grade. The Board clarified that the designated grades for the location are currently Grades 5, 6, and 7. However, should there be sufficient room or an increase in demand, the Board will reassess and potentially revise the grade designations.

8. **Adjournment (Zahida Hirani-Saran)** **8:25PM**

a. **Motion to Adjourn:** Ajoke Omage