

**Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School**

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes – Wednesday, December 14, 2016

- Present:** Susannah Howe, Deirdre Arthen, Scott Remick, Dan Klatz, Amy Aaron, David Starr, Amy Reesman, Penny Leveritt, Charles Wiemeyer, Andi Porter, Chris Greenfield
- Regrets:** Steve Hoyt, Terra Missildine, Michael Filas
- Facilitator:** Scott Remick
- Notetakers:** Penny Leveritt, Caroline Palmer
- Guests:**
- Listkeeper:** Susannah Howe
- Timekeeper:** David Starr
- Mission statement read by:** David Starr

Topic	Discussion	Action (if necessary)
<b>Announcements/Appreciations/Acknowledgements</b>	<u>Announcements:</u> There is a fair amount of uncertainty about how things will go for charters after the ballot question was voted down and with President Elect Trump. We will have to wait and see but might want to be prepared to be more politically active.  <u>Appreciations:</u> The Winter Fair was amazing - the transformation of the school, the outstanding projects. Kudos to everyone involved with this great event.	
<b>Any thank you notes needed?</b>	Possibility of a thank-you from the Board in the next newsletter for the hard work on the Winter Fair.	
<b>BoT Visibility this month?</b>		

<p><b>Minutes</b></p>	<p>October BoT meeting minutes reviewed.</p> <p>Under ‘coordinator salary review,’ a second period was placed.</p> <p>November meeting with DESE minutes reviewed.</p> <p>Minor changes requested as to the spelling of last names.</p>	<p><b>Scott moved to approve Nov BoT minutes as amended. David seconded. Minutes approved by consensus.</b></p> <p><b>Scott moved to approve DESE/BoT minutes as amended. Andi seconded. Minutes approved by consensus.</b></p>
<p><b>Public Comment Period</b></p>	<p>None.</p>	
<p><b>Coordinator Supervision and Evaluation Process</b></p>	<p>After conferring with an outside consultant, the Domain Council received a draft report with recommendations. The Council would like to come to the Board with a full recommendation of how to proceed, but only after a Board conversation has been had about the consultant’s memo. The consultant’s recommendation states that long-standing Coordinators undergo review every three years, with reviews occurring more regularly for newer employees. The consultant also suggests a formal yearly or twice yearly occasion where the public can approach and speak to the Board, as well as ongoing training so that the Board may be familiarized with the review process concerning Coordinators. Substantial time and effort went into the production of this report, so a close reading of its results would be beneficial in making long-term decisions.</p> <p>Is it beneficial for the Coordinators to have a system of self-review and assessment that includes progress and goal-accomplishment for off-review years? This is a suggestion in the consultant’s recommendations, and something the Domain Council is discussing.</p> <p>The governance guide for charter schools is being reviewed soon, and the governing body usually offers trainings around updated topics. While these trainings are</p>	<p><b>Domain Council will return to the January Board meeting with a plan of action for implementation of these recommendations.</b></p>

	<p>somewhat inaccessible due to location (Worcester) it may help the Board to move forward with the implementation of this recommendation to take this into account.</p> <p>If additional questions concerning Coordinator evaluation are included on the annual community survey, the questions would be tailored to produce relevant and cohesive data. This survey would be well thought-out and could be reused and tailored as needed. Questions concerning Coordinator evaluation have previously been present on annual surveys, but it would be beneficial for the Board to meet in a small committee to discuss the efficacy of these questions and how they should be utilized going forward.</p> <p>The applicable Board minutes usually include a summary of Coordinator evaluations and in this way the data is accessible to the public. On at least one previous occasion, Coordinator reviews have been available on public record in monthly informational packets.</p> <p>Caution should be taken to ensure that questions concerning Coordinator evaluation do not veer into inviting character-based critique and instead remain specific to the duties of a given role. One reason that this question could be included on the annual survey is to provide accountability and a voice to those having critical feedback, so that the questions could ask as a starting place for dialogue.</p> <p>Domain council will come to the January meeting with a proposal to implement this advice.</p>	
<p><b>Job description: Education Coordinator</b></p>	<p>Dan has taken a close look at the responsibilities and job description of his position. Additional to the responsibilities of the Student Services Administrator (SSA), the Education Coordinator is responsible for developing curriculum and participating in Board meetings. The SSA will be responsible for 504 plans and IEPs. The SSA will be the lead person concerning student support, the Education Coordinator will be the lead person regarding curriculum. In official designation, the SSA will be the special education coordinator for the school. Right now, the Education Coordinator and SSA are pulling double-duty and co-attending many meetings, but clear separation of tasks and responsibilities makes more sense</p>	<p><b>Susannah moved to approve the Education Coordinator Job Description as written David seconded. Minutes approved by consensus.</b></p>

	for the efficiency of these roles. In the reworking of this SSA role, the only practical change made to the workload of the person serving as SSA would be the addition of 504 plan consideration. It is unclear if the word Administrator or the word Coordinator are more appropriate for the role, or if one of a plethora of other words would serve best.	
<b>Job Description: Student Services Coordinator</b>	See above.	
<b>Education Coordinator Search Committee Update</b>	<p>Michael and Susannah are co-chairing, with Deirdre and Amy as well as a parent (Angie Gregory) and two teachers (Rebecca Belcher-Timme and John van Beckum) on the search committee. All minutes of the meetings will become public after the decision has been made, as the discussion has been occurring in Executive Session. The committee hopes to be able to bring a recommendation to the Board by the March meeting of the Board of Trustees, after the Board interviews have concluded.</p> <p>As a Board, continuing education terms specific to the role of the Education Coordinator and Student Services Administrator could be beneficial to ensure that all members of the Board are able to speak effectively about the process of filling these roles. Use of a glossary of common education colloquialisms would increase clarity of conversation around these topics.</p>	
<b>Coordinator Salary Review</b>	<p>Last month, the process to analyze Coordinator salaries was approved. The data have been clarified to show different average salaries and levels of variance from the norm over time and adjusting for inflation. Challenges in providing a recommendation include working around inflation, deciding where in the 90%-110% of average bracket the salaries should fall, and how these salaries would be paid out. The impact of mid-year and retroactive salary adjustment differ greatly and would result in different impacts to the FY 2017 budget.</p> <p>The committee demonstrates the effect of retroactive pay to meet the 90% of average bracket for FY 2017, as well as an increase to meet the 95% of average bracket for FY 2018. An increase of 5.5% from the last salary analysis</p>	<b>Finance Committee will look at the data and provide budget impact statement to Board at the next Board meeting.</b>

	<p>and adjustment appears optically similar to the potential 8% increase in salary as of the FY 2018. Effort is being made to ensure that Coordinator salaries are brought more closely in line with demonstrated average salaries.</p> <p>The Finance Committee will take demonstrated recommendations marked as a priority by the Board and investigate ways to make fiscal decisions possible to carry out. If this committee provides the Finance Committee with their suggestions for incremental increases, the Finance Committee could work with the budget to advise where it would be possible and impossible to implement with salary increases. Questions remain about the rate of salary increase in percent that most positions of this nature receive yearly. In order for the Board to come to a decision, the Finance Committee could use these numbers to see how the budget for this year and the next will adjust to salary increases and provide data back to the Board.</p> <p>Amy R. will create a proposal for the January Board meeting to make a recommendation regarding salary increases for the FY 2017 to get the Coordinator Salaries to 90% of average. The budget for site improvements is currently in surplus, so a large-scale effort to ramp up salaries may be most effective now, in a time of relative plenty.</p>	
<p><b>LRP Timeline Tool: DRAFT</b></p>	<p>When the committee met last month, a better way of tracking long range planning and effective updates were discussed. The idea of a dashboard in the form of a timeline was proposed and a preliminary tool was created. It uses the red-yellow-green light system to demonstrate where long range plans are on track, in the works, or requiring more dedicated effort. This at-a-glance tool can be used to easily report on progress at Board meetings.</p> <p>Only one topic is marked with red, concerning school culture surrounding the transition from 5th to 6th grade. Conversation can be ongoing regarding the importance and priority of concerns highlighted on this LRP, and some things may change or be removed as the LRP is reexamined. Clarification of which parts of yellow or red concerns are most in need of attention could help the tool be most effective. For printing in black and white, letters denoting color could be added to clarify which blocks are which colors.</p>	<p><b>Coordinators and GABS to look over LRP document and provide feedback.</b></p>

	<p>This tool can help Coordinators clarify and quickly access workable goals. The protocol for letting go of unnecessary or superfluous goals could include striking or blacking out completed or now-unneeded goals. The ability to alter or strike goals could be held by the Board. Feedback would be appreciated concerning how the LRP tool will be implemented in practice.</p>	
<p><b>Value of Inclusion and Diversity</b></p>	<p>The Equity Committee meets to discuss equity around race and class in school. The committee is comprised of Deirdre, Amy, and a varying number of teachers, who converse with teachers regarding issues. A proposal went to teachers around youth education around creating a safe and intimate cooperative community.</p> <p>On MLK day, much of this discussion can find appropriate context for building lessons. Teachers suggested that the school itself could also put out a more formal statement regarding these issues. As opposed to a biographical study of MLK, the focus of this year’s program would be a study in how to carry his principles forward into the present day and future community.</p> <p>No specific action needs to be taken by the board, as this is just primarily an update on activities. The conversation to be had could focus on a broad range of identities and lived experiences, and not solely on class and race as diversity and equity issues. The group has assessed classroom spaces and teaching materials for explicit or implicit bias.</p>	
<p><b>City of Easthampton PILOT</b></p>	<p>Several local charter schools have been surveyed and few or none of them make PILOT donations to cities, as it often implies a recurring relationship. Paying a PILOT is voluntary and implies a payment for services provided by the City of Easthampton and to ensure a good relationship with the city. There is a possibility of making a donation in lieu of a PILOT each year depending on the budget’s allowance for it. The other organizations in Easthampton that don’t pay taxes are nonprofits and churches, and some do make donations to the city in the form of library donations. While politically a good process to make a habit of, it will require consultation with the budget year to year in order to calculate the donation. The donation could either be calculated on what remains in the budget or added as a budget item in response to what we as a</p>	<p><b>Amy will look at collaboratives for comparable data.</b></p>

	school owe to the community at large. Amy could research and provide more data on the donations made by comparable institutions in the community as well as how Hilltown utilizes public utilities and services.	
<b>New Business - Identify only</b>	The Board should take a look at laws concerning the US flag and the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, and will examine this at the next Board meeting.	
<b>Committee Reports - Questions only</b>	A joint meeting of Board and Friends of Hilltown in February has been proposed. The Click workspace in Northampton is available and the occasion could be a combined work and social meeting. A Doodle Poll will be established by Andi to find a date that works best for most attendees.  Domain report - Math coach will be available for grades 6-8.	<b>Andi will create a Doodle Poll to find the best date for a Friends of Hilltown/Board joint meeting in February.</b>
<b>Meeting Wrap-Up/ Evaluation</b>	Next meeting January 11, 6:30 Snacks: David Starr, Drinks: Amy R. Newsletter blurb: Penny Facilitator: Scott	
<b>Review Action Items</b>	Reviewed action items with the board.	
<b>Adjournment</b>	Meeting adjourned at 8:43 PM	

**Attachments:**

Dec BOT Meeting Agenda; November 2016 BoT Meeting Minutes; November 17, 2016 BoT/DESE Meeting Minutes; Coordinator Evaluation Process letter from Larry Hunt; Education coordinator Job description; Student Services Coordinator job description; Coordinator Salary Review and Budget Impact Analysis; LRP Tracker Tool DRAFT; Domain Coordinator Report, December 2016; Domain Council Meeting Minutes, November 15, 2016; Domain Council Meeting Minutes, November 29, 2016; Finance Committee Meeting Minutes, October 21, 2016; Finance Committee Meeting Minutes, November 4, 2016; Finance Committee Meeting Minutes, December 2, 2016; GABS Meeting Minutes, November 15, 2016; GABS Meeting Minutes, December 6, 2016; SEPAC Update, November 2016; FOH Report, September 2016; FOH Report, October 2016; FOH Report (DRAFT), December 2016;

**Tentative Agenda for Jan 2017 Meeting:**

Review of state laws regarding displaying the Unites States flag and saying the pledge of allegiance at school

Coordinator eval proposal from domain council

Proposal for January salary retroactive revision for fy17 from subcommittee

Revisit discussion of LRP - divide + conquer

GABS review of bylaws for discussion before proposal

Committee progress on goals submitted in Sept., assessment of Board goals