

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes – Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Present: Susannah Howe, Dianne Hobbs, Deirdre Arthen, Scott Remick, Dan Klatz, David Starr, Jesse Belcher-Timme, Penny Leveritt, Andi Porter, Terra Missildine, Amy Aaron, Charles Wiemeyer

Regrets: Steve Hoyt

Facilitator: Scott Remick

Notetakers: Alana Fichman

Guests: Amy Reesman of GABS committee, Ellen Ferris

Listkeeper: Scott

Timekeeper: David

Mission statement read by: Scott Remick

| Topic | Discussion | Action (if necessary) |
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| Announcements/Appreciations/Acknowledgements | <u>Announcements:</u> The USDA application for a loan to buy the building was submitted. <u>Appreciations:</u> | |
| Any thank you notes needed? | | Board will send letter penned by Amy and signed by Susannah to Florence Savings Bank for the donation |
| BoT Visibility this month? | sleepover and Prisms Coffeehouse | Board will make a presence at the Prisms Coffee House. Penny will be at the K-5 sleepover. |
| Minutes | January 2016 and February 2nd emergency meeting minutes reviewed. | Scott moved to approve January minutes as amended. David seconded. Minutes approved by consensus. Scott moved to approve February 2nd |

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| | | <p>emergency meeting with amendment.</p> <p>David seconded.</p> <p>Minutes approved by consensus.</p> |
| Public Comment Period | None. | |
| Staffing Changes | Amy Aaron will retire at the end of next year. | |
| Succession Planning | <p>From the meetings held with the Coordinators, Domain Council, teachers, admin staff, Friends of Hilltown, and the board of trustees, some recurring themes emerged, such as: coordinators need more time for their jobs, a need for more defined roles, a need for backup assistance, a need for a SPED director, the challenge of having the community coordinator be a part time position, and the need for a maintenance person or janitor. Also the need to increase accountability was a recurring theme.</p> <p>3 preliminary plans outlined:</p> <p>Plan 1: An executive director with three full time coordinators. A SPED coordinator at halftime. A potential half-time janitor. <u>Pros:</u> BoT supervision of only one, plan could - in theory - add a staff person to free up some coordinator time. <u>Cons:</u> Stretches the budget, could be hard to find a director that is the right fit, biggest change from current plan.</p> <p>Plan 2: Admin and Education Coordinators at full time, shared supervision of a community associate at half time position, half-time SPED Coordinator, potential half-time janitor. <u>Pros:</u> More budget friendly. <u>Cons:</u> does not address need for more coordinator assistance, community person still overburdened and does not have an equal seat at the table.</p> <p>Plan 3: All three coordinators at full time. "Swing person" ¼ time in each arena plus extra time. SPED coordinator at halftime, part-time janitor possibility. <u>Pros:</u> more staffing to help coordinators, all domains equal. <u>Cons:</u> more budget costs, finding swing person who has all the skills to help coordinators could be difficult,</p> | |

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| | <p>division of swing-person's time and supervision could be difficult.</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p>Facilities director/janitor is a position with a specific skills set and should not be handled by coordinators at a higher pay. Facilities staff would be very beneficial. T.M. Could be worth exploring a maintenance service, but would likely be much more expensive than having someone on staff.</p> <p>A lot of support for a SPED administrative position.</p> <p>Swing person would be potentially difficult to find someone with that broad of a skills set to cover all that the Coordinators do.</p> <p>Finding a swing person, which would require a broader skill set, should be a last resort.</p> <p>Should there be shared management structure? Has been from the beginning. Plan 1 stands out from the rest.</p> <p>Should decide whether 1 coordinator or more than 1 before finding other details.</p> <p>Plan 1 with an executive director makes it so board only has one person to supervisor. If biggest motivation is to ease the board's supervision by having only one person to supervise...that might not be enough of a reason to go with Plan 1. Plan 1 is quite different than the original mission and feel of how the school runs.</p> <p>The idea of one executive director is about more than easing the board's supervision levels, but also about helping the coordinators with some of their work load.</p> <p>"School leader" sets the tone of a school. More efficient, "buck stops here" model. Departure from current model. Just having more people is helpful. Decisions in schools can happen "on the fly" due to immediacy of certain situations. Agrees that flexibility within the roles is good, and that the positions can be replicated.</p> <p>For the record, coordinators do disagree some of the time, and while the back-and-forth is potentially inefficient, it can lead to better decisions.</p> <p>Having three coordinators is part of the personality of the school. If issue is of accountability, we could change the relationship of coordinators to the board rather than bring in an outside director.</p> <p>Structure should reflect mission and values. Board was more heavily involved in the earlier years of the school.</p> | |
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| | <p>If there is an executive director they should come from a community background due to school's mission. Site manager could fulfil duties of sanitation in addition to other tasks. Dissatisfied with all three plans at present.</p> <p>What is board looking for when they say "increased accountability"?</p> <p>Board is responsible for supervising three coordinators and doing reviews. Accountability not large enough issue to change the structure of the school.</p> <p>Community coordinator should be built up rather than ½ or less, due to school growth, very important to develop. Could each coordinator have their own half-time assistant?</p> <p>Having a part time maintenance person doesn't seem feasible. Could it be combined with something else?</p> <p>Hard to see benefits of one director. "Accountability" seems more like dissatisfaction with final decision rather than the way decision is made. One person could result in more issues being brought to the board. Cooperative management essential element of the school.</p> <p>Parents have difficulty in bringing up issues to administrators and the board. Success with current plan is due to long-term working relationship. Difficult to plug people into current plan. Director could help with parent concerns.</p> <p>Multiple coordinators with support is more sustainable over time. When one director is replaced it could completely alter culture of the school.</p> <p>Should be an assessment in what are the key issues that need to be addressed.</p> <p>Question: Could there be more details provided on the reasons and examples of the theme of the need for more accountability that came from the Succession Plan meetings?</p> | |
| BOT role in hiring | moved to the March meeting | |

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| GABS update and BOT recruitment | Sent 8-9 applications to those interested, 1 candidate, another potential. School need publicity materials, new brochure. Possibly create a marketing budget for cost of printing? | GABS will continue to work on these materials, and will come up with an amount for the budget for design and printing. |
| Site Update | Some impending projects include shelves in the attic, covering lower half of walls in All School, bridge connecting the play structure elements. Also a combination of plantings and some sort of physical barrier along back “kids playground” along O’Neil St. | |
| Political Update | No public meeting planned with Senator Rosenberg yet- he apologized about what was in press. Raising the cap on charter schools will not affect Hilltown Charter School itself, though the campaign has increased negative press towards charter schools. | |
| New Business - Identify only | Question of board meetings in morning versus evening? Question of visibility. Full-length morning meetings would be hard for some current BOT members; the emergency meeting only worked so well because it was 15 minutes long. | |
| Committee Reports - Questions only | Equity team has been meeting for about two years, sporadically, currently working on self-assessment. Activities have included research on books in classrooms that diversify reading material, potential trainings, and discussions of hiring strategies to diversify staff. | |
| Meeting Wrap-Up/ Evaluation | Next meeting is scheduled for March 9, 2016 at 6:30 pm. Snacks: David Starr Drinks: Jesse Belcher-Timme Newsletter blurb: Penny Facilitator: Susannah | |
| Review Action Items: | Alana reviewed action items with the board | |
| Adjournment | Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM | |

Attachments :

BOT Meeting Agenda; January 2016 BoT Meeting Minutes Draft;
February 2nd Emergency Meeting Minutes Draft; Initial Report to
BOT Re: Succession Plan; SPEDPAC January 2016 Meeting Minutes;
GABS January Meeting Report; Domain Council Minutes 02-02-2016;
Personnel February Meeting Minutes; Domain Coordinators Report,
February 2016

Tentative Agenda for March Meeting: BoT role in hiring, domain
Council philosophy for salary scales, continue succession
planning conversation; SPED admin position?; database update
from Coordinators, budget process overview?, possible site
update, proposal for, "What happens when a coordinator asks for
a waiver?"; building purchase update?