AURORA ACADEMIC CHARTER SCHOOL

BOARD COMMITTEE

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

Date: September 11 , 2025
Time: 7:00 PM
Location: AACS Online

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

Guests: None

Items

7:02PM

1. **Land Acknowledgement (Zahida Hirani-Saran, Board Chair)**

The meeting commenced at 7:02 PM with a Land Acknowledgement delivered by Board Chair Zahida Hirani-Saran, recognizing the traditional territories on which Aurora Academic Charter School resides.

2. **Call to Order (Zahida Hirani-Saran, Board Chair)** **7:04PM**

The Board Chair officially called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM. The session was held virtually via Google Meet to ensure public accessibility.

A five-day wave notice was provided. The vote resulted in six in favour and one abstention. There was no approval of the agenda and no review of the prior meeting minutes. The Board will review and approve the minutes at the next scheduled meeting.

3. **Superintendent Report**
   a. **Building Proposal** **7:08PM**

The Superintendent provided a review of the proposed site, highlighting it as a strong addition to AACE. The project would be supported through a provincial heritage grant designated for the acquisition and restoration of historical sites. As charter schools are not permitted to purchase property directly, the building would be acquired through Infrastructure. A $100,000 heritage grant for the first 5 years would cover the costs required to make the building operational, excluding desks and other start-up expenses.

It was noted that a lease agreement cannot proceed without provincial and city approval. The proposal presents limited risk, as it involves the submission of a Capital Planning and Infrastructure approval form and the potential selection of the site as the winning bid.

i. **Motion** :The Board of Directors authorises administration to submit a proposal to acquire the Connaught Armoury (10310–85 Ave NW), subject to the conditions outlined in the City of Edmonton's submission process, including approvals from Alberta Education and purchase through Alberta Infrastructure

ii. **Moved by:** Fauziat Raji
iii. **Seconded:** Adedayo Ojeleye

iv. **Discussions**

Board members raised several questions regarding capital planning, specifically around the discontinuation of start-up grants. Historically, these grants were provided largely for charter schools—to assist with initial costs such as desks and Chromebooks. However, they are no longer classified as start-up institutions and therefore no longer eligible for this funding.

The Board discussed the implications of a potential fourth site. It was confirmed that Aurora's current surpluses are sufficient to support this expansion, noting that the government has previously expressed concern regarding Aurora's surpluses exceeding 20% for capital. The surplus is considered very healthy, and this acquisition would come at no direct cost to Aurora. The proposed site is in significantly better condition than the Alberta Avenue building.

Discussion also included insight into the bidding process. Alberta Education has submitted a bid on behalf of Infrastructure for AACS. While the financial component is important, the City is also prioritizing how the new tenants will serve and support the community. As the building is designated as a historical property, any renovations or alterations will require approval from both the Province and the City's Heritage Planning Department, with a focus on maintaining historical accuracy.

Board members acknowledged the potential benefits of this proposal, including progress toward the long-term goal of reaching 2,100 students. The consensus was that this represents a low-risk opportunity: the only potential concern would be maintaining positive relationships with Capital Planning and the Government. Overall, the acquisition is viewed as a "win-win" situation for Aurora, with no apparent downside.

v. **Vote Decision:** The Board voted unanimous in favour.

b. Transportation

The Board acknowledged ongoing challenges with busing and noted that parents have communicated concerns regarding late arrivals and departures. While operational matters rest with administration, the Board holds responsibility for financial oversight and ensuring compliance with Board policy requirements, including the 75-minute maximum ride time and adherence to budgetary responsibilities.

The Superintendent reviewed the current situation, noting that Aurora has engaged a new transportation provider this year. Ridership has increased to over 1,100 students approximately 30% more than the previous year without an increase in staffing. At Skyrattler Campus, ridership has reached 90%, a level that was not anticipated. Current budget capacity allows for one additional bus. Data from both AACS and Cunningham indicates that delays are largely attributable to road construction and traffic patterns.

The Superintendent cautioned that adding a bus at this time could have negative long-term budget implications if the delays prove to be temporary. Instead, the focus will be on improved communication with families, more precise route planning, and exploring the creation of a parent advisory group to provide local insight into routing options.

Board members expressed appreciation for the efforts of the Superintendent and the transportation department. It was noted that similar issues tend to arise each year, and discussion followed on the need to isolate problem routes, ensure drivers adhere to their assigned routes, and address the presence of students riding buses without being scheduled.

Clarification was provided that this matter is not a request for additional financial resources, but rather an update to ensure the Board is aware that transportation challenges remain a top priority. The Board requested that updated ride times, along with recommendations for potential adjustments, be presented at the next meeting.

8:09PM

4. Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors will be on September 18, 2025 at AACS Skyrattler Campus

5. Adjournment **8:10PM**

The Meeting of the Board of Directors was adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Motion: To adjourn the meeting of the Board of Directors on September 11, 2025.
Moved: Fauziat Raji