

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes – Wednesday, October 9, 2024, 6:30pm

Location: HCCPS and Zoom

Present:

In-person: Chris Kusek, Emily Boddy, Kathleen Hulton, Ben Carlis, Grace Mrowicki, Rebecca Belcher-Timme, Andrea Hermans, Tala Elia, Neal Teague, Lily Newman, Kate Aleo, Kylan Mandile, Kelly Vogel, Kathleen Szegda

By Zoom:

Regrets:

Guests:

In-person:

By Zoom: Cayla Doran (SEPAC), James Meehan, Kris Lane, Lori Pellicia

Facilitator: Kathleen Hulton

Notetaker: Emily Boddy

List keeper: Kathleen S.

Timekeeper: Neal

Mission statement read by: Ben

Topic	Discussion	Action (if necessary)
<p>Welcoming (read mission statement) (Kathleen H.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Announcements, appreciations, acknowledgements ● Agenda Check: Appoint timekeeper, list keeper ● BOT Visibility this month 	<p>Announcements, Appreciations, Acknowledgements:</p> <p>Kathleen H. Attended a training through MPCSA, grateful to our board for great attendance!</p> <p>Communication from admin and teachers has been excellent this year.</p> <p>Board leadership remark on how Admin is settling in well and needing less and less assistance from board leadership.</p> <p>Carla for managing the audit, gathering materials. Did an excellent job.</p> <p>Chris remarks on how well the school leadership is doing - many are new to their positions.</p> <p>Kelly thankful for the facilities team and especially Rick Stultz, for commitment and engagement.</p>	

	<p>Agenda Check - Duties assigned (as above)</p> <p>Board Visibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clothing Swap 10/20 ● Coffee Hours - will be shifting to class groups hosting coffee hours. Kathleen H suggests the board host some coffee hours. ● Grapefruit sale in the Prisms - board can support the fundraising effort ● Mini Courses 	
<p>Approve minutes from previous BOT meeting, 9/11/24</p>	<p>Amendments: None.</p>	<p>Lily motioned to approve 9/11 meeting minutes with amendments; Tala seconded; the Board approved meeting minutes by consensus.</p>
<p>Public Comment (Kathleen)</p>	<p>None.</p>	
<p>Domain Updates (15 mins):</p> <p>Teaching and Learning</p> <p>Charter renewal</p> <p>SEPAC update</p> <p>Community and family engagement</p> <p>Playground update</p> <p>Student devices at school</p>	<p>Teaching and Learning (Rebecca):</p> <p>Rebecca has visited and spent time in all the classes. This has been integral to her understanding of what’s happening in the classrooms so she can provide meaningful support.</p> <p>Teacher Leadership Team meeting on rotation, looking at Professional Development this year. Training for TAs coming up with the Equity team during teacher conferences. Kelly Brown, Easthampton teacher, helping with a PD program next month.</p> <p>Staffing - Emily Lees is going on mat leave, and Carly will fill in during the leave. She is in training and has been helping with special ed. already, so it will be an easier/smooother transition.</p> <p>Part time Special Ed. Admin Asst, Brenda, has</p>	

	<p>started and been a tremendous help in getting systems in place and supporting Amy with Admin.</p> <p>School has purchased a subscription to a digital signature service to shorten turnaround time from IEP proposal to confirmation/rejection.</p> <p>School will be piloting co-teaching in Prisms math where Special Ed. teacher is co-teaching with the primary teacher.</p> <p>Still developing systems with Jess to document behavior. Chris also working closely with Jess around reminders to Prisms students around expectations, eg hallway etiquette and particularly how students are speaking to TAs.</p> <p>Operations</p> <p>Charter Renewal:</p> <p>Documentation submitted. School leadership succession plan was submitted as a draft and waiting for finalization. (more below)</p> <p>Danielle, our rep from the Charter Renewal team, confirmed her school visit and what will happen during the visit, eg interviews, observations, tour.</p> <p>SEPAC Update:</p> <p>SEPAC held its first hybrid meeting on Oct 9th with Chris (HOS) to gauge interest and gather ideas for future meetings. SEPAC hopes to hold monthly meetings. Cayla Doran, oranges and greens parent, is leading SEPAC presently.</p> <p>Community and Family Engagement:</p> <p>Tiffany reports strong family engagement.</p> <p>Clothing Swap 10/20, 10-1.</p> <p>Family Contra Dance with Cake swap in November.</p> <p>Great Coffee Hour this past Friday; trying to overlap with drop in mornings in blues/indigos. Working on having class parents take the lead on coffee hours moving forward.</p>	
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	<p>Still in need of some class parent participation, especially in the Purples and Prisms.</p> <p>Winter Fair planning has started.</p> <p>Playground update:</p> <p>Finance committee wants to recommend using funds, coupled with fundraising, to start the playground. Chris has spoken to the company we were in touch with last year. Final quotes should come in, more info next month. The project may come in stages, multi-year project.</p> <p>Student Devices at School:</p> <p>Survey data collected. Overwhelmingly clear that there needs to be a bell to bell policy for all personal devices at school. Listening session on Tuesday. Chris hoping to have policy to the board next month for approval.</p> <p>School Facilities:</p> <p>Inspections happened for various things, including water testing, elevator.</p>	
<p>FY24 Audit, Kylan (Discussion, Decision)</p>	<p>Included in packet.</p> <p>Chris Lane and James Meehan present at meeting and provided an overview of the Audit.</p> <p>Our new auditors have given feedback that we are on great financial footing, and fiscally responsible.</p> <p>Kylan adds that as we review financials, we need to look at capital campaigns. We need to maintain a reserve in the event of unforeseen circumstances.</p>	<p>Tala motioned to approve the FY24 Audit as set forth; Kathleen S. seconded; the Board approved by consensus.</p>
<p>MCAS, Rebecca (Report, Discussion)</p>	<p>Presentation Included in the Packet.</p> <p>Profile link: https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/mcas/achievement_level.aspx?linkid=32&orgcode=04500105&orgtypecode=6&</p>	

	<p>Communication to families is important to support with student anxiety, to help families understand why MCAS is important, to understand that the MCAS doesn't end if the MCAS requirement for graduation is removed (there may be misunderstanding around this, since the issue is in the spotlight right now)</p> <p>Helpful point in communicating with parents around the usefulness of the MCAS: If we do not achieve our DESE prescribed growth targets over time, then specific support from DESE is directed to the school that might impact its ability to be autonomous and offer some of the unique programming options we value.</p>	
<p>Board membership and procedures, Ben (Update, Discussion)</p>	<p>Staff board membership:</p> <p>Currently our minimum number of board members is 6, per our bylaws. PER state law, we cannot be in a position where we have 3 members who cannot participate in deliberations and voting and 3 who are. Therefore, if we want to increase our number of staff (non-voting) positions to 3, we would have to increase our minimum number of board members.</p> <p>DESE advises that we do not have staff members on our board, but they understand our cooperative nature makes that important to our mission and ethos. DESE does not recommend making staff members voting members due to conflicts of interest. DESE does not recommend raising our minimum number of staff members. Instead, if we want great staff input, they suggest we could designate additional staff members to be part of discussions when a matter calls for that.</p> <p>Additionally, our bylaw that states quorum is made up of voting members is out of alignment with state law and needs to be changed. All members, voting and non, count towards quorum.</p>	<p>Grace and Andrea will bring the matter to a teacher meeting to determine if staff feel like they'd like the increase pursued.</p> <p>GABS will review bylaw and make a proposal to change our bylaw regarding Quorum.</p>

<p>JEDI, Kathleen S. (Update)</p>	<p>Slides for the presentation are included in the packet.</p>	
<p>Head of School Evaluation, Kathleen (Update)</p>	<p>Since the last board meeting, Kathleen and Chris attended a workshop together about HOS evaluation. They suggested that new leaders spend the fall laying the groundwork, building relationships - eval not a one time thing, something that happens over time. Now have a once weekly check-in to review what's happening.</p>	
<p>2024-25 Head of School Goals, Chris and Kathleen (Discussion, Decision)</p>	<p>Included in packet . Not historical practice at Hilltown: Chris is presenting goals, discussion and then approval (or not). Chris also met with a mentor at the Charter Association. Chris presented additions to the document as it was submitted to the board packet, and provided the final version for inclusion in the final packet.</p>	<p>Emily motioned to approve the Head of School Goals with additions as described by Chris; Kathleen S. seconded; the Board approved by consensus.</p>
<p>Board Goals, Lily (Activity and Discussion)</p>	<p>Presentation slides and materials are included in the board packet. Board discussed ideas in pairs. Board leadership will use this feedback to write out board goals, in conjunction with HOS goals, LRP, SOA.</p>	
<p>Board Leadership Succession Plan, Lily (Discussion, Decision)</p>	<p>Included in the packet.</p>	<p>Tala motioned to approve the Board Leadership Succession Plan; Ben seconded; the Board approved by consensus.</p>
<p>School Leadership Succession Plan, Lily (Update)</p>	<p>Draft included in the packet. The draft was submitted to DESE as a draft. Draft has been submitted to the Personnel Committee. A final draft will come for our approval as it's ready.</p>	

<p>GABS update, Emily (5 minutes)</p>	<p>Call for Committee Goals. Goals should be in support of the overall board goals. Please make this part of the agenda for your next meeting, and have goals ready to present at either our December meeting.</p> <p>Committee Minutes - Draft versus final. Emily reviewed our guidelines around this. To confirm, draft minutes or final minutes are fine to submit to the board packet. Whilst always submitting final minutes is ideal, this does mean that there can be huge gaps between when a meeting takes place and when content is reported out. SO: if you submit a draft to the board packet, please also submit a final copy for the following board packet. CLEARLY indicate on the draft that it is a draft. This way we can ensure that final versions are documented.</p> <p>Board Packet items: Please try to have these in by Friday. Nicole is often working on the packet Monday with things that are still trickling in, but ideally she has completed the bulk of it on Friday. The sooner she has everything, the sooner the packet is ready for you to review ahead of the meetings.</p> <p>Emily will resend the Committee Chairs checklist with updated processes. Please review - even if you are not yet a committee chair - so we are all on the same page.</p>	
<p>Committee Reports - Questions, Kathleen H.</p>	<p>None</p>	
<p>Meeting Wrap-up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Minutes Finalization ● Snacks + Drinks for next meeting ● Newsletter Blurb ● New business for next Board meeting 	<p>Next Meeting: November 13, 2024 6:30pm Facilitator: Kathleen H Snacks: Tala Drinks: Kelly Newsletter blurb: Emily</p> <p>New Business:</p> <p>Playground (some urgency)</p> <p>Charter Renewal Debrief</p>	

	HOS Succession plan, if back from Personnel	
Review Action Items	Reviewed action items.	
Adjournment	Meeting adjourned at 9:00pm	Lily motioned to adjourn; Kathleen S. seconded; the meeting was adjourned.