

**HCCPS Board of Trustees**  
**Meeting Agenda**  
**January 13th, 2020 6:30 PM**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81426027291?pwd=ZkJZT1NuUEVvK3lTeUNELzNMaDVmdz09>

Meeting ID: 814 2602 7291 Passcode: hilltown

The Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School was founded in 1995 as a Massachusetts Public Charter School. Our mission is:

- To engage students in a school that uses experiential, hands-on activities, the arts, and interdisciplinary studies to foster critical thinking skills and a joy of learning.
- To sustain a cooperative, intimate community of students, staff, families and local community members, which guides and supports the school and its educational program.
- To cultivate children's individual voices and a shared respect for each other, our community, and the world around us.

**Facilitator: Matt Dube**

**6:30 Welcoming (read mission statement): (10 min)**

Announcements, appreciations, acknowledgements

Agenda Check: Appoint timekeeper, list keeper

Thank You Note Check

BOT Visibility this month

Approve minutes from previous BOT meeting

**6:40 Public Comment period: (10 min)**

**6:50 Justice Equity Diversity Inclusion (JEDI): Jen/Karen (10 min)**

**7:00 Director Hiring Proposal: Kelly (10 min)**

**7:10 Extending Tax Credit for COVID Leave: Tala (10 min)**

**7:20 Student Opportunity Act (SOA) Plan: Directors (10 min)**

**7:30 Committee Goals Update: Matt (10 min) - put before hybrid, etc**

**7:40 Standardized Testing Update: Lara (15 min)**

**7:55 In-Person/Hybrid/Remote Updates: Kate/Lara/Deirdre (25 min)**

**8:20 Committee Reports -- Questions Only (5 min)**

**8:25 New Business (5 min)**

**8:30 Meeting Wrap-up/Evaluation/Newsletter Blurb/Minutes Finalization (5 min)**

**8:35 Review Action Items in this meeting's minutes (5 min)**

**8:40 Adjournment**

## Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School

Board of Trustees DRAFT Meeting Minutes – Wednesday, December 9, 2020, 6:30 pm

- Location:** By Zoom (pursuant to Governor Baker’s March 12, 2020 Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law)
- Present:** Kate Saccento, Lara Ramsey, Deirdre Arthen, Matt Dube, Noelle Barrist Stern, Rich Senecal, Kelly Woods, Karen Sise, Paula Ingram, Sara Schieffelin, Chris Korczak, Dawn Reesman, Joe Wyman, Kathleen Szegda, Jill Richmond, Tala Elia
- Regrets:** Jen Matos
- Facilitator:** Matt
- Notetaker:** Noelle
- Guests:** (As listed in the Zoom participant information) Alec MacLachlan, Laurel Loomis, Peter Kennedy, Nancy Childs, Kerri Simonelli, Gaby Blaustein, Emily Boddy, Melysa Friedman, Marguerite Durant, Rebecca Belcher-Timme, Emily Lees, Joy Kinigstein, Beth Adel, Grace Tiso, Cait, Gina, Dan Klatz, Bobby, Alex Niemiec, Meg Colenback, Scott Meyers, Andrew Sirulnik, Tamara Kupfer, Myssie Casinghino, Mary Price, Rachel Merrell, Maggie Dietrich, Seana, Andrea Hearn, Paula Yolles, Carol McMurrich, Zoe Klatz, Jeanne S., Sam Schoenberger, Tiffany Ross, Stephanie Mattrey, Rashida Krigger, Joanna Morse, Helen Korczak
- List keeper:** N/A because of “raise hand” function on Zoom
- Timekeeper:** Chris
- Mission statement read by:** Lara

Topic	Discussion	Action (if necessary)
<b>Announcements/ Appreciations/ Acknowledgements</b>	<u>Announcements:</u> <u>Appreciations/Acknowledgements:</u> Deirdre thanked everyone who helped with the remote Winter Fair (wreath making and other activities) and said that it went really well.	
<b>Any thank you notes needed?</b>	None	
<b>BOT Visibility this month?</b>	Deirdre noted that the Winter Solstice Celebration is coming up. It will be remote.	

<b>Minutes</b>	Noelle asked if Joe wrote the newsletter blurb. No one wrote a newsletter blurb last month. Noelle said the minutes would be revised to note "N/A" under "Newsletter blurb."	Dawn moved to approve the minutes, as amended; Chris seconded; the minutes, as amended, were approved by consensus.
----------------	--	---

<p><b>Public Comment</b></p>	<p>Tamara Kupfer advocated that increasing the amount of in-person learning is the right path for the school. She stated that the school is safe and the data supports increased in-person time. She said that the school needs to come up with a long-term plan and it needs to be shared with the entire school community.</p> <p>Paula Yolles said we are at a pivotal moment in deciding how to proceed. She said that one of the best things about Hilltown is the sense of community. She said that it is starting to feel like it is teachers vs. parents who want increased in-person time. She said that the current system is not sustainable, because there is in-person and remote learning at the same time. She asked the Board and Directors to stand behind what had been offered at the beginning of the year (teachers could request to work from home) until the end of the year.</p> <p>Laurel Loomis said that the staff put their trust in the Directors and the Board to protect them. She said they are not feeling safe. She asked, if this is the case, how will the school maintain its sense of community.</p> <p>Maggie Dietrich talked about how remote learning has negatively impacted her child and how much things improve when he goes to school for two hours per week. She said that she believes the school can put in place increased in-person time and protect the safety of students and staff. She urged the Directors and Board to take quicker action.</p> <p>Marguerite Durant referred to the survey that was discussed at the school's listening session last week. She said that the priorities identified were safety and equity. She said that a large number of students are remote only and, if in-person time is increased and remote instruction is decreased, we need to consider how that will impact the remote-only students.</p>	
------------------------------	--	--

<p><b>Charter Board Survey (Kelly)</b></p>	<p>Kelly noted that Board members had received a Charter Board Survey from the Charter School Association and asked if the Board will be participating. Deirdre said that the survey asked a lot of the questions that DESE asks when it makes a site visit. She said that she thinks the purpose behind the survey is to see if additional training/education is needed for Board members.</p> <p>Matt encouraged everyone to complete the survey. Kelly said it is due on December 11th.</p>	<p>Board members will complete the survey by December 11th.</p>
<p><b>Enrollment Policy (Kate)</b></p>	<p>Kate referred to the revised enrollment policy (dated 12/7/20). She said this is something that is required by DESE. She said it has expanded since last year, but all of the detail was required.</p> <p>In response to a question from Chris, Kate said she could do a summary for people to read that would be easier for people to comprehend.</p>	<p>Kelly moved to accept the revised enrollment policy, as drafted, with the addition that the Directors are able to make non-substantive changes; Joe seconded; the Board approved the revised enrollment policy by consensus.</p>
<p><b>Special Subcommittee Work/Needs (Dawn/Matt)</b></p>	<p>Dawn asked for Board members to volunteer for two special subcommittees: (1) to conduct the Directors' evaluations; and (2) to address the portion of the current Long-Range Plan on the roles and responsibilities of the Directors. Dawn said that this work needs to be done now despite the pandemic, because the Directors need more feedback than they are currently receiving and, if there is a change in Directors, their roles and responsibilities need to be clear. She said she would like to be on the second subcommittee.</p>	<p>Dawn will send an email to the Board members asking for volunteers.</p>
<p><b>Justice Equity Diversity Inclusion (Karen)</b></p>	<p>Karen reported that all subcommittees are supposed to be looking at JEDI issues. She said in the Facilities Committee, they are looking at building accessibility issues. Kate spoke on behalf of the Finance Committee and the request for JEDI training presented to that committee. She said that they are</p>	<p>JEDI will look at whether there are other training options and ways to be creative. Matt will reach out to the Charter School Association to see</p>

	<p>trying to determine how to budget for the training. Kelly shared that the new staff folder was shared with the Personnel Committee and they are starting to discuss how to incorporate best practices in recruiting and hiring. Sara reported that JEDI will be an agenda item moving forward for the GABS Committee.</p> <p>Karen also reported that the initial request for funding for the training was denied by the Finance Committee, but the Finance Committee said they could present a revised proposal. Karen said that they would be submitting a revised request for \$3,160 for the training. She advocated that this is important work and we will not be able to go forward in a meaningful way if the Board does not have the training and vocabulary to have meaningful discussions about JEDI issues.</p> <p>Chris asked if JEDI was asking for the money for this year or as part of the July budget. Karen clarified that it is for this year. She said JEDI was authorized only until July. If the training will be put off, JEDI will need to be authorized for another year and it is putting the whole issue off.</p> <p>In response to a question from Kelly, Rich and Chris explained that the funds were denied because the funds had not been allocated (there is nowhere to take the money from; there is only a \$500 discretionary fund), unless this is designated as an emergency and made part of an emergency fund. Dawn and Sara advocated that we be creative in trying to arrange for this training/work without it necessarily costing such a large amount. Chris advocated that he would not be opposed to pulling from the emergency fund with the understanding that it be replenished. Kate noted that the Finance Committee will be bringing a revised budget to the Board in February. She clarified that we do not have an “emergency fund”; we have reserves.</p>	<p>whether there are grants available.</p>
--	---	--

	<p>Myssie Casinghino, on behalf of the Friends of Hilltown, said that she would be willing to look into how they might support the cost. Deirdre said that the money from Friends of Hilltown has already been allocated in the budget.</p>	
<p><b>In-Person/Hybrid/Remote Updates (Kate/Lara/Deirdre)</b></p>	<p>Lara went over the timeline from July through December. She explained that the plan going forward is to move to remote plus two for the 4th-8th graders. She said that the Directors will be assessing in January when they can move to this next step. Lara explained that the matter cannot be resolved this month, because of: the scheduling, transportation, and communication challenges; having more students on site for extra support; the school currently administering standardized tests; the school preparing progress reports; having staff out unexpectedly; and issues of parity between remote and on-site challenges. She said that the Directors' plan is to work toward the next phase in January and that three issues need to be resolved: the pace of change; clarity on the curriculum; and ensuring the remote program is not overly diluted.</p> <p>Kate discussed school safety and the groups that the school consults with on safety issues. DESE has identified Northampton as its target municipality and the Northampton Director of Health has said that there is no reason for the school to go fully remote at this time. She said that if someone tests positive, the staff and parents of the students in that cohort will be notified and that cohort will go remote.</p> <p>In response to questions from Karen and Noelle about the Board's role vs. the Directors' roles in the hybrid plan, Laura explained that the Directors are tasked with developing the best policy they can and then they submit that to the Board for their comments and hopefully support.</p>	

	<p>A number of Board members advocated for having a plan that is shared with the school community. Kate and Lara explained that the most we can do this year is remote plus two for everyone except for the K-1st grade students who will have remote plus four. They explained that this is based on the safety protocols and mitigation strategies (<i>e.g.</i>, having spaces for individual cohorts, not having crowded common spaces, having work spaces for teachers to be in the building with their masks off if they need to be to teach to remote learners). Kate said that, if we wanted to go beyond that, it would mean looking at expanding facilities and staffing.</p> <p>Lara explained that, in January, the Directors can provide a timeline.</p> <p>Kelly cautioned that we still need to make sure that there is flexibility built into the plan and timeline.</p> <p>Dawn advocated that we assume everyone is coming from a place of best intent.</p>	
<p><b>Work-From-Home Procedure</b></p>	<p>Matt explained that the Executive Committee met following the last meeting to address the work-from-home procedures and whether changes were needed. He stated that the Executive Committee had determined that no changes were needed at this time and there is no policy or proposal in front of the Board.</p> <p>Chris asked if there was anything in the procedure that prevented teachers who were on site from requesting to work from home. Lara said that it could happen that a work-from-home plan might not be renewed if it did not fit with program needs.</p> <p>Lara explained that use of the \$45,000 that the Board authorized at the last meeting is on pause, because</p>	

	<p>upon further review, the Directors thought that the use of substitute teachers did not work with the school's programming.</p> <p>Dan provided clarity and a historical perspective on the school's reserves.</p> <p>Joanna Morse asked for clarity on the process for allowing teachers to work from home and having substitutes in the building. She said that she does not feel heard and she knows she speaks on behalf of other teachers. She said this is a pivotal moment in the relationship between the Board, the teachers, and the staff.</p> <p>Chris advocated that teachers should not feel they have to come into the building against their will.</p>	
<b>Committee Reports - Questions only</b>	None	
<b>New Business</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Update from all committees on progress on committee goals</li> <li>2. Succession planning for next year</li> <li>3. Personnel Committee policy for streamlining the future hiring process for Directors</li> </ol>	
<b>Meeting Wrap-Up/ Evaluation</b>	<p>Next Meeting: January 13, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.</p> <p>Facilitator: Matt</p> <p>Snacks: N/A</p> <p>Drinks: N/A</p> <p>Newsletter blurb: Joe</p>	
<b>Review Action Items</b>	Reviewed action items.	
<b>Adjournment</b>	Meeting adjourned at 8:57 p.m.	

**Tentative Agenda Topics for January 13, 2021 Board Meeting:**

HCCPS BOT Meeting Minutes: December 9, 2020

JEDI

Update from all committees on progress on committee goals

Succession planning for Board members

Personnel Committee policy for streamlining the future hiring process for Directors

**Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School  
Student Opportunity Act Plan: SY 2021-2023**

**→ Commitment 1: Focusing on Student Subgroups**

**Which student groups will require focused support to ensure all students achieve at high levels in school and are successfully prepared for life?**

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School is committed to ensuring all of our students achieve success in school, and we work to close achievement gaps among student subgroups. Looking at data trends over the last three years (MCAS, IOWA test of basic skills, SAT10 test of basic skills, in-house assessments) tells us that not all student groups are not currently experiencing the same level of success.

- 1) Our economically disadvantaged students have lower achievement and growth scores in ELA compared to non-economically disadvantaged students.
- 2) Girls have lower achievement and growth scores in mathematics compared to boys.
- 3) Our educator workforce does not mirror our student population. Just about 5% of our staff are people of color/multi-racial compared to 20% of our student population. Our students of color would be more engaged and better supported by a more diverse staff.

We are working hard on several fronts to close achievement and opportunity gaps for these three student subgroups (economically disadvantaged students, female students, and students of color). In the next three years, we see this work as happening through direct student services, family engagement, professional development, policy work, and curriculum review/revision.

**→ Commitment 2: Using Evidence-Based Programs to Close Gaps**

**What evidence-based programs will your charter school adopt, deepen, or continue to best support the closure of achievement and opportunity gaps? What resources will be allocated to these programs?**

- 1. Research-based early literacy programs in pre-kindergarten and early elementary grades

Last year, at the conclusion of a year-long curriculum review process, Hilltown adopted a science-based reading program (Being a Reader through Collaborative Classroom). We arrived at this choice with the goal of closing the gap between economically disadvantaged students and non-economically disadvantaged students in reading. We recognized that students who are school-dependent for learning to read were not flourishing at the same level as students who were not school-dependent, and MCAS scores showed a persistent discrepancy between economically disadvantaged students and non-economically disadvantaged students. This program we selected includes phonics, a phonics intervention program, a literacy component, easily accessible professional development, a social skills component, and a social justice component (culturally responsive teaching embedded into the curriculum): “Our social justice frame should prompt us to ask these questions: *How are students code breakers, how are they text users, how are they text critics, and how are they meaning-makers?*” (Zaretta Hammond, source [here](#)). In the last year, teachers have participated in professional development and coaching and targeted PD work on literacy and culturally responsive teaching that will continue to be a part of our three-year plan.

<b>FY21 budget item</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Foundation Category</b>
Being a Reader Curriculum and PD	\$14,237.60	CoronaVirus Relief Fund Professional Development
Teaching Assistants	\$18,800	Title I

<b>Evidence-based program identified by the Department:</b>	Research-based literacy programs in pre-kindergarten and early elementary grades  Supporting educators to implement high-quality, aligned curriculum
<b>SOA program categories:</b>	D (hiring school personnel), E (PD) and F (purchase of curriculum materials)

## 2. Supporting educators to implement high-quality, aligned curriculum.

At Hilltown, we have noticed a persistent discrepancy between the achievement and growth of male and female students in math, with boys having higher achievement and growth than girls. We see closing the math achievement gap as a task of pedagogy, curriculum, and school culture. Our plans include implementing high-quality curriculum and supporting educators in doing so. Two years ago, we replaced our 6th-8th grade math program with a research-based, common core aligned curriculum (Illustrative Math). Now we are in the process of reviewing our K-5 math program with anticipated pilots happening next year and a new curriculum selection scheduled for next spring. Teachers have and will continue to participate in professional development in math teaching and in creating classroom cultures that promote growth mindset and fair access to participation in all subjects.

<b>FY21 budget item</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Foundation Category</b>
Teaching Assistants	\$18,800	Title I
Workshop on engaging students remotely	\$429.00	Professional Development
Technology workshop	\$600.00	Professional Development
<b>Evidence-based program identified by the Department:</b>	Supporting educators to implement high-quality, aligned curriculum.  Inclusion/co-teaching for students with disabilities	
<b>SOA program categories:</b>	D (hiring school personnel), E (PD) and F (purchase of curriculum materials)	

## 3. Diversifying the educator/administrator workforce through recruitment and retention

Our workforce does not mirror our student population, a fact which we believe lowers the engagement and academic success of our students of color. We have intentionally focused on hiring practices and policies that will expand our prospective candidate pool at all levels of the institution. To support students and staff, and to become a school that is worthy of a diverse applicant pool and diverse student body, we have focused on culturally responsive teaching practices and professional development aimed at becoming an anti-racist institution. We review and revise our school curriculum and our school environment to make our commitments to equity ever more meaningful, visible, and to ensure availability of “mirrors and windows”.

<b>FY21 budget item</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Foundation Category</b>
Social Justice Workshop for Students Collaborative for Educational Services	\$1,580.00	Community Fund
Social Justice Workshop for Staff and Board through Collaborative for Educational Services	\$3,160.00	Professional Development
<b>Evidence-based program identified by the Department:</b>		Diversifying the educator and administrator workforce Increased personnel and services to support student holistic needs
<b>SOA program categories:</b>		D (hiring school personnel) and E (PD)

→ **Commitment 3: Monitoring Success with Outcome Metrics and Targets**

**What metrics will your charter school use to monitor success in reducing disparities in achievement among student subgroups? Select from the list of Department metrics or provide your own.**

- What data will you monitor to see if your evidence-based programs are successful? Select at least three outcome metrics to include in your plan. These can include metrics from the list provided by the Department (see below) or custom metrics. How will these chosen metrics demonstrate the reduction of opportunity or achievement gaps for specific groups of students?
- Where possible, align outcome metrics with the evidence-based programs described in Commitment 2.
- If you create custom metrics, you must also identify targets for each custom metric.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Outcome Metrics</b>
<p><b>Student Achievement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved proficiency scores in ELA for economically disadvantaged students.</li> <li>• Improved proficiency scores in mathematics for female students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English language arts (ELA) achievement</li> <li>• Mathematics achievement</li> </ul>
<p><b>Student Growth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved ELA mean SGP for economically disadvantaged students</li> <li>• Improved Mathematics mean SGP for female students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ELA mean student growth percentile (SGP)</li> <li>• Mathematics mean SGP</li> </ul>

<p><b>Additional Indicators</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increase diversity on staff and close the gap between 5% staff of color and 20% students of color.</li> </ul>
-------------------------------------	--

<p><b>Department outcome metrics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ MCAS achievement scores</li> <li>○ MCAS SGPs</li> </ul>	<p><b>Custom metrics (must include targets as well):</b></p> <p>Faculty profile will reflect increased diversity and close the gap between 5% staff of color and 20% students of color.</p>
--	---

→ **Commitment 4: Engaging All Families**

**How will your charter school ensure that all families, particularly those representing the student subgroups most in need of support, have the opportunity to meaningfully engage with the charter school regarding their students' needs?**

A core tenet of the mission of the Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School is to sustain a strong community of students, staff, families and local community members that guide and support the school and its educational program. We prioritize family engagement as essential to ensuring success for all students. Parents make up most of our Board of Trustees, are involved in all governance committees and are welcome to come into the school at any time to meet with administrators, visit classrooms or assist with projects. Parents are invited to walk their children to their classrooms each morning and, at the end of the day, K-5 parents come into the school to sign their children out. These opportunities for casual contact among parents and with teachers help build a sense of natural connection. We publish a weekly e-newsletter that goes to all parents and any grandparents who request it and we schedule monthly family events, either social or educational, in the evening or on the weekend.

We know that it is particularly important to find ways to effectively engage the families of our economically disadvantaged students, students of color and students with disabilities and that for some of the families in these subgroups the current engagement opportunities may not be adequate. To specifically support those subgroups, we conscientiously plan family programs meetings and teacher conferences to accommodate a variety of work schedules. We promote participation in our parent-led SEPAC through emails and a dedicated space in the weekly Newsletter and we are currently creating a Parent Equity Team to support families of color and offer recommendations.

We measure family engagement through tracking of attendance at events, teacher records and an annual satisfaction survey sent out to all parents.

**Certifications:**

**X By checking here, I certify that our charter school has engaged stakeholders in our community in accordance with the Student Opportunity Act**

**Please summarize your stakeholder engagement process, including specific groups that were engaged:**

- Curriculum committees including administrator and teachers
- Parent surveys
- Parent focus groups
- Teacher focus groups
- Staff professional development
- Board committees including community, parent and staff members
- A parent letter was shared during public comment in our May and June 2020 Board of Trustees meetings. A primary concern for families was the lack of educator diversity in our school

**X By checking here, I certify that the Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School Board of Trustees voted on our Student Opportunity Act Plan.**

**Date of vote: 1/13/2021**

**Outcome of vote:**



HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE  
CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

**Personnel Committee Proposal to the Board of Trustees**

**Subject:** Hiring Policy for School Directors

**Date:** September 30, 2020 (re submitted - January 2021)

**Priority level:** High

**Approximate time needed for discussion:** 15

**Proposal to be presented by:** Kelly Woods

**Text of proposal:** We propose changing the current hiring process for a school director: rather than holding an internal hiring process first and then an outside search if the internal candidate is not offered the job, we propose one full search for a leadership position during which internal and external candidates are considered concurrently.

The change in the policy would be reflected by the following edits:

**CURRENT PROCESS:**

1. **Mandatory Committee Orientation:** The Search Committee meets to determine criteria, discuss the timeline and create or revise interview questions for the first interview.
2. **Begin the hiring procedure for internal candidates:** The position will be posted internally and interested and qualified candidates will have ten working days to apply. The committee will interview all internal applicants who meet minimum qualifications. If the committee intends to move the candidate forward, the candidate will be asked to complete the parent and staff interview process. The Committee will recommend one of the following options to the full Board:
  - a) Offer the staff member the position.
  - b) Proceed with the external search process and provide the staff member the option to continue as a candidate. (Move to Step 3, External Position Posting)
  - c) Not offer the staff member the position (Move to Step 3, External Position Posting)

Once the internal process is complete, the Committee will, when necessary (options b or c above) begin a full process.

3. **External Position Posting:** The position will be posted for external candidates.
4. **Candidate Selection:** The Committee screens resumes and selects candidates for Search Committee interviews.



HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE  
CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

**PROPOSED REVISION:**

1. Mandatory Committee Orientation: The Search Committee meets to determine criteria, discuss the timeline and create or revise interview questions for the first interview.
2. Begin the hiring procedure by posting the position both internally and externally.
3. Candidate Selection: The Committee screens resumes and selects candidates for Search Committee interviews. The committee will interview all internal applicants who meet minimum qualifications.

**Goals to be achieved by proposal:**

1. Launching a wide search in the first phase of a leadership hire will increase our opportunity to increase diversity at the leadership level of the school.
2. At the end of an extensive search, the Hilltown community will know that the chosen candidate was selected from the widest possible pool and this will increase confidence in the person who ultimately fills the role.
3. Hiring processes for leadership positions would be more time efficient.
4. A single-stream hiring process removes this possible outcome of a first round with internal candidates: "We like you and would like to keep your candidacy on the table, but we would like to open the search to the public at this point in the process."

**Potential problems/dissenting views:**

1. The opportunity to apply for a leadership position without external competition may be seen as a benefit to staff; changing this benefit could be experienced as taking a benefit away.



HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE  
CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

**Personnel Committee Proposal to the Board of Trustees**

**Subject:** Extending Tax Credit for Covid Sick Leave to 3/31

**Date:** December 22, 2020

**Priority level:** High

**Approximate time needed for discussion:** 10

**Proposal to be presented by:** Tala Elia

**Text of proposal:** Assuming the COVID stimulus package passed by the senate on 12/21, employers will have the option to receive a tax-credit for sick time provided to employees for COVID-related leave (separate from regular sick leave) up to 80 hours per person. Up through 12/31, this leave and tax credit program has been mandated. Now, employers have the option and must elect to do this voluntarily.

**Goals to be achieved by proposal:**

1. Ensure that regular sick-time is not used for COVID-related absences that qualify under the extension of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA).
2. Remove an inequity that comes into play when an on-site employee is required to quarantine (and take a day or days away from work) but a remote teacher does not. This way, everyone's sick bank is used for non-COVID illness the same way.

**Potential problems/dissenting views:**

1. Expected to be some extra paperwork to fill out during tax season.
2. Not a problem, but note that clear medical documentation is required or reimbursement is not guaranteed.
3. We have the option of choosing a class of employees to offer this to (e.g. classroom teachers vs. specialists or TAs). We aren't recommending differentiating employees for this benefit, but some may believe this would provide useful flexibility.



HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE  
CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

**Personnel Committee Proposal to the Board of Trustees**

**Subject:** Hybrid Schedule Remote + 2

**Date:** December 31, 2020

**Priority level:** High

**Approximate time needed for discussion:** 30

**Proposal to be presented by:** Lara Ramsey

**Text of proposal:**

In our current COVID context, our ability to provide in-person instruction for students is limited by a requirement for students to be spaced 6' apart, a recommendation from the Health & Safety Team that we avoid eating in the building, and our obligation to accommodate all learners opting for either hybrid or remote programs. Our Hybrid Plan, Remote + 2, is all we can do until the circumstances change. Remote + 2 allows curriculum to progress every day of the week, maintains daily synchronous contact between all students and teachers, avoids eating in the building, and provides in-person contact for students-teachers and students-students twice a week.

**The Directors propose that we fulfill our hybrid plan of Remote + 2 by adding an additional half-day of on-site learning for students in grades 4-8.**

The Health and Safety team (school nurse, school physician, Director of Administration and Northampton Board of Health) has identified that, with our space and staffing, Hilltown has the capacity for this adjustment. Our building and building systems currently satisfy the low risk tier according to the CDC. Note that the vaccine is expected to be available to Massachusetts teachers between February-April. Ideally, we will have an extra measure of safety available at that point. Other updates related to building safety include the purchase of air purifiers and the acquisition of Covid tests (rapid) for symptomatic students and staff.

The Director of Teaching will work with teaching teams to identify schedules in which Remote + 2 can be implemented. 4-5 will be the first team to make a shift, followed by a shift for 6-8. 6-8 grade teachers share afternoon time blocks and specialist teachers, while 4-5 teachers share morning morning blocks with K-3 and a different set of specialist and special education teachers.

Implementing Remote + 2 requires full-time homeroom/classroom teachers and some TAs to be on site with their students for 4-10 hours. It also requires specialist teachers and some TAs to teach and assist remotely.

The table below shows how many hours full-time classroom/homeroom teachers are required to be



HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE  
CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

with students in person in Remote +1 and Remote + 2 models. The in-person time for students is noted in italics. The highlighted parts show our currently operating model.

	K/1	2/3	4/5	6	7/8
<b>Remote + 1</b>	4.5 hours, <i>2.25 hours per student</i>	4.5 hours <i>2.25 hours per student</i>	<b>4.5 hours</b> <i>2.25 hours per student</i>	<b>4 hours</b> <i>2 hours per student</i>	<b>2 hours</b> <i>2 hours per student</i>
<b>Remote + 2</b>	9 hours <i>4.5 hours per student</i>	<b>9 hours</b> <i>4.5 hours per student</i>	4.5 hours for one teacher, 9 hours for the other teacher <i>4.5 hours per student</i>	4.5 or 8 hours (two models to choose from) <i>4.5 hours per student</i>	4 or 8 hours (two models to choose from) <i>4 hours per student</i>
<b>Remote + 4</b>	<b>18 hours</b> <i>9 hours per student</i>				

To implement Remote + 2, we need a transition period of 3-4 weeks to maintain safety and solve logistics (special education services, transportation, space, transitions, etc.). We propose a plan where Remote + 2 begins for grades 4 & 5 after February Break and Remote + 2 begins for grades 6-8 in mid-March.

The specific schedules that are worked out must ensure that all-remote students have live teaching and peer group experiences on par with students who come on site.

We will need to re-assess Work from Home Plans to ensure adequate staffing.

**Goals to be achieved by proposal:**

Being in-person for an additional block will help many students strengthen connections to teachers, peers and learning.



HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE  
CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

The number of students who have been recommended to learn from within the building (by teachers and by the mental health team) continues to rise. We have a waiting list for students who would benefit from being in school that we cannot accommodate. Being in person for an extra half-day would make it possible for these learners to be in an optimal environment more often.

Our hybrid plan, submitted to and accepted by the state, directs us to evaluate Remote + 1 and fulfill our Remote + 2 plan when possible.

**Potential problems/dissenting views:**

Some teachers and TAs may not be able to work remotely, even if that is their preference, if Work from Home Plans are adjusted to accommodate a Remote + 2 schedule. While it is financially possible, it is not optimal for students if teachers use personal time to circumvent teaching in person. Subs are not teachers, they do not know the students or the curriculum, and they may not be readily available.

Technologically speaking, 4th-8th graders are not as dependent on in-person time to connect with curriculum and one another as K-3. This is an argument for a differentiated program.

The chances of covid spread among children age 12 and younger are lower than among children age 12 and up.

Students in 6-8 rotate teachers for more classes than students in K-5.

Teaching in-person twice a week means teaching the same lesson twice (for Group A and Group B), which is to say the momentum of the curriculum is interrupted (compared to teaching a new lesson every day). The primary concern here is interrupting student engagement (not pace of curriculum, a secondary concern).

With more in-person time, potential for sub needs increases. The increase is because an open Covid test in anyone's household requires quarantining until test results are in, and because any two symptoms that could be linked to Covid require teachers to stay home. There is a national and local shortage of qualified substitute teachers.

When we surveyed parents, students and teachers in early December, about 50% of the parents and students expressed a desire for additional in-person time and teachers were weighted against additional in-person time among 4th-8th grade teachers. Do we have enough community support to make this decision?



# HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

---

## Domain Directors' Report January 2021

1. **Return to school:** Grades K-8 were remote the week of January 4th. On January 11, Hilltown will resume the hybrid learning model that was in place prior to break.
2. **Attendance:** On-site and remote school attendance from November 2020 to December 2020 continued to be strong:
  - 93% of our 218 students have been present 90-100% of school days
    - 65 students were present 90% to 96% of school days (compared to 69 in Sept/Oct)
    - 138 students were present 100% of school days (compared to 133 in Sept/Oct)
3. **Admissions:** Hilltown is now accepting applications for SY 2021-22. The application is available online on the school's website. There will be a virtual information session held on Saturday, January 23rd from 10:00 am to 11:30 am where the Directors will talk about the school's mission and how it informs curriculum, classroom structure and community involvement at Hilltown. Part of the session will also include breakout rooms for parents to hear from K/1 and grade 6 Teachers. We will be doing outreach through printed materials to local early intervention programs, housing projects, refugee and immigrant programs, WIC and SNAP sites, and food pantries.
4. **Asymptomatic Testing:** Hilltown has been chosen as a Phase 1 participant in the Abbott BinaxNOW COVID testing initiative. This test is a rapid antigen test. Rapid antigen tests perform best when the person is tested in the early stages of infection with SARS-CoV-2, which is when the viral load is generally highest.

Schools have been authorized to use it for symptomatic testing only. The Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) have worked in collaboration to clearly define the circumstances under which a staff member or student can be tested at school. Parental and staff consent is required before the test can be administered.

The School Nurse, Mary Price, has received the necessary training to administer the test and in how to upload the results into a database which is linked to the Massachusetts DPH. Participation is completely voluntary but we are hopeful that having this additional tool in our safety toolbox will prove extremely beneficial. Mary has received the test kits and can start testing as early as next week.



## HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

5. **Standardized Testing:** 4th-8th graders participated in the Stanford 10 test of basic skills. Students were tested in two areas, reading and math. On the whole, our school did as well as we would expect during COVID programming. Usually our collective test scores are above average; this year, we came out looking average. Test scores are normed with standards generated in 2018 and even with Covid, our school is right in the middle of the pack.
6. **Staffing update:** We increased the ETL position from .6 to .8 to support in-person learning time for students and other COVID needs. All teachers and TAs are having a meeting to check-in with Lara in January.
7. **Tradition Holds:** The Hilltown tradition of a Winter Solstice Celebration on the day before December break was beautifully held through the work of music teachers, Marguerit Durant and Aram Rubenstein-Gillis and Tech Coordinator, Grace Mrowicki who worked with Deirdre to create an online version that was inclusive, participatory and meaningful. There were over 200 log-ins, making it the best attended event to date.
8. **Textile Recycling:** Hilltown is partnering with Bay State Textiles by hosting a drop box for fiber recycling. The program accepts clothing, bedding, shoes, bags and more. The school will receive a rebate of \$100 per ton of materials donated to be recycled.



HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE  
CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

Domain Council Meeting Minutes- December 18, 2020

9:00 am Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86426378361?pwd=WDdjMk1pMHJaWUNpOXJDUFhYMUIjUT09>

**Present:** Matt Dube, Kate Saccento, Lara Ramsey, Deirdre Arthen, Dawn Reesman

**Regrets:** None

Topic	Discussion	Action
January Agenda	Items that will need to be covered at January's BoT meeting were discussed, including Director Hiring proposal, JEDI, and others	Agenda will be send to Noelle and Nicole for Board packet
Remote/In-person/Hybrid	Directors discussed ongoing planning and feedback, working on Remote+2 plan	Directors will present plan at January BoT meeting
Assessment update	Lara reported out recent testing results	Lara will update community on results
Review action items		Done
Tentative agenda topics for next meeting	February agenda; updates/follow-ups from January BoT meeting	
Next meeting time/date/location		Friday, Jan. 15, 9:00 a.m. <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86426378361?pwd=WDdjMk1pMHJaWUNpOXJDUFhYMUIjUT09">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86426378361?pwd=WDdjMk1pMHJaWUNpOXJDUFhYMUIjUT09</a> Passcode: Domain
Adjournment		Meeting adjourned at 10 a.m.



Facilities Committee Meeting Minutes – January 5, 2020, 6:45pm

Meeting Location: <https://zoom.us/j/97773314974>

**Present: Joe Wyman, Kate Saccento, Jill Richmond, Nan Childs**

**Regrets: Karen Sise**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<b>Action (if necessary)</b>
<b>HVAC Units</b>	<p>Kate shared May 2019 energy audit; LED lights were installed after that audit.</p> <p>Kate spoke with someone from CET about doing another audit- the person from CET will come to HCCPS next Wednesday. We'd be seeking information around HVAC and possibilities around HVAC units.</p>	<p>Kate will invite parent (and former Site Committee member) Mike Simonelli to the next meeting to see if he has anything to add to radiant map, efficiency questions, and looking into mini-splits for future years.</p>
<b>Mini Splits</b>	<p>Kate shared a radiant heat map. She spoke with Dan and he said that there is forced hot air in the main office, coordinators, nurse and entire second floor.</p>	<p>See note above</p>
<b>Sidewalk</b>	<p>Nan found some options for parking barriers. The committee still needs to look into whether or not we would need a permit for this and whether we have enough space including it to be ADA accessible.</p>	<p>Joe will reach out to parent architects to inquire about barriers. Do we have enough space for a sidewalk and for a car to turn around? Will it be ADA accessible?</p>



HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE  
CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

<b>Building Accessibility</b>	Jill shared examples of accessibility audit questions.	Jill will go through the survey and see what is pertinent to the school. Then, the committee will begin to go through and answer the questions at the next meeting.
<b>Review Action Items</b>	Reviewed Action Items.	
<b>Tentative Agenda Topics for Next Meeting</b>	HVAC Sidewalk Building Accessibility	
<b>Next Meeting Date/Time/Location</b>	Tuesday, February 2, 2021 6:45pm	
<b>Adjournment</b>	Meeting adjourned at 7:25pm	



HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE  
CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

**Finance Committee Meeting Minutes –November 4, 2020, Zoom, 8:30 AM**

**Present:** Carla Clark, Maureen Mahar, Richard Senecal, Chris Korczak,  
Kate Saccento, Lisa Plaza  
**Guests:** None  
**Regrets:** Andy Tilbe  
**Agenda:** Approve October Minutes; Review Financials

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<b>Action (if necessary)</b>
<b>October Minutes</b>	Approval of October minutes.	<b>Rich moved to approve October minutes, Maureen seconded. Approved by consensus</b>
<b>FY2021 Committee Goals</b>	Balance the budget Use COVID grant funds appropriately Review Hilltown’s \$0 balance budget policy Complete a mid-year review of frozen staff salaries	<b>No action needed</b>
<b>FY21 Financial Review</b>	Reviewed Revenue & Expense Sheet: A few expense line items have increased but were offset by grant funds Reviewed the Balance Sheet No significant changes	<b>No action needed</b>
<b>Tentative Agenda Topics for Next Meeting</b>	Approve November Minutes Review revised budget to submit to BOT Start reviewing \$0 balance budget policy	



HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE  
CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

<b>Next Meeting Date/Time/Location</b>	12/2/20; Via Zoom, 8:30 AM	
<b>Adjournment</b>	Meeting adjourned at 9:15 AM	



**Finance Committee Meeting Minutes –December 2, 2020, Zoom, 8:30 AM**

**Present:** Carla Clark, Maureen Mahar, Richard Senecal, Chris Korczak,  
 Kate Saccento, Lisa Plaza, Andy Tilbe  
**Guests:** Jen Matos  
**Regrets:** None  
**Agenda:** Approve November Minutes; Review Financials

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<b>Action (if necessary)</b>
<b>November Minutes</b>	Approval of November minutes.	<b>Carla moved to approve November minutes, Maureen seconded. Approved by consensus</b>
<b>Review JEDI Proposal</b>	JEDI requested \$3,160 for social justice training for all BoT members  All agreed that this training is important but there are no funds in the current budget for this training  Jen Matos will review with JEDI Committee-may request funds for next year’s budget	<b>No action needed</b>
<b>FY21 Financial Review/\$0 Balance Budget Policy Review</b>	Reviewed Revenue & Expense Sheet-no major changes  Reviewed working draft budget-no major changes  \$0 Balance Budget Review-Lisa will review with an auditor to determine best practice	<b>No action needed</b>
<b>Tentative Agenda Topics for Next Meeting</b>	Approve December Minutes  Review staff salary increases  Review revised budget to submit to BOT  Start reviewing \$0 balance budget policy	



HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE  
CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

<b>Next Meeting Date/Time/Location</b>	1/20/21; Via Zoom, 8:30 AM	
<b>Adjournment</b>	Meeting adjourned at 9:15 AM	



**GABS Committee Meeting Minutes – December 16, 2020**

**Meeting Location: By Zoom**

**Present:** Deirdre Arthern; Sara Schieffelin; Noelle Barrist Stern; Jared Libby

**Regrets:** Paula Ingram

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<b>Action (if necessary)</b>
<b>Organization of BOT Documents in Google Drives</b>	Jared joined GABS to discuss organization of files in the BOT and GABS Google Drives.	Noelle will share the sign-in information for the Drives with Jared. He will look it over and provide suggestions to GABS about organizing the documents.
<b>JEDI</b>	GABS is looking to recruit a diverse Board with respect to income, race, and cultural background. Once we have a better sense of how many Board members will be remaining next year, GABS will be able to better address recruiting diverse Board members. At that point, GABS can ask JEDI to join us and give advice and suggestions for recruiting strategies.	
<b>Succession Planning</b>	We need to clarify how long the following members will remain on the Board: Kelly, Karen, and Jill. Noelle will not serve another term. Matt will continue and is willing to serve another year as President. However, Dawn will not continue as Vice President, so that someone can serve with Matt as Vice President and then move on to President the following year.	Noelle will email Matt and ask if we can wait to address succession planning until March. She will also talk to him about his willingness to continue to serve as President.



HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE  
CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

	<p>One suggestion was that Matt and Dawn serve one more year as President and Vice President and then Matt serve the subsequent year as President with a new Vice President when some of the new Board members have more experience.</p> <p>GABS will ask Rich if he will serve again as Treasurer. We will also need a new Clerk. It was suggested that Jill serve in that role if she stays on the Board. Sara would be willing to serve as GABS Chair. She might be willing to serve as Clerk.</p> <p>Paula's term will also be ending. Deirdre will put something in the weekly bulletin to the staff after the break and the January meeting about the upcoming openings on the Board.</p> <p>GABS will also need new members, since Noelle and Paula are leaving. GABS will address this when we have more information.</p>	<p>Sara will email Rich and see if he will serve as Treasurer again next year. Sara will also email Kelly, Karen, and Jill and see if they are willing to stay on as community Board members next year.</p> <p>Sara will take the GABS minutes next month.</p>
<p><b>Check-in on Committee Goals</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Resolve committee roles for upcoming year and develop policy for selecting teachers and staff members to serve on committees. ⇒ Completed</li> <li>2. BOT orientation ⇒ Completed</li> <li>3. BOT recruitment ⇒ In progress (GABS recruited an additional three Board members during the course of this year and is working on succession planning and recruitment for next year).</li> <li>4. Access for BOT members to shared drives/HCCPS Gmail accounts. ⇒ Completed, in part (all Board members have HCCPS gmail accounts). In progress, in part (GABS, with Jared's assistance, is working on organizing and providing access to the shared drives).</li> </ol>	<p>Sara will report this at the next Board meeting.</p>



HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE  
CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

	<p>5. Documenting BOT approvals (policies/proposals). ⇒ In progress (Jared will look at this while he is working on the Google Drive project; GABS will continue to work on this throughout the year).</p> <p>6. By-laws language clean-up. ⇒ GABS will address this only if something comes up.</p>	
<b>Review Action Items</b>	Action items reviewed.	
<b>Next Meeting Date/Time/Location</b>	January 20, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.	
<b>Adjournment</b>	Meeting adjourned at 6:24 p.m.	



HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE  
CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

Personnel Committee Meeting Minutes  
Wed., Dec. 23 7:30am (\*holiday on 12/30) at 7:30am

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88069674816?pwd=Szg0UlgxV1FKUVNXVFJHaXhtRzBIQT09>  
Passcode: coffeetime

**Present:** Nicole Grinaski, Emily Lees, Jen Matos, Kelly Woods, Lara Ramsey, Tala Elia

**Regrets:**

Topic	Time	Discussion	Action
Meeting Roles	2 mins	Facilitator: Lara Notetaker: Kelly Timekeeper: Nicole	
Streamline Search Proposal Prep	16 min	Drafted proposal from earlier this fall was reviewed as a Committee in preparation to bring it to the Board for consideration: <a href="https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ccFPmai-ubll9pjDEHt1Rb_UtPSdWqPE/edit">https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ccFPmai-ubll9pjDEHt1Rb_UtPSdWqPE/edit</a>  Recommended - in short:: Combine internal and external processes into one process for director hires.  Goals: Increase diversity of applicant pool. Increase confidence in process and candidates. Improve efficiency by streamlining the process.  Concerns: Perception that internal candidates may lose preference in applicant pool.  Discussion: Opportunities for administrative professional development internally are up to individuals to take initiative toward that professional goal. Joining Board committees or proposing leadership projects are standing options.	Kelly will bring proposal to the Board for discussion.
Sick Day Equity Discussion -	17 min	There is a tax credit for up to 80 hours of sick leave that employers are required to offer until 12/31/2020	Lara will ask board to add to the agenda.



HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE  
CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

<p>clarified is actually "Corona Sick Time Credit"</p>		<p>for Corona related illness. Staff do not need to use their personal sick time bank when they are sick with Corona (or required to quarantine due to covid per school policy). They must use their personal sick time when it is not directly Corona related or quarantine required by policy.</p> <p>Tax credit has been extended as an optional until 3/31/2021. Discussion re whether or not Hilltown will extend and continue.</p> <p>Articles for background &amp; details re the credit program:  <a href="https://www.hrdiver.com/news/coronavirus-relief-package-includes-tax-credits-for-leave-employee-retenti/592546/">https://www.hrdiver.com/news/coronavirus-relief-package-includes-tax-credits-for-leave-employee-retenti/592546/</a>   <a href="https://www.fmlainsights.com/breaking-congress-declines-to-extend-ffcra-leave-offers-tax-credits-to-those-voluntarily-providing-paid-leave/">https://www.fmlainsights.com/breaking-congress-declines-to-extend-ffcra-leave-offers-tax-credits-to-those-voluntarily-providing-paid-leave/</a>   <a href="https://www.businessinsurance.com/article/20201222/NEWS06/912338683/Employers-may-extend-FFCRA,-but-mandate-ends-Experts">https://www.businessinsurance.com/article/20201222/NEWS06/912338683/Employers-may-extend-FFCRA,-but-mandate-ends-Experts</a></p>	<p>Lara will check-in with Kate re details and potential impact.</p> <p>Tala and Lara will draft a proposal to extend the credit to March.</p>
<p>Annual goals check-in - including JEDI goal check-in</p>		<p>Committee continues to screen best practices in hiring. Proposal to streamline hiring will be brought to Board in January.</p>	
<p>New Business</p>		<p>Inquiry was made to the Chair re the status of the Director Salary Scale process draft. Kelly clarified this was brought to the Board/ Domain for consideration last year.</p>	<p>Kelly will bring to Board to remind and clarify timeline for action.</p>
<p>Review action items</p>		<p>Director Hiring Process Proposal to Board - Kelly will share with Noelle for packet - is already on agenda.</p> <p>Lara to check in with Kate re tax credit impacts.</p> <p>Lara will ask Board to add proposal regarding extending participation in the tax credit program for Corona sick time to the January agenda.</p>	



HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE  
CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

		Lara and Tala to draft proposal regarding extending participation in the tax credit program for Corona sick time.  Kelly will remind Board/ Domain re recommendation to draft outline of Director Salary Scales process.	
Tentative agenda topics for next meeting		TBD	
Next meeting time/date/location		Wed., Jan. 27 7:30am Zoom link found on school calendar	
Adjournment		8:15am	

1 Industrial Parkway  
Easthampton, MA 01027

Phone: 413-529-7178  
Fax: 413-527-1530

website: [www.hilltowncharter.org](http://www.hilltowncharter.org)  
e-mail: [info@hilltowncharter.org](mailto:info@hilltowncharter.org)