

**HCCPS Board of Trustees
Meeting Agenda
February 10, 2016**

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: Scott Remick

6:30 Welcoming (read mission statement) (15 min)

Announcements, appreciations, acknowledgements
Agenda check; Appoint timekeeper, listkeeper
Thank You Note check – any needed?
BOT Visibility this month
Approve Minutes from Jan 13 and Feb 2

6:45 Public Comment period (10 min)

6:55 Staffing Changes: Amy (5 min – update)

7:00 Succession Planning: Susannah/Ellen (30 min – discussion)

7:30 BOT Role in Hiring: Dan/Steve (20 min – discussion)

7:50 GABS Update and BOT Recruitment: Penny (10 min – update/discussion)

8:00 Site Update: Amy/Charles (5 min – update)

8:05 Political Update: Amy (10 min – update)

8:15 New Business (5 min – identify only) (Try an AM BOT Meeting?)

8:20 Committee Reports (5 min – questions only)

8:25 Meeting Wrap-up/ Evaluation/Minutes Finalization (5 min)

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

8:30 Review Action Items in this meeting's minutes (5 min)

8:35 Adjournment

INITIAL REPORT TO HILLTOWN BOARD OF TRUSTEES

RE: SUCCESSION PLAN

Written by: Susannah Howe and Ellen Ferris

Date: January/February 2016

The Process:

To address the question of succession and administrative structure, we met with various stakeholders in the school. We asked them to describe how they interact with each of the coordinators, what is challenging and what works with these interactions, and what would be their ideal coordinator structure. The groups included: the coordinators themselves (to find out what their actual responsibilities are outside of their job descriptions), Domain Council, teachers, admin staff, Friends of Hilltown, the board of directors to discuss accountability issues, and the SPEDPAC. Through this process, we learned of 113 discrete coordinator tasks - **see Appendix A for a list.**

Themes:

We then identified themes and created three potential plans for the future structure of school administration.

The overall themes are listed below based on either quotes or amalgams of quotes. Identifying information has been removed. **See Appendix B for complete list of themes and comments.**

- Need for Coordinators to have more time
- Need for Accountability
- Need for more defined roles
- Need for backup
- Need for SPED director
- Having a part time Community Coordinator is challenging
- Need for janitor or facilities manager
- Miscellaneous

Proposed Plans:

We propose three potential plans that address some or all of these issues.

Existing Plan:

Currently we have 3 coordinators, one of whom is half-time, across the educational, administrative, and community domains. The coordinators are supervised by the board of trustees. The Administrative Coordinator supervises both the office manager, bookkeeper, and nurse. The Education Coordinator supervises the teaching staff. The Community Coordinator supervised the Development Associate when the DA position existed.

This existing plan is not without its challenges especially in meeting the needs of the school community as it grows. See Appendix B for many comments addressing the challenges and shortcomings of the current structure.

(5.25-5.75 FTE)

- Educational Coordinator 1.0 FTE
- Administrative Coordinator 1.0 FTE
 - Office Manager 1.0 FTE
 - Bookkeeper 0.75 FTE
 - Nurse 1.0 FTE
- Community Coordinator 0.5 FTE
 - Development Assoc. 0.5 FTE (or not at all)

Plan One - Single Director:

This plan introduces an overall school director who supervises three coordinator positions across the domains, a half-time SPED coordinator supervised by the Education Coordinator, a potentially half-time janitorial position supervised by the Administrative Coordinator, and brings the Community Coordinator to full-time.

(7.25-7.75 FTE)

- Director 1.0 FTE
 - Educational Coordinator 1.0 FTE
 - SPED Coordinator 0.5 FTE
 - Administrative Coordinator 1.0 FTE
 - Office Manager 1.0 FTE
 - Bookkeeper 0.75 FTE
 - Nurse 1.0 FTE
 - Facilities? 0.5 FTE? (or at all?)
 - Community Coordinator 1.0 FTE

Pros:

- Adds staffing to give Coordinators more time
- Addresses accountability
- BOT supervision of one person is easiest
- Provides solid support and backup
- Strengthens the community support
- Still gives the coordinators autonomy to do their specific tasks rather than having to hold unrelated responsibilities.

Cons:

- Stretches budget
- The Director has to be the right person - someone who can work collaboratively and set the right tone for the community.
- Biggest change in structure from current plan

Plan Two - Two Coordinators:

This plan enlists two full time coordinators in the Education and Administrative domains who supervise various half and full time positions. The Education Coordinator supervises the halftime SPED director and the Administrative Coordinator supervises the full time Office Manager, Bookkeeper, Nurse, and potential halftime facilities position. Both Coordinators share supervision of a halftime Community Associate and Administrative/Discipline backup position.

(6.25-6.75 FTE)

- Educational Coordinator 1.0 FTE
 - SPED Coordinator 0.5 FTE
- Administrative Coordinator 1.0 FTE
 - Office Manager 1.0 FTE
 - Bookkeeper 0.75 FTE
 - Nurse 1.0 FTE
 - Facilities? 0.5 FTE? (or at all?)
- (Shared Supervision)
 - Community Associate 0.5 FTE
 - Admin/Discipline back up 0.5 FTE
(title TBD)

Pros:

- More budget-friendly plan
- Does add some staffing beyond current plan
- BOT supervision of two coordinators is simpler
- Not very different from current structure

Cons:

- Does not address accountability issue
- Community person still overburdened.
- Supervision for swing person is unclear
- Not very different from current structure
- Lessens importance of community - community doesn't have an equal 'seat at the table.'

Plan Three - Three Coordinators:

This plan brings all three coordinators to full time and adds a half time SPED Director supervised by the Education Coordinator and full time 'Swing person', supervised by all three coordinators, whose support is split between each domain with an additional quarter time open. This open time can be spent on any domain depending on the project or particular needs of each domain during the year.

(7.25-7.75 FTE)

- Educational Coordinator 1.0 FTE
 - SPED Coordinator 0.5 FTE
- Administrative Coordinator 1.0 FTE
 - Office Manager 1.0 FTE
 - Bookkeeper 0.75 FTE
 - Nurse 1.0 FTE
 - Facilities? 0.5 FTE? (or at all?)
- Community Coordinator 1.0 FTE

(Shared Supervision)

- Swing Person 1.0 FTE

Pros:

- All domains equal
- Provides support for all domains
- Swing person adds some flexibility and helps with some overflow

Cons:

- Stretches budget
- Does not address accountability
- Swing person can quickly become stretched
- Unclear what responsibilities to give to swing person, or how to supervise
- BOT supervision of three coordinators can be difficult

Summary of Structure for Proposed Plans

Plan 1 - Single Director (7.25-7.75 FTE)

- Director 1.0 FTE
 - Educational Coordinator 1.0 FTE
 - SPED Coordinator 0.5 FTE
 - Administrative Coordinator 1.0 FTE
 - Office Manager 1.0 FTE
 - Bookkeeper 0.75 FTE
 - Nurse 1.0 FTE
 - Facilities? 0.5 FTE? (or at all?)
 - Community Coordinator 1.0 FTE

Plan 2 - Two Coordinators (6.25-6.75 FTE)

- Educational Coordinator 1.0 FTE
 - SPED Coordinator 0.5 FTE
- Administrative Coordinator 1.0 FTE
 - Office Manager 1.0 FTE
 - Bookkeeper 0.75 FTE
 - Nurse 1.0 FTE
 - Facilities? 0.5 FTE? (or at all?)
- (Shared Supervision)
 - Community Associate 0.5 FTE
 - Admin/Discipline back up 0.5 FTE (title TBD)

Plan 3 - Three Coordinators (7.25-7.75 FTE)

- Educational Coordinator 1.0 FTE
 - SPED Coordinator 0.5 FTE
- Administrative Coordinator 1.0 FTE
 - Office Manager 1.0 FTE
 - Bookkeeper 0.75 FTE
 - Nurse 1.0 FTE
 - Facilities? 0.5 FTE? (or at all?)
- Community Coordinator 1.0 FTE
- (Shared Supervision)
 - Swing Person 1.0 FTE

Appendix A - List of Responsibilities and Tasks

8th grade graduation
admin supervision
All School/II Teatro
all-school sleepover
alumni relations?
Americorps staffing
ArtSpark
audit
carpool map/network
Charter School Association connections
childcare at events
civil liberties
class parents
class scheduling
classroom events
classroom configuration
classroom management
classroom visits, spending time in classes
cleaners
Co-op meetings, Annual Meeting
Community Days
Community Team
complaints
CORI checks
CPR, Charter Renewal
create educational environment
crisis management
curriculum planning and tracking
DC Trip, Nature's Classroom
Dean of Students
discipline
discipline back-up
dissemination to other schools
Domain Council, Board of Trustees
Ed Forums
emergency protocols
employment letters
extracurricular activities - chorus, frisbee, etc.

facilities management
Family Dance
family orientation (esp. new families)
Finance Committee
finance/budget
fiscal policies
Friends of Hilltown interaction
fundraising, development
GABS Committee
Grandparent's Day
grant writing - external funding
greeting at drop-off and pick-up
groundskeeping, playground
health insurance
human resources
informal student interaction
Kids Club
lease/mortgage
link families
Long Range Plan
lottery, enrollment
lunch scheduling and lunch duty
mentoring teachers
mini-courses
MLK Day events,
Music Festival
newsletter
ordering supplies
parental concerns re building, logistics, safety
parental concerns re community, events
parental concerns re education
payroll
Personnel Committee
Prisms coffeehouse
professional development
progress reports
prospective family interaction
public relations, media
recess
SCA coordination
school birthday celebrations

school dances (6-8)
school email system
school lunch (hot lunch)
school photos
school policies
school safety
school schedule/calendar
Science Fair
service learning
Site Committee
Solstice Celebration
SPED admin - meetings, paperwork
SPED implementation
SPED oversight
Spirit Week
staff orientation
staff supervision
staff training
start of year info/packets for families
state/Doe admin reports, regulations, compliance
state/DoE educational regulations, paperwork
student council, leadership teams?
substitute teachers
supervise counselor (same as teacher?)
supervise nurse
surveys - parents, school satisfaction
TA supervision
teacher observation, supervision, evaluation
teacher/staff meetings
tech support
testing - MCAS, PARCC, Iowas
transition day
volunteers - recruitment, coordination, tracking
website, FaceBook, social media
Winter Fair

Appendix B - Themes from Succession Planning Discussions

Need for Coordinators to have more time
AC role may get overloaded esp with new state requirements all the time
CC always pressed for time bc of upcoming event -- no time for relaxed interactions
Coordinators are hijacked by immediate tasks
Hard for EC to supervise teachers due to lack of time
Issues get decided on the fly and then become policy
Lack of time compromises teachers ability to have a global vision
Lack of time leads to quick decisions that go on to become policy, stress, burn-out, no time for creativity or long range planning.
Limited mentoring opportunities
Mostly verbal communication since there is no time for writing
No orientation for new staff
Solutions can't arise organically bc too many things need to get done
Teacher supervision/evaluations often are sidelined
Too much to do so things fall away
Want more data on where people go after Hilltown and why families leave early
Need for Accountability
3 coordinators and 2 BOT in Domain Council - takes a lot of energy for BOT to make their voice heard
AC is main liaison with the board -- constant discussion where line is between coord and BOT
All working together but can't agree so nothing happens-paralysis
Because the coordinators are so positive about the school, it is challenging for them to hear critical feedback
BOT is so fluid, hard to have supervision translate into improvement and change
Coordinators will back each other up and collectively ignore items
DC need third person - the balance of power needs to shift back to the board
Don't want to rat/step on each other
Having 3 coordinators means that the CC can't effectively advocate for parents without 'going against' the AC and EC
If a staff member has a professional issue or complaint, there is no recourse beyond the coordinator
Many choices go unchallenged
Need accountability that hiring committees are staffed with qualified representatives
Need clarity on who makes decisions - BOT, coordinators, Committees?

Often only sanitized information go to the BOT - ongoing tension between what the coordinators want to go the the BOT and what the DC wants to go the BOT
Peer supervision makes challenging to call your peer out and/or to make the board aware of a problem b/c they have to work closely with each other every day
Profound miscommunications
Puts other staff in awkward position
Scheduling collisions
The ability of a volunteer BOT to supervise the coordinators is shaky.
The coordinators need to solicit more input from staff and community
There are no checks and balances
When there is a disagreement, the coordinators usually win
Working with BOT - awkwardness of reporting to a volunteer board that is transient and may not be well informed
Need for more defined roles
AC is a 'catch all' position
All-school is unclear -- who is ultimately responsible
Blurred boundaries between coordinators because of collaboration
EC and AC need to delegate
Highly collaborative but in an ad hoc way and all day long - collaboration is enmeshed and doesn't want to stay in boundaries
Kids Club is in a strange spot - causes issues
Lack of clarity leads to chaos
Lack of clarity leads to double work or things being dropped
Leadership roles can be muddy
Line blurred the most between AC and EC
Make fewer decisions than would make individually - inefficient
Need clarity on who makes decisions
Need to separate out EC and disciplinarian roles
Parents often contact the wrong coordinator about a specific issue -- they are not sure who to contact
PE Teacher needs to be under the EC, not AC
Permeable membrane around AC and EC roles leads to nebulousness
Supervision is not clear - no system in place
The coordinators are too intertwined- it would help if they had more independence from one another
Unclear who TAs report to

Unclear whose agenda is most important
When they solicit each others' opinion on so many things, it can get redundant and waste time
Need for back up
Discipline consistency is challenging - with kids club and with varied approaches with EC and AC...Sometimes AC doesn't know about specific discipline plan with a particular student
Discipline plans are worked on specifically with EC, teacher, specialists but if Dan is unavailable when problems arise, the other coordinators don't know what's been decided, worked on and potentially undermine
Instead of ad hoc interaction all day long, have a specific time each day
Need to have built in support as back up
Need to make sure at least one coordinator is in the building at all times
Need for SPED Director
More and more of a need
Need director and implementer
Would free EC from having to attend all IEP meetings and SPED team meetings
Would ease EC job
Need more Sped support
Sped director very needed - mentioned by all groups
Need to have someone to go to with SPED questions
Having a part-time CC is challenging
AC and EC have to serve as back up often
Are coordinators equal players?
Communication challenging
Confusion with childcare, scheduling meetings, organizing the volunteer database, posting of notices
Don't get responses in a timely manner bc CC is on limited schedule
During event times, would be helpful to have someone fulltime
Hard to connect due to erratic and part-time schedule
Hard to keep CC in the loop
Lots done on the fly
Lots of last minute planning for events
Many don't fully understand or are confused by CC position
Many expressed the need for CC to be fulltime
Presents challenges regarding expectations and responsibilities
Responsibilities are blurred.

Need a janitor - echoed by many

Part-time custodian - or facilities manager - would help a lot

MISC

3 people together can come up with better ideas than one alone.

All coordinators would like more admin help

CC could cut down on teacher's burden by taking more active role in organizing volunteers for classroom

CC role seen as not important by some

Challenging for teachers to commit to service learning,

Challenging for teachers to understand CC role and challenging for CC to communicate with teachers

Civil liberties contact and process should be revisited and may require more training...process is too subjective right now

Clear boundaries regarding budget

Communication is challenging at times

Communication is lacking and breeds mistrust

Coordinators are overburdened

Coordinators motivated by interactions with the kids and being with the kids

Disconnect from main office to AC office

Having someone fill in for lunch and recess would help

Lots of juggling

No clear guidelines for assistance programs - free lunch, etc.

Teachers ambivalent about supervising TAS - not clear that they do always either

Teachers would like more input on service learning choices

The development associate position should become part of the CC role

Wish more leadership responsibilities could be given to teachers

Would be great to have a curriculum coordinator

PLAN 1						
<div>This plan has a fulltime director to oversee 3 coordinators. The EC oversees the SPED Director and the AC oversees a Facilities position, plus the Office Manager and Bookkeeper.</div>						<div><div>key</div><div>not sure</div><div>shared responsibility</div></div>
DIRECTOR						
Fulltime						
Responsibilities						
supervise and back up for the 3 coordinators	greeting at drop-off and pick-up	w/ CC, EC?				
admin supervision	hold mission of school					
CPR, Charter Renewal	Long Range Plan					
Charter School Association connections	mentor teacher leaders					
civil liberties	mini-courses					
Co-op meetings, Annual Meeting	prospective family interaction	lottery/enrollment also?				
complaints	public relations, media					
discipline back-up	school policies					
dissemination to other schools	school schedule/calendar					
Domain Council, Board of Trustees	surveys - parents, school satisfaction	with CC, EC				
GABS Committee	visibility of school-events					
Ed. Coordinator			Admin Coordinator		Community Coordinator	
Fulltime			Fulltime		Fulltime	
Responsibilities			Responsibilities		Responsibilities	
classroom configuration	professional development	audit	payroll	8th grade graduation	Friends of Hilltown interaction	school dances (6-8)
classroom visits, spending time in classes	progress reports	class scheduling	recess	All School/Il Teatro	fundraising, development	school photos
classroom management	school schedule/calendar	crisis management	school email system	all-school sleepover	family orientation (esp. new families)	school schedule/calendar
create educational environment	SPED Oversight	emergency protocols	school safety	alumni relations?	Friends of Hilltown interaction	Science Fair
curriculum planning and tracking	staff orientation	employment letters	school schedule/calendar	Americorps staffing	Grandparent's Day	service learning
DC Trip, Nature's Classroom	staff training	Finance Committee	Site Committee	ArtSpark	grant writing - external funding	Solstice Celebration
discipline	staff supervision	finance/budget	state/Doe admin reports, regulations, co	childcare at events	link families	Spirit Week
Ed Forums	state/DoE educational regulations, pap	fiscal policies	substitute teachers	class parents	Long Range Plan	student council, leadership teams?
greeting at drop-off and pick-up	supervise counselor (same as teacher?)	health insurance	supervise nurse	classroom events	MLK Day events,	transition day
informal student interaction	TA supervision	human resources		Co-op meetings, Annual Meeting	Music Festival	volunteers - recruitment, coordination, tracking
Kids Club	teacher/staff meetings	lease/mortgage		Community Days	newsletter	website, FaceBook, social media
Long Range Plan	teacher supervision, observation, eval	Long Range Plan		Community Team	parental concerns re community, events	Winter Fair
parental concerns re education	testing - MCAS, PARCC, lowas	lottery, enrollment		extracurricular activities - chorus, fris	Prisms coffeehouse	
Personnel Committee	tech support	parental concerns re building, logistics, safety		Family Dance	SCA coordination	
				family orientation (esp. new families)	school birthday celebrations	
SPED Director		Office Manager (w/part time assistant?)	Bookkeeper			
Halftime		Fulltime	current level			
SPED admin - meetings, paperwork		carpool map/network	ordering supplies			
SPED implementation		CORI checks	payroll			
		Kids Club logistics				
		logistical assistance for school events	Facilities?			
		lunch scheduling and lunch duty	Halftime? (company?)			
		school lunch (hot lunch)	cleaners			
		start of year info/packets for families	facilities management			
		What other admin duties can be shifted here?	groundskeeping, playground			
			Site Committee			

PLAN 2																	
This plan includes two coordinator/supervisors and a 'swing' halftime coordinator who works on specific admin projects such as charter renewal, state reporting, compliance and also as part of the Ed team in discipline.																	
key																	
not sure																	
shared responsibility																	
Ed. Coordinator																	
Fulltime																	
Responsibilities																	
classroom events																	
classroom configuration																	
classroom management																	
classroom visits, spending time in cl																	
CPR, Charter Renewal																	
create educational environment																	
curriculum planning and tracking																	
DC Trip, Nature's Classroom																	
Dean of Students																	
discipline																	
Domain Council, Board of Trustees																	
Ed Forums																	
greeting at drop-off and pick-up																	
informal student interaction																	
Kids Club																	
Long Range Plan																	
mentoring teachers																	
mini-courses																	
Additional Questions/Notes																	
GABS Committee??																	
Where is the appropriate place for the civil liberties contact?																	
Does this plan need a half time curriculum coordinator?																	
Can this plan support a half-time facilities coordinator?																	
Wish List: Student Ed coordinator - Dean of Students																	
Wish List: Staff Coordinor -Dean of Faculty																	
Wish List: teacher leaders																	
Admin Coordinator																	
Fulltime																	
Responsibilities																	
admin supervision																	
alumni relations?																	
Americorps staffing																	
audit																	
Charter School Association connections																	
civil liberties																	
class scheduling																	
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employment letters																	
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payroll																	
professional development																	
public relations, media																	
SCA coordination																	
school policies																	
school safety																	
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staff orientation																	
staff supervision																	
staff training																	
state/Doe admin reports, regulations, compliance																	
state/DoE educational regulations, paperwork																	
supervise nurse																	
surveys - parents, school satisfaction																	
SHARED SUPERVISION																	
Community Associate																	
halftime																	
Responsibilities																	
8th grade graduation																	
All School/Il Teatro																	
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parental concerns re community,																	
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Solstice Celebration																	
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volunteers - recruitment, coordination, tracking																	
website, FaceBook, social media																	
Winter Fair																	
Swing person (Ed/Tech?)																	
halftime																	
Responsibilities																	
CORI checks																	
discipline back-up																	
school email system																	
tech support																	
Office Manager (w/part time assistant?)																	
Fulltime																	
Responsibilities																	
carpool map/network																	
childcare at events																	
Kids Club logistics																	
lunch scheduling and lunch duty																	
ordering supplies																	
recess																	
school lunch (hot lunch)																	
start of year info/packets for families																	
Bookkeeper																	
current level																	
ordering supplies																	
payroll																	

Plan 3																	
This plan brings the CC to fulltime and also adds a swing person to work .25 time on each domain with .25 time open.																	
key																	
not sure																	
shared responsibility																	



Domain Coordinators Report to the Board of Trustees February, 2016

1. Dan and Amy met with the Northampton Superintendent of Schools John Provost several weeks ago. We contacted him after hearing from a former parent that he was looking for support in getting parents from his district to respond to a survey. We gave him a tour of the school, and discussed what we saw as the strengths of our school and offered assistance in any way he felt would be meaningful.
2. Our numbers of students either in Special Education or on 504 Accommodation Plans has increased since the beginning of the year. Currently, we have 37 students on IEPs with another 8 in the referral process, and 5 students on 504 plans. The number of referrals is unusually high due to parent requests (as opposed to teacher referrals). We are essentially obligated to evaluate students when parents make the request. This requires a significant commitment of resources—both money and time.
3. We applied for and received a Community Foundation grant that allowed us to host renowned Vermont biologist, Susan Morse for a day-long program on Friday Feb 5. She presented a terrific program for everyone in the morning and then took many classes out on tracking expeditions.
4. Seventh graders have been offered the opportunity to attend the 22nd annual ADL Youth Leadership Congress in Boston this March. It appears that many of them will choose to attend.
5. Our Annual Open House was wildly successfully- the biggest crowd ever. We continue to get glowing feedback on the event.
6. With the support of the Equity Team, during the next two months the teaching staff will undertake a 3 part self-assessment around issues of race and class - and diversity in general. We hope that the process, along with some professional development in this area will help us move forward in our understanding of and ability to address any issues that arise at school.
7. Our Admission Lottery was held Feb 4 and, for the first time, we ran the lottery digitally. We use a randomizing program that took all of 5 minutes to download, randomize and upload back to our excel file! Sometimes technology is wonderful. We have 300 applicants for 33 openings thus far. Our anticipated attrition rate, at this point, is significantly lower than last year.
8. We have submitted the request to DESE to take a loan that extends beyond the term of our charter and will hear back from them within 30 days, likely sooner. Our application to USDA should be submitted on Wednesday, Feb 10 even though we have not been determined eligible to apply yet.
9. We are anticipating a visit from state Senator Humaston soon. We have asked him to write us a letter of support for our USDA application and he is very interested in visiting first. Once we have a date we will ask our Easthampton BOT members to join us.

DOMAIN COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES
2.02.16

Attending: Susannah Howe, Dan Klatz, Amy Aaron, Scott Remick, Deirdre Arthen

8:45 am – Meeting began

Topics discussed: Feb BOT meeting agenda, Domain Council spring schedule, Coordinator waiver request policy, SPED Administrator budget/timing

Feb BOT Agenda: We planned the agenda for the regular February BOT meeting: staffing changes, succession planning, Personnel: BOT role in hiring, GABS update, Site update, political update.

Domain Council Schedule: DC will meet at 8:30 AM the following dates this spring:

Wed, Feb 24
Tues, Mar 1
Tues, Mar 15
Tues, Apr 5
Tues, Apr 26
Tues, May 3
Tues, May 17
Tues, May 31
Tues, June 14

Coordinator Waiver Request: We briefly discussed Deirdre's request for a waiver from the Jan BOT meeting. Susannah and Scott will make a decision on this specific case at the next Domain Council meeting (2/24), and will also prepare a draft policy to bring to the March BOT meeting regarding such cases in the future.

SPED Administrator: As the student population grows and, with it, the number of students with IEPs and 504s, there is need for additional SPED administrative staffing. The school's budget for next year can't be finalized until we know our rent/mortgage payment. Timing is also tight, but if the BOT were to approve a position in March, the hiring process could be in April/May. We might consider hiring a full-time person who is a SPED Administrator half-time. More discussion forthcoming at the next DC meeting and the March BOT meeting...

Next Domain Council meeting: Wed, Feb 24 @ 8:30 AM

10:00 am – Meeting ended

Respectfully Submitted,
Susannah Howe

GABS Meeting Report: January 19, 2016

5:00 PM

Volunteer Resource Form

Deirdre gave us a print out of names and contact information of people who have expressed interest in BOT and/or committee service

We reviewed list and identified strong candidates for BOT membership

Committee Interest Form

Reviewed and edited form

Identified need for committee descriptions to be sent out with interest form

Recruitment Tools:

Improve school brochure with an eye towards people in the community. Ask for money at the next Board Meeting for color printing.

Next meeting: February 23, 2016

AGENDA ITEM: Recruitment effort follow up, develop GABS Committee description **Meeting ended at 6:05 pm**

**Hilltown Special Education PAC Meeting Minutes: Thursday, January 14, 2016,
6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.**

Present: Tara Winters, Jen Marshall, PAC Co-Chairs, and 5 parents

Overview: This was a general SEPAC meeting for parents to gather and discuss questions, comments, and any current issues in regards to special education at HCCPS as a group. It was noted that the Department of Secondary Education's Program Quality Assurance (P.Q.A.) will visit Hilltown the week of January 19. They have asked to speak with Jen and Tara, who will respond on behalf of the group. Members were reminded that the next meeting, a "Transition Night," will be held on Thursday, February 4, 2016, featuring three parents of HCCPS students that have transitioned to the Purples, Prisms, and/or high school, so they may share their, and their children's, experiences.

Parent Concerns and Observations:

- 1.) Least Restrictive Environment (L.R.E.): Ability for learners with special needs to stay in the classroom as much as possible. Some parents mentioned that their child was out of the classroom for a significant amount of the day and had mixed feelings about this, mentioning that though their child liked the setting, they were missing out on the whole-group experience in the general education classroom. Concerns were also shared about transitioning back into the general education classroom after spending substantial time in the special education room.
- 2.) Differentiation: Some parents expressed concern about whether there was enough differentiated instruction by general education teachers to support all learners within the classrooms. Though many thought teachers seem gifted in this area, some parents wondered if additional training is needed, and if special education teachers could spend more time in the general education classrooms instead of pulling children out for instruction.
- 3.) Communication: Some parents felt classroom teachers were not aware of his/her children's specific goal or accommodations in the IEP. They also expressed concerns about what they saw as a lack of coordination/communication between general and special education teachers. Concerns included whether there is enough support for students on IEPs in some of the general education classrooms.
- 4.) Delivery of services: A few parents questioned the delivery of special education instruction by paraprofessionals, with one parent showing their child's service delivery grid where both "sp. ed. teacher and sp. ed. paraprofessional" is listed (Prism student.) The group discussed the pros and cons of pull-out versus push-in instruction.
- 5.) Targeted instruction: Some members voiced concerns about whether specialized designed instruction, such as for reading, was being delivered consistently and systematically.
- 6.) Technology: Parents expressed that technology needs to be better integrated into the regular and special education classrooms, and some professional development is likely needed, especially to support learners so they can have more autonomy and create a toolbox to better access the curriculum (such as learning and utilizing apps on the iPad.) It was also mentioned that a student felt stigmatized using the resource room iPad as it had a bright pink cover, while others in the school did not.
- 7.) Lastly, some parents voiced concerns about the plan for school growth, noting that if there is an increase in students on IEPs, HCCPS should have a plan to support all learners, such as hiring another special education teacher and/or administrator.

Positive Notes:

- 1.) All parents expressed their support for the special education staff and their dedication and flexibility to reach all learners at HCCPS. Several parents noted the conscientious, targeted approach Amy Linnell, Gaby Blaustein, and Caitlin Florschutz have taken in their thoughtful work with children.
- 2.) Parents also expressed the fear that some special educators may feel overwhelmed and have too much on their plate - both a positive as to their willingness to review and adjust instruction, but also a negative as some worried about longevity of staff.
- 3.) Meeting students where they are at: Everyone agreed the staff at Hilltown are incredibly welcoming and meet students where they are at, including taking their interests into consideration, so kids feel safe and supported.
- 4.) Dan Klatz: Parents could not say enough about Dan, and his knowledgeable, thoughtful, and caring understanding of each of their children's unique and individual needs. Parents also worry that Dan has too much on his plate; and, about what might happen if Dan was not in this important position as he is so supportive of learners and "gets" special education. As one parent said, "He believes in our kids," to which we all agreed.

Overall, every parent agreed that HCCPS has an amazing amount of potential, but the need for focused, delicate management and thoughtful decision-making about special education is critical as the school grows and melds into its new location and potentially sees shifts in its population.

Next Meeting - NEW DATE: Thursday, February 4th, 6:30 p.m.:

Transition Night Workshop with HCCPS Parents of children that have transitioned to the Purples, Prisms, and beyond.

Come join us as we meet as a group and ask former and current HCCPS parents about their own child's transition into the Purples, Prisms, and on to high school. This is a parent/guardian/adult friend only event - no students please so parents may speak freely. Child care will be provided if needed. Please let us know as soon as possible so we can make arrangements. Hope you can join us!

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School

Personnel Committee Minutes – Monday, February 1, 2016

Present: Dan Klatz, Sam Charron, Rebecca Belcher-Timme, Steve Hoyt, Carla Clark

Regrets:

Topic	Discussion	Action (if necessary)
Hiring	<p>There is an emphasis on teachers in the current hiring policy.</p> <p>Bookkeeper, nurse, TAs have a different process.</p> <p>Summer hiring is often different due to time constraints and availability of staff members.</p> <p>Questions in the teacher session are often repetitive.</p> <p>Could teachers meet with candidates so candidate can ask their own questions?</p> <p>Could parents submit questions in advance?</p> <p>If questions are selected in advance it could be by board members and parent reps</p> <p>Parent role is not to make recommendations, simply to state strengths and weaknesses</p> <p>Does the length of the process or the process itself cause us to lose candidates?</p> <p>Could we draft set scripts for the parent piece (to eliminate potentially inappropriate questions)?</p> <p>For non-teacher hiring it should be up to the domain coordinator to appoint appropriate staff to help with the hiring.</p> <p>Teachers who work less than 50% of the time may have a different process.</p> <p>Teachers moving grade to grade is the decision of the ed coordinator</p> <p>Internal hiring of other personnel for teaching positions is done by appropriate committee</p> <p>Recruiting diverse personnel should be a goal</p> <p>Write a statement about discretion in summer hiring.</p>	<p>Get feedback from the board about their role in hiring at next board meeting.</p> <p>Get feedback from teachers (especially recent hires) about how indicative the process is of the work environment.</p>

Next Meeting: March 3