

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes – Wednesday, Dec 13, 2023, 6:30 pm

Location: HCCPS and Zoom

Present: **In-person:** Kate Saccento, Laura Davis, Gina Wyman, Emily Boddy, Tala Elia, Matt Dube, Stacy Guifre, Kathleen Szegda, Kathleen Hulton, Ben Carlis, Lily Newman, Kylan Mandile, Tiffany Ross, Grace Mrowicki, Kelly Vogel

By Zoom: Andrew Coate

Regrets: Kate Ewall, Lisa Hamilton

Guests: **In-person:** Rebecca Belcher-Timme, Nicole Singer, Andrea Hermans

By Zoom: Carla Clark, Kerri Pollard, Rani Gold, Myssie Cassinghino, Nan Childs, Gaby Blaustein, Alex Niemec, Dana Gramp, Seana Lamothe, Kate Kamins, Zoe Klatz, Dawn Graichen-Moore

Facilitator: Matt

Notetaker: Emily

List keeper: Kelly

Timekeeper: Gina Wyman

Mission statement read by: Kate S.

Topic	Discussion	Action (if necessary)
Welcoming (read mission statement) (Matt) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Announcements, appreciations, acknowledgementsAgenda Check: Appoint timekeeper, list keeperThank You Note CheckBOT Visibility this month	Appreciations: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Tiffany thanked a number of community members who helpedLaura gave a recap of who is on the Student Support committee, and her appreciation for all the work. The first meeting was today. Agenda Check: Matt clarified that the Behavior position agenda item is a discussion only, no decisions will be made tonight. Thank you note check: Tiffany mentioned she has Thank you notes (as above) Board Visibility: Winter Solstice	

Approve minutes from previous BOT meeting	None.	Kathleen S motioned to approve November meeting minutes; Kylan seconded; the Board approved November meeting minutes by consensus.
Public Comment (Matt)	Speaker, Nan, notes that she's surprised the behavioral position is on the table when the matter hasn't been raised at any staff meetings, since the last board meeting. Notes concern when the community director was moved to coordinator - the impact on the cooperative element of the school. Position is 85k a year, while the School needs repairs, there are other needs in the school - roof, playground, school is overcrowded, lacks academic spaces, gym, cafeteria; staff lay-offs last year. Asks why we aren't working together to find creative solutions. Suggests it's time to pause and think of other solutions.	
Updates - Laura/Kate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lunch Advisory Team • Winter Fair • TA Feedback 	<p>Lunch Advisory Team: Carla Clark, Emily Boddy (board member), Megan Sirota (parent). Met recently and decided they will send a survey about the current lunch program and possible changes.</p> <p>Winter Fair: Hilltown's Winter Fair that was led by the new Community and Family Engagement Coordinator was a huge success! The event raised a net amount of \$5,183.64 (last year our net was \$2,673 and this year we even exceeded the 2019 year by a few hundred dollars)!</p> <p>TA Feedback: gathered feedback from the staff at a teacher and staff meetings. Summary: the big change has been that class TAs go to specials with the students. Feedback is that teachers have increased workload on things TAs did, especially k-5, and 2-5 where there are more students than normal. Teachers and TAs report there isn't appropriate time for planning, discussions, and confidential conversations. Solution has been to have a TA sub twice a week so teachers have planning time with their own TA. TA in music has been especially helpful.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tala asks the cost difference with sub vs having the position, for example, in the Atelier. Laura explains that it is similar, but a little less costly. This feedback will help design staffing models moving forward. Anticipate the sub will stay in place for the foreseeable future, but haven't decided how long this will remain in place. 	
JEDI, Kathleen S. (Discussion)	<p>Kathleen raises whether the board might have training to develop shared understanding - similar to cultural humility training (what teachers had in the fall).</p> <p>Kelly wonders if adding additional training materials to board orientation may feel like too many layers at one time, and would prefer something like the cultural humility training. Kathleen notes that some combination of the two might be ideal.</p> <p>Kylan suggests that many board members are receiving DE+I training already, and may feel redundant. Lily suggests that at the start of each year that there may be a review of shared definitions/concepts. Ben suggests the DEI discussions on the board would be helpful in grounding communal understanding. Grace suggests that there are concepts related to education that would be helpful for board members to understand, and that there are ways to address shared definitions without doing hours' long trainings.</p> <p>Kathleen S suggests that the Cultural Humility training is unique in the way it calls for continued self reflection.</p> <p>Kelly wonders if we could use a board meeting to have a training.</p> <p>Kathleen S suggests annual review at the start of a new year of concepts and ideas, along with resources to have some continuity. This could be in</p>	

	<p>addition to some sort of training. Suggests some form of JEDI discussion at the next retreat, and including some members of the JEDI committee. Kathleen H suggests some experience that could shift the dynamic away from the dominant culture.</p>	
<p>Committee Goals Matt D. (Discussion)</p>	<p>Personnel: 1) Review existing policies, 2) review personnel archives and organize, 3) review/develop remote work policy Facilities: Will report next time.</p>	<p>Possible next month Agenda item: Facilities' report</p>
<p>Student Behavior Support Coordinator, Kate, Laura (Presentation + Discussion)</p>	<p>Lily spoke with teachers about their ideas for solving for behavior position, and this feedback was shared at the Domain Council meeting.</p> <p>Kate adds that no formal session was arranged, as per the action item at the last board meeting.</p> <p>Lily reports that teachers/staff provided ways that a process would be inclusive, ie ways they can see a proposal, provide feedback and understand how their feedback will be held. Respondents reported that they didn't expect to be making decisions, but that they want to be part of the process in meaningful ways.</p> <p>Matt reports that this proposal is not in isolation, looked into what will be lost in order to institute this position.</p> <p>Gina notes that it was striking how surprised respondents in the conversations with Lily were that this was a proposal, and that a month has passed and there has been very little development and communication since.</p> <p>Laura notes that we recognize that an inclusive process is necessary. Powerpoint Presentation (included in the packet) gives more detail about the background and need for this position. Kate weighed in as well, to say that the way things are handled right now - in spite of everyone trying their best - is missing something at the core, isn't sustainable.</p> <p>Question is asked about whether all grade levels are eligible for suspension. All grades are eligible for</p>	

	<p>suspension.</p> <p>Kathleen H notes that the interventions that are allowed have shifted over time, making it more time consuming for staff.</p> <p>Kate S notes that they want to create processes and support that are sustainable and support teachers and families. Eg creating accountability and consequences that teachers can carry out and don't take more resources.</p> <p>Laura notes that we don't have anyone who can hold/manage the behavioral processes.</p> <p>Lily asks if there are ways to reimagine current staff to be reorganized to address some pieces of the puzzle?</p> <p>Laura notes that she feels like she has tapped into everyone's existing capacity, so it would have to be a reorganization/new structure/system. But nothing is immediately apparent where other staff could fill in, everyone giving 150%.</p> <p>Kylan asks what structures may have been in place historically that might have helped with behavioral issues? Gina responds that they did use 'buddy classrooms' eg a student could go reset as a 'helper' in a former teacher's classroom. Grace explains that efforts were made in the past to have a peer mediation team in the Prisms - the struggle was in finding interested students.</p> <p>Gina also notes that she doesn't think everyone is maxed out, hence why some teachers are asking for teacher leadership roles.</p> <p>Stacy notes about 504 + IEPs where there are behavioral components , workload will increase as IEPs + 504 increase.</p> <p>Rebecca asks - what is the skillset of the person who can help address mental health and behavioral needs, and get community and student buy-in to address this 'crisis of capacity'?</p> <p>Laura notes that behavioral support is about buy-in. Notes that collaboration is needed to address it.</p>	
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	<p>Kathleen H notes that she feels that suspension is necessary and an effective tool in helping curb behaviors. Asks how many suspendable instances happen that don't result in a suspension. Is minimizing suspensions when they are one of the only disciplinary tools we have, a reasonable approach?</p> <p>Laura notes that there are many, but it doesn't feel right suspending.</p> <p>Kelly asks about enrichment for families out of school hours - eg discussion groups, presentations, etc.</p> <p>Tiffany asks what trade-offs there are for Laura doing nearly 30 hours on behavior. Laura notes that she doesn't have adequate time to spend on other aspects of her job. Kate S. summarizes this problem which goes back many years.</p> <p>Andrew asks if the current system of response works well, but there isn't enough time to hold it, or do you think another person would bring different resources and ideas - hoping for extra set of hands or to change the system? Laura would like to see more restorative practices and preventive work, including tier 2 work.</p> <p>Lily asks what the directors see as next steps - after seeing pain points. Kate suggests that the board looking at the Director of Teaching and Learning position and wonders what is the timeline. If the board does not want to look at the role, the directors will need to reexamine how to reorg for more support and how they can work the budget. Kate S. says next step is getting feedback from teachers/staff, but it is difficult to find time to have these conversations.</p>	
<p>Attendance Policy Proposal, Laura (Discussion/Decision)</p>	<p>Laura explains that the attendance policy approved needs to remove the statement about which buttons to press when calling.</p>	<p>Tala motioned to approve the Attendance policy; Kathleen S seconded; the Board approved the attendance policy by consensus.</p>

Grievance Policies, Laura/Kate (Discussion/ Decision)	Kate asks that the board approve additional language be added to the staff AND the caregivers/student grievance policies regarding civil rights complaints.	Kathleen S motioned to approve the updated language in the grievance policies; Tala second; the Board approved by consensus.
Facilities - Roof / Playground, Kate S. (Presentation + Discussion)	<p>Facilities met to review two priorities: roof and playground.</p> <p>Had hoped to put a playground in this summer, using capital expenditures (discussion was to suggest 150k of the 310k), however the roof needs to be redone and finance decided through consensus that monetary constraints in the capital fund - improve roof summer 2024 and move playground to 2025.</p> <p>Kate spoke with the President of FoH, Sarah Rosehill and this will give FoH more time to fundraise for the playground.</p> <p>Roof Estimates will go to facilities and then to finance, to propose capital expense for the roof, which should be around 100k.</p> <p>Additional updates:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Mapping of HVAC system - zones and methods 2) Outlets will be installed in classrooms for new projectors during break 	
Board Retreat, Matt (Discussion + Decision)	Matt asking for volunteers to spearhead board retreat organizing - dates, ideas, subjects to focus on (past examples: JEDI, lockdown/pandemic debrief)	Matt and Kathleen will begin the process of organizing the retreat.
Committee Reports - Questions, Matt	None.	
Meeting Wrap-up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes Finalization 	Next Meeting: January 10, 2024 7pm Facilitator: Matt Snacks: Stacy Drinks: Lily Newsletter blurb: Andrew	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snacks + Drinks for next meeting • Newsletter Blurb • New business for next Board meeting 	New Business: Facilities	
Review Action Items	Reviewed action items.	
Adjournment	Meeting adjourned at 8:23 pm	Tala motioned to move into executive session and adjourn the open meeting from executive session; Stacy seconded; the meeting was adjourned.

Tentative Agenda Topics for the November Board Meeting:

- Board Retreat
- Facilities' committee report