

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes – Wednesday, August 5, 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, Liz Preston, Kelly Woods, Karen Sise, Paula Ingram, Rich Senecal, Jen Matos, Sara Schieffelin, Chris Korczak
- Regrets:** Dawn Reesman; Joe Wyman
- Facilitator:** Matt
- Notetaker:** Noelle
- Guests:** (as listed in the Zoom participant information): Tim Reynolds, Amanda Costin, Amy Chapman, Andrea Hearn, Angela, AR, Beth Adel, Cait Browne, Cindy Mahoney, Dan Klatz, Emilie Woodward, Emily Lees, Gaby Blaustein, Gina Wyman, Helen Korczak, House of Fay, Jessica Morris, Jill Anderson, Jill Richmond, John Van Beckum, Joy Kinigstein, Kathleen Hulton, Kathleen Szegda, Kathryn, Laurel Loomis, Marguerite Durant, Mary Price, Meg Colenback, Myssie Casinghino, Nancy Childs, Natasha Matos, Pat Mahoney, Paula Yolles, Peter Kennedy, Polly Normand, Rachel Lauder, Rachel Maoire, Rachel Merrell, Rebecca Belcher-Timme, Sam Schroenberger, Sarah, Seana Lamothe, Tala Elia, Valerie Gintis, Vanessa Adel, Kerri Simonelli
- List keeper:** N/A because of “raise hand” function on Zoom
- Timekeeper:** Jen
- Mission statement read by:** Karen

Topic	Discussion	Action (if necessary)
Announcements/ Appreciations/ Acknowledgements	<u>Announcements:</u> <u>Appreciations/Acknowledgements:</u> Deirdre thanked all of the teachers, staff, and parents who have been so engaged in the reopening process. Matt seconded that. He thanked the administrators, teachers, staff, and families. He also thanked those serving on the Hilltown reopening committees: <u>Building Safety:</u> Nan, Gina, Mary, Emily Lees, John, and Kate Ewall (consulting school physician)	

	<p><u>Sounding Board on Schedule</u>: Gina, Paula I., Peter, Marguerite, and Paula Y</p> <p><u>Curriculum for Social/Emotional Learning and Building Community</u>: Emilie, Gaby, Jeanne, Meghan, Beth, and Paula I</p> <p><u>Teachers Working Group (with teachers from other districts)</u>: Rebecca, Gina, Andrea, John, Nan, and Cait</p> <p><u>Equity Under These Circumstances</u>: Gaby, Grace, Emilie, Beth, and Cait</p> <p><u>Optimizing Hybrid and Remote Learning</u>: Gina, Paula I., John, Peter, Rebecca, Paula Y., Grace, and Cait</p> <p><u>Passing on Meetings (method of sharing information among teachers)</u>: John and Lara</p>	
Any thank you notes needed?	None	
BOT Visibility this month?	N/A However, Deirdre pointed out how important it will be to have Board members present if there are additional meetings added to the schedule.	
Minutes		Chris moved to approve the July meeting minutes; Karen seconded; the BOT approved the minutes by consensus.
Public Comment Period	1. Emily Lees read a statement that a group of teachers prepared regarding the reopening. The statement endorsed a hybrid plan with a limited number of students attending in-person. She advocated that there be as much time spent outside as possible and that the school go fully remote when it is not possible to remain outside. She recommended	

	<p>that specialists have the ability to work remotely. These points are more fully laid out in the letters teachers submitted to the Board.</p> <p>2. Polly Normand read an email she and Peter Normand had composed to the Directors and had also forwarded to the Board. She explained that remote learning does not work for their family. She made requests about other ways to accommodate her family (e.g., a weekly curriculum sent home so that they can work with their children).</p> <p>3. Rachel Maiore pointed out the stress on everyone from the pandemic. She suggested that we work on conflict resolution. She stated that, if we are focused on social and emotional wellness, we need to acknowledge that remote learning is impossible for some families. Rachel said she would like it to be acknowledged; that would be helpful to her.</p> <p>4. Jessica Morris expressed concern that eighth graders from Hilltown will be behind their peers when they get to high school, since they will be at school only two ½ days per week. She pointed out that having so many grades in one building is generally a plus, but in this case it presents a challenge, particularly for the eighth graders.</p>	
<p>Review of Consensus Process (Deirdre)</p>	<p>Deirdre explained that the consensus process is usually addressed at the orientation for new Board members in September, because the Board does not typically have an August meeting. However, since the Board is having an August meeting, she reviewed the consensus process for the three new Board members.</p>	
<p>Approve Renewing Board Member (Matt)</p>	<p>Matt explained that Tim’s and Joe’s Board terms technically ended and they need to be reappointed to the Board (and then that can be ratified by the Cooperative at the Annual Meeting or at a Special Meeting).</p> <p>Noelle stated that reappointing Tim for a second</p>	<p>Kelly moved to approve Joe for a second three-year term to the Board; Liz seconded; Joe was approved for a second three-year term by consensus.</p>

	<p>three-year term raised the issue of his presidency and that she had concerns, which she then outlined.</p> <p>Liz expressed that she was concerned by what she was hearing. She stated that a healthy relationship between a Board and the leadership of a school is crucial; the tone of the relationship sets an example. This kind of divisive relationship described is damaging long-term. She stated that the relationship needs to be grounded in trust and that trust is compromised at this point.</p> <p>Tim responded to Noelle’s comments and stated that he wished that they had been brought to his attention earlier, which would have given him an opportunity to correct and adjust.</p> <p>It was clarified that the issue of Tim’s renewal as a Board member is separate from his renewal as Board President. Kelly moved to approve Tim for a second three-year term to the Board; Matt seconded; there were blocking concerns. A proposal was made to table this for the next Board meeting or call a special meeting.</p>	<p>Liz made a motion to table the issue of Tim’s second three-year term to the Board; Matt seconded; the matter was tabled for the next Board meeting or a special Board meeting.</p>
<p>Work From Home/Remote Work Policy (Lara)</p>	<p>On behalf of the Personnel Committee, Lara requested that the Board create an executive committee to look at who would qualify for a remote-work policy (<i>e.g.</i>, in accordance with CDC guidelines and based on factors such as age and health conditions).</p>	<p>Chris moved to authorize Matt to form an Executive Committee to create a remote-work policy; Kelly seconded the proposal; the Board approved the proposal by consensus.</p>
<p>School Reopening Schedule (Kate, Lara, Deirdre)</p>	<p>Kate explained that the first day of school will be September 14th and that the plans are due to DESE by August 10th.</p> <p>Lara discussed the process used to develop the school reopening plans. She acknowledged how difficult this</p>	<p>Liz moved to approve the Directors’ plan to submit to DESE; Matt seconded the motion; the plan was approved by consensus.</p>

	<p>is for families. The Directors put forth two hybrid plans at the community meeting last week. They modified the plans to address the logistical concerns of families with multiple children. Lara explained that the school will work with families to accommodate scheduling. She also stated that children cannot be in-person at school for full days, because the teachers and staff cannot serve kids in-person and remote at the same time and not all children in a group can be in-person at once. There is also a plan to have students who need additional help physically present in the building. The plan will be re-evaluated after two weeks. Lara then went through the plan in the Board packet.</p> <p>Lara said that there would be additional issues addressed by school reopening committees through the fall as school reopens. For example, Jen suggested that students at Mount Holyoke might be able to provide assistance and she could connect the school with those resources. Lara noted that the committees would look at all of these creative ideas.</p> <p>Board members and members of the public raised questions and concerns about various topics (<i>e.g.</i>, plans for families who cannot do remotely learning, what outdoor learning would look like, how communication will be made when plans change, how mask requirements will be enforced).</p> <p>Kate explained that the Directors would answer questions about scheduling and that a lot of other questions will be addressed in the plan submitted to DESE and then sent to the school community. Questions can also be emailed to her.</p> <p>It was acknowledged that the Board had also received a number of letters from teachers, which they had read and for which they were grateful.</p>	
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	<p>The Board discussed whether they were ready to approve the plan. Questions were presented regarding whether the plan should be to go fully remote or delay the in-person component.</p> <p>Kate explained that the plans could change from week to week based on the virus numbers and feedback they are receiving from teachers and families.</p> <p>Chris had concerns about the plan and was unable to support it, but he did not choose to block approval.</p>	
New Business	<p>Tim's appointment to a second three-year Board term</p> <p>The Board presidency</p>	
Committee Reports - Questions only	None	
Meeting Wrap-Up/ Evaluation	<p>Next Meeting: September 9, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.</p> <p>Facilitator: Matt</p> <p>Snacks: N/A</p> <p>Drinks: N/A</p> <p>Newsletter blurb: Matt</p>	
Review Action Items	Reviewed action items.	
Adjournment	Meeting adjourned at 8:59 p.m.	

Tentative Agenda Topics for September 9, 2020 Board Meeting:

Update on the Remote-Work Policy
 Reopening Plans--Updates
 Holding Equity and Justice as a Board
 Formation of a J.E.D.I. Committee
 Long-Range Planning
 Tim's Consecutive Board Term
 Board Presidency