

**HCCPS Board of Trustees
Meeting Agenda
April 8, 2015**

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 which 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: Kipp Armstrong

6:30 Opening / Welcoming (read mission statement) (10)

Announcements, appreciations, acknowledgements *Committee reports due end of April*
Agenda check; Appoint timekeeper, listkeeper
Need for Thank You Notes written from BOT President?
Approve Minutes from previous meeting

6:40 Public Comment period (10)

6:50 Personnel Committee Visit/Introductions; Dan, Jessica (10 min)

7:00 Topic of the month reprise: Bonuses; Kipp, Susannah (15min) (Discussion)

7:15 GABS; Susannah, Penny (10 min) (Decision Clerk Description)

7:25 3rd Quarter financials; Amy/Scott (20 min) (Discussion)

7:45 LRP Updates; Coordinators (10 min) (Discussion)

7:55 Annual Meeting; Deirdre (10) (Discussion)

8:05 New Business

8:10 Committee Reports- Questions only (note: Security report, G2G – will be handed out)

8:20 Meeting Wrap-up/ Evaluation/Minutes Finalization

Set date/ facilitator, snack bringer, newsletter blurb, check agenda for next meeting

8:25 Review Action Items in this meeting's minutes; Knox (5 min)

8:30 Adjournment to executive session for the purposes of real estate negotiations.

APPROVED
4/8/2015



Proposal to the Board of Trustees
From
Governance and Board Sustainability Committee

Date: April 8, 2015
Priority Level: MEDIUM
Proposal to be presented by: GABS

Committee members drafting proposal: Deirdre Arthen, Susannah Howe, Amy Reesman, Penny Leveritt

Text of proposal:

GABS proposes a revised job description for the HCCPS Board of Trustees Clerk.

(See attached for proposed job description revision.)

Goals to be achieved by proposal:

The BOT clerk should have a revised job description that reflects the current practice and workings of the governance of HCCPS as they specifically relate to the duties of the clerk. GABS chose to provide a simplified clerk job description to present to the BOT for approval.

GABS and the clerk will, at a later date, create a supporting internal handbook that will be made available to the clerk on the trustees@hilltowncharter.org google account and in hard copy, as needed, to assist the clerk in completing the duties as described in the proposed clerk job description.

Potential problems/dissenting views:

Probably none.

Additional notes:

**Job Description for HCCPS Clerk of the Board of Trustees
(prepared 4/2015)**

The Board Clerk's duties include the following:

1. Ensure that the Board of Trustees (BOT) is in compliance with all applicable Massachusetts reporting requirements.
2. Ensure all BOT documents (policies, minutes, records, etc.) are kept up-to-date and accessible to the HCCPS community. In particular, ensure that the BOT meeting support process is followed.
3. Ensure that all required BOT correspondence within the HCCPS community is completed in a timely manner.

Categories of duties

1. Reporting to the State
 - a. Summer letter regarding board membership
 - b. Annual financial disclosure forms
 - c. Conflict of Interest training
 - d. Certificate of receipt of Open Meeting Law materials
 - e. State approval of new board members
 - f. Resignations and end-of-term departures
 - g. BOT & Committee meetings and meeting date/time changes
2. Keeping board books up to date
3. Annual meeting support
4. Board of trustees meetings support

(see HCCPS clerk procedural handbook for detailed instructions for the duties above.)

HCCPS

LRP Update

Name: Amy Aaron

Date: 3/31/2015

LRP Goal: Goal #1, Site –

Items Accomplished:

- In conjunction with On Site Committee and Domain Coordinators have begun prioritizing summer projects
- Prioritization includes programmatic and economic considerations
- Ongoing work with building owners re: regulation of the HVAC systems. New, high efficiency boiler installed in Feb. along with improved heating to nurse's office.
- Negotiating a PPA for the installation of solar panels
- Acoustic treatments in All School, music room nearly complete; more materials on order to complete K-5 classrooms
- Installed security buzzer system on front door

Obstacles:

Limited time and finances

Relying on building owners to schedule their subcontractors

Next Steps:

Continue pressure on building owner to complete all tasks that are their responsibility

Finish acoustic treatments where needed

Prepare for summer playground work

LRP Goal: Goal #2 School Finance

Items Accomplished:

-
- We have a contingency fund that is 12% of our FY 15 operating budget
 - We are operating with a FY 15 zero balanced operating budget
 - Developing FY 16 budget drafts in conjunction with Domain Council
 - Finance and Site continue to assess which building related capital expenses can be completed this year and next

HCCPS

LRP Update

Name: Deirdre Pulgram Arthen

Date: 4- 8- 2015

LRP Goal: Community Goal 1

Create and Implement Community Team

Items Accomplished:

Community Team has been meeting for a year.
Comm Coord., 1 teacher, counselor, 5 parents

Family events planned and hosted – First Friday party, Winter Fair

Regular meetings and ongoing planning continues

Improved access to school events on the webpage and in newsletter – largely thanks to Grace

Obstacles:

Still no simple method for getting input due to no student council

Hard to find good meeting time for both staff and parents

Big job that can expand easily – needs organization, prioritization and short term goals

Next Steps:

Currently working on:

Annual meeting, 20th birthday party, parent parking, outreach to parents of older kids

HCCPS

LRP Update

Name: Deirdre Pulgram Arthen

Date: 4-8-15

LRP Goal: Community Goal 2

New Student/Family Integration

Items Accomplished:

Revised beginning of the year events to First Friday party and class parties before school opens

Brought in 2 Americorps members

For Parents:

New parent breakfast. Coop meeting with focus on new parents (not too successful)
Sent special invitations to events, Conversations with parents of new younger kids
Morning Coffee hours (restarting soon)

For Students:

Work building student community within classrooms has been successful
Prisms Leadership Teams
6th grade teambuilding trip

Obstacles:

Parents of new older students seem reluctant to show up or volunteer for all school events.
Results are better for class-related events and Prisms teachers have increased these opportunities.

Low rate of response to emails and volunteer forms.

Drop off and pick up ease make it unnecessary for many parents to ever come into school, so they don't interact with each other or staff informally. Not a problem overall with parents of kids grades K-4

Next Steps:

Ask for help from teachers
Brainstorm with Community Team

Identify parents to work with

Parent Survey in spring

HCCPS

LRP Update

Name: Deirdre Pulgram Arthen

Date: 4-8-15

LRP Goal: Community Goal 3
Traditions Supporting School Culture

Items Accomplished:

Leadership Teams begun
CSL time set aside in Purples
Buddy classes for all Purples
Hilltown Harmonies and 2-5 chorus successes
Mummers Play repeat
Il Teatro improving

Obstacles:

Leadership Teams need adjusting – hard to meet the original goals of visibility and service to the community.

Teaching the entering 6-8th graders the songbook (our shared community language) is hard to accomplish – we need time for that.

Next Steps:

Work with Prisms and Purples teachers to plan for next year
Student Community Leadership Team has some great ideas – use them!

HCCPS

LRP Update

Name: Deirdre Pulgram Arthen

Date: 4-8-15

LRP Goal: Community Goal 4

Leadership Training (due to begin in 2015-16)

Items Accomplished:

Leadership Teams in Prisms
CSL in Purples
Initial conversations about Restorative Justice

Obstacles:

None yet – foreseen, meeting time.

Next Steps:

Keep going, see how it goes this year
Plan with teachers for Leadership Teams and more time next year
Work with teaching staff about integration among all ages.

HCCPS

LRP Update

Name: Dan Klatz

Date: April 3, 2015

LRP Goal:

K-8 Curriculum Review

Items Accomplished: Reviewed Reading curriculum K-8 for alignment with Common Core. Identified areas for modification, specifically regarding phonics in grades K-3.

Obstacles: Financial restraints may limit options.

Next Steps: Teachers will be recommending a unified K-5 phonics/spelling program by the end of the year. Continue ELA review with focus on the writing curriculum

LRP Goal:

Academic Affiliation and Teaching Interns

Items Accomplished: Have agreement with Smith College Education Department on pilot program—see attached. The pilot has been approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies, and we can therefore begin in Fall 2015.

Obstacles: Just implementation

Next Steps: Interview candidates, make selections, begin implementation

LRP Goal:

Grades 6-8 Program Reorganization

Items Accomplished: Developed a staffing plan for grades 7/8. We will have an additional Math/Science teacher and an additional Humanities/ELA teacher.

Developed several schedule models that will incorporate all three grades and allow for sharing of space.

Obstacles: To be determined during implementation

Next Steps: Hiring of new staff; summer planning; ordering furnishings and supplies for additional classrooms.



Teaching Fellowship Program

The Hilltown Teaching Fellowship is a two-year program offered by Smith College and the Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public school that offers an intensive internship in multi-grade classrooms, Kindergarten through Grade Eight. In unique and select instances, a one year internship may be available.

Teaching Fellows work the full school year with the supervising teacher (192 days), performing essential functions and working the hours of a teacher, provided they do not conflict with the required course load at Smith College. Daily work hours are generally 8 am-4 pm, with occasional meetings past 4 pm.

Teaching Fellows assist the classroom teacher and other staff in facilitating the creation of a respectful, safe, and nurturing classroom environment. Fellows plan and facilitate lessons in all curricular areas on a weekly basis. They work individually with assigned students and with small groups on activities planned by the special education and classroom teachers. Fellows develop and maintain good working relationships with families of classroom students, participate in professional development activities and staff meetings, and provide observational feedback on student performance/behavior to teachers.

Teaching Fellows manage the whole class when needs arise taking the teacher away from the class. They prepare materials needed for lessons as assigned by the classroom teacher, perform classroom clerical duties including correcting and documenting student work, and supervise and monitor students during lunch and recess as assigned.

Hilltown Teaching Fellows will serve their first year in a mixed-age classroom, and their second year in a different mixed-age classroom. Fellows will leave the program with teaching experience at four different grade levels. The Fellowship pays a \$10,000 annual stipend.

DOMAIN COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES
03.06.15

Attending: Susannah Howe, Dan Klatz, Kipp Armstrong, Amy Aaron, Deirdre Arthen,

8:30am – Meeting began

The initial focus of today's meeting was to review the agenda for the March 2015 BOT meeting.

We then discussed the agenda item - topic of the month: potential bonuses, and ways to divide funds if available to give as bonuses. Deidre had the idea to figure the % of the total salary line represented by the amount available for bonuses and give bonus amounts equal to that percent. This idea will be presented at the March BOT meeting.

Amy then briefed us on the current site list of to do items.

Amy also briefed us on the solar contract draft we have received, she will present the opportunity at the March BOT meeting.

Dan briefed us on an issue regarding parental feedback to the Prisms curriculum, parents of a student do not think geo-political conflicts should be linked to the study of religion.

9:45am – Meeting ended

Respectfully Submitted,
Kipp Armstrong

DOMAIN COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES
03.18.15

Attending: Susannah Howe, Dan Klatz, Kipp Armstrong, Amy Aaron, Deirdre Arthen,

12:00pm – Meeting began

The initial focus of today's meeting was to establish the agenda for the April 2015 BOT meeting.

We also discussed the timing of continuing bonus discussions with the BOT before all financials are clear – we decided the discussion at April BOT was worthwhile as we will benefit from a thoroughly discussed decision process.

Amy suggested a BOT member be identified as a formal thank you note writer when needed, it was agreed this should be the President of the BOT unless there are extenuating circumstances. We also decided to add this to the opening announcements item on the agenda.

We discussed Give to Grow updates from Sonja to the BOT and feel a short, concise written monthly update would be best.

Dan also updated us on the Prisms curriculum concern from a student's parents. The concern prompted insightful dialogue and will be responded to by a change in the curriculum the next time it is taught (in 2 years).

1:15pm – Meeting ended

Respectfully Submitted,
Kipp Armstrong

GABS Report March 18, 2015

Updating Board and Officer Job Descriptions - to be done over several months

We continued work on updating the document for the Clerk job description. It was decided that the section relating to clerk responsibilities surrounding procedures before, during and after Board meetings might better serve as a separate internal “how-to” document (entitled “Board Meeting Support Procedures” for the use of the clerk and GABS (as needed). In addition this separate document could be useful instruction for hired minutes takers or other persons to whom the pertinent board meeting duties could be delegated. As this would be a procedural document, GABS feels that it would not need to come to the Board as a proposal, and a summary of clerk duties related to board meetings will be included in the clerk job description proposal coming to the Board.

GABS will continue working on the clerk job description individually and the proposal will be brought to the board at the April meeting.

Housekeeping:

the clerk will continue to add pdfs of board book documents to the trustees@hilltowncharter.org account

Hilltown Special Education PAC Meeting Minutes: Thursday, March 19, 2015, 6:30 p.m.

Present: Tara Winters, Jen Marshall, PAC Co-Chairs; Dan Klatz, and 27 parents and Purples/Prisms Students.

Overview: The Thursday, March 19th SEPAC Meeting was a presentation: From Hilltown to High School: Transition Planning. Four former HCCPS students who are now in high school sat on a panel for a discussion moderated by Tara and Jen, followed by an open Q&A session for the parents and students in the audience. The panelists were: Tori Laverdiere, currently a junior at Northampton High; Maible Coughlin, currently a senior at Hartsbrook; Olivia Ferguson, currently a senior at Easthampton High; and, Lucas Solem, currently a sophomore at Northampton High.

A lively, informative discussion took place after introductions. Notes from that discussion are as follows:

General Observations:

--Many of the panelists were worried before entering high school, but all found the transition easier than they thought it would be once they began school.

--More than one panelist reported being very ready from day 1 for honors level work at the high schools they attended.

--All panelists liked being in high school and had very positive things to say about their experiences and high schools.

How did HCCPS help prepare the students for high school?

--The many public speaking requirements and opportunities at HCCPS helped them tremendously in high school. They were not nervous, whereas many of their peers who had not had such opportunities were nervous.

--8th grade projects at HCCPS gave the students a foundation in project management and organization that other students lacked

--The Reading Buddies program at HCCPS prepared the students for good relationship foundations and a sense of responsibility to their larger community

--HCCPS prepared students for active, experiential learning. Students get used to talking directly to teachers at HCCPS, a skill that is really helpful at a bigger school where students need to be able to advocate for themselves in the classroom.

--Encouragement of volunteerism, and general participation in school activities, is a great foundation for future work in high school, such as serving on the National Honor Society or joining new clubs.

--Students expressed feeling well prepared in the area of Math

--A student from NHS expressed that feeling comfortable with adults and talking with teachers at HCCPS allowed for greater connections with teachers at the high school level

--HCCPS promotes a culture where making friends is easy and those skills transfer well to bigger schools where you need to meet new people.

What are the challenges and how should students prepare to meet them?

--Homework in high school is not always consistent or predictable. Need to learn to plan for extra time in case a “surprise” assignment pops up and, often, students need more time for homework than what they previously planned for at HCCPS.

--If you need an IEP or 504, it is much better to enter high school with one already in place.

--Teachers are open to making accommodations, but students must learn to ask for those accommodations (like extra time) in advance. The day after your homework is due is not acceptable.

--High school schedules are more complicated than HCCPS and students have more “little pieces” to keep track of. High school expects students to be responsible for organizing themselves--so be sure to find a system that works for you.

--At Northampton High, the two students present felt that the HCCPS science curriculum did not “match up” with what is taught at JFK and in some subjects--biology and anatomy were named--they felt behind those students from JFK. The students from Easthampton High and Hartsbrook did not experience that.

Suggestions for increasing success:

--Get involved in extracurricular activities such as drama or other clubs, and athletics - it’s “not scary at all” and instantly assists in forming a large friend group

Responses to audience questions:

--WORKLOAD: Communicate with your teachers! Especially before due dates if challenges arise or exist. Staying after school with teachers for assistance can also be a great help.

--SOCIAL TRANSITION: There are often team-building games in classes freshman year; most people are nice, & bullying is rare - there are just some people who aren’t very nice at times. Making friends is simpler than it seems.

--PEER PRESSURE?: Across the board it could be perceived, but in general is not the case and kids just do what they are going to do.

--STIGMA WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION?: No stigma or judgment, and all backgrounds and kinds of kids take academic support classes. Don’t hesitate to talk with your teachers about any concerns!

A huge thank you to our four awesome student volunteers!!!

Next Meeting - NEW DATE: Wednesday, April 29th: Parents Rights Workshop
with Special Education Advocate Ingrid Flory, 6:30 PM @ HCCPS

| | | Mar 31, 15 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| ASSETS | | |
| Current Assets | | |
| Checking/Savings | | |
| Easthampton Savings | | |
| | ESB-Checking | 541,657.40 |
| | ESB-9 month CD | 91,264.83 |
| | Total Easthampton Savings | 732,922.23 |
| Florence Savings | | |
| | Money Market-FSB | 301.58 |
| | Total Florence Savings | 301.58 |
| | Total Checking/Savings | 733,223.81 |
| Other Current Assets | | |
| | Other current assets | 17.44 |
| | Suspense | -26.82 |
| Due from employees | | |
| | COBRA | -7.70 |
| | Total Due from employees | -7.70 |
| | Prepaid Expenses | 273.34 |
| Security Deposit | | |
| | Reserve for forefiture | -18,270.83 |
| | Security Deposit - Other | 23,630.83 |
| | Total Security Deposit | 5,360.00 |
| | Total Other Current Assets | 5,616.26 |
| | Total Current Assets | 738,840.07 |
| Fixed Assets | | |
| | Leasehold Imp. - Easthampton | 187,537.18 |

| | | Mar 31, 15 |
|--|------------------------------|-------------------|
| Property and Equipment | | |
| | Classroom Equip./Furnishings | 20,587.63 |
| | Computers | 14,067.50 |
| Total Property and Equipment | | 34,655.13 |
| Accumulated Depreciation | | -20,928.11 |
| Total Fixed Assets | | 201,264.20 |
| TOTAL ASSETS | | 940,104.27 |
| LIABILITIES & EQUITY | | |
| Liabilities | | |
| Current Liabilities | | |
| Accounts Payable | | |
| | Accounts Payable | 31,120.82 |
| Total Accounts Payable | | 31,120.82 |
| Other Current Liabilities | | |
| Payroll Liabilities | | |
| | Dental Plan Payable | -538.85 |
| | Employee Health | -2,654.24 |
| | Long Term Disability | -111.30 |
| | MA Retirement | 0.01 |
| | Sect 125 - FSA | -2,166.13 |
| Total Payroll Liabilities | | -5,470.51 |
| Total Other Current Liabilities | | -5,470.51 |
| Total Current Liabilities | | 25,650.31 |
| Total Liabilities | | 25,650.31 |
| Equity | | |

| | | Mar 31, 15 |
|---------------------------------------|--|-------------------|
| | Res'd for Capital Building Fund | 16,354.21 |
| | Donor Restricted Music Fund | 229.22 |
| | Contingency Fund | 296,947.84 |
| | Investments in Fixed Assets | 194,837.50 |
| | Undesignated Fund Balance | 80,527.17 |
| | Net Income | 358,266.44 |
| | Total Equity | 914,453.96 |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY | | 940,104.27 |

| | | | Jul '14 - Mar 15 | Budget | \$ Over Budget | % of Budget |
|--|--|-----------|-------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Ordinary Income/Expense | | | | | | |
| Income | | | | | | |
| Federal Grants | | | | | | |
| REAP Grant | | 12,000 | 19,911 | -7,911 | 60% | |
| Total Federal Grants | | 12,000 | 19,911 | -7,911 | 60% | |
| State Sources | | | | | | |
| Per-Pupil Revenue | | 1,715,679 | 2,272,188 | -556,509 | 76% | |
| Total State Sources | | 1,715,679 | 2,272,188 | -556,509 | 76% | |
| State Grants-DOE Administered | | | | | | |
| SPED 240 | | 23,044 | 27,637 | -4,593 | 83% | |
| SPED 274 | | 2,951 | 2,951 | | 100% | |
| Teacher Quality 140 | | 4,127 | 4,127 | | 100% | |
| Title I 305 | | 9,122 | 15,447 | -6,325 | 59% | |
| Total State Grants-DOE Administered | | 39,244 | 50,162 | -10,918 | 78% | |
| Friends of HCCS Grant | | | | | | |
| Community Service Grant | | | 1,200 | -1,200 | | |
| FOH Rolling Arts Grants | | 500 | 1,500 | -1,000 | 33% | |
| Total Friends of HCCS Grant | | 500 | 2,700 | -2,200 | 19% | |
| Private Grants | | | | | | |
| Commtty Fndn Class Projects | | 3,893 | 2,000 | 1,893 | 195% | |
| MA Cultural Council | | 5,000 | 5,000 | | 100% | |
| Total Private Grants | | 8,893 | 7,000 | 1,893 | 127% | |
| Fundraising Income | | | | | | |
| General Fundraising | | 36,422 | 38,000 | -1,578 | 96% | |
| Field Trip Fund | | 6,855 | 6,855 | | 100% | |
| Pizza | | 3,287 | 3,000 | 287 | 110% | |
| Winter Fair | | 7,659 | 7,500 | 159 | 102% | |

