

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes– Wednesday, Feb 14, 2024, 7 pm

Location: HCCPS and Zoom

Present:

In-person: Kate Saccento, Laura Davis, Emily Boddy, Tala Elia, Matt Dube, Stacy Guifre, Kathleen Szegda, Kathleen Hulton, Ben Carlis, Lily Newman, Grace Mrowicki, Kelly Vogel, Kate Ewall

By Zoom: Tiffany Ross

Regrets: Kylan Mandile (Resigned since last meeting: Andrew Coate, Lisa Hamilton, Gina Wyman)

Guests: **In-person:**

By Zoom: Sara Schieffelin, Freja Joslin, Myssie Cassighno, Debra Courage, Rani Gould, Dana Gramp

Facilitator: Matt

Notetaker: Emily

List keeper: Stacey

Timekeeper: Kate E

Mission statement read by: Tala Elia

Topic	Discussion	Action (if necessary)
Welcoming (read mission statement) (Matt) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Announcements, appreciations, acknowledgements• Agenda Check: Appoint timekeeper, list keeper• Thank You Note Check• BOT Visibility this month	Announcements, Appreciations, Acknowledgements: Agenda Check: Thank you note check: Board Visibility: Coffee Hour after the break (this week’s was canceled due to snow day)	

<p>Approve minutes from previous BOT meeting</p>	<p>None.</p>	<p>Kathleen S motioned to approve January meeting minutes; Tala seconded; the Board approved January meeting minutes by consensus.</p>
<p>Public Comment (Matt)</p>	<p>None.</p>	
<p>Updates - Laura/ Kate/Tiffany (Share/Discuss)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Long Range Plan Updates ● Staffing updates ● Admissions update ● Tuition update 	<p>Long Range Plan Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal 1 - Safe and Supportive Schools ● Goal 3 - K-8 Grade Configuration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Explained the meetings that have happened with staff, parents. Anticipates that 2-3 suggestions will come out of the process with pros/cons lists for people to understand and respond to. And next phase will start in April ● Goal 3 - Defining an “excellent arts-integrated academic program and culture” visioning <p>Staffing updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Oranges teacher - engaging in a normal teacher process, not long term sub, in order to attract the best candidates. Currently in resume review, and reaching out for initial interviews for the week after break. Ideally no more than 4 weeks for substitute, currently Zoe Klatz. ● 6-8 Special Education TA - Bailey Costin-Shaw accepted the role and started today. ● 7-8 Math TA - Prisms TA no longer at Hilltown, subs currently covering and there is a job posting on Indeed to hire new. ● Interim Behavioral Support role (discussed later in the meeting) <p>Admissions update - 40 families came to Zoom orientation; in-person open house had 40+ people</p>	

	<p>in attendance. Application levels similar to last year and there is typically a wave of applicants nearer the Feb 28th deadline. It takes a few weeks after the closing date to get letters out to families.</p> <p>New Prisms Student Behavior Reflection System - The Prisms team has been working collaboratively with Laura to design and pilot a new system that clarifies expectations for students, and gives teachers another tool to help students to reflect on their behavior. Student input was solicited prior to the pilot, and their ideas were included in the design. Teachers may assign a reflection period during lunch or recess time where students are supported to reflect on behavior that did not meet expectations, and to make more effective choices going forward. Written reflection records are shared with parents. The new system seems to be having a really positive effect. Teachers have stepped up and everyone is engaged. The Prisms team will periodically reflect on system design, and incorporate student input to make improvements.</p>	
<p>Opening Discussion/Idea Sharing Laura/Kate (Update)</p>	<p>Define what an excellent arts integrated academic program and culture looks like?</p> <p>The teachers/staff discussed this at a staff day, and it generated a lot of interesting discussion.</p> <p>BoT reflected on same. Discussion about what arts-integration means, has impacted families, how it is important.</p> <p>Members remarked on traditions and methods for engaging families. Singing, seeing the process of work over time. Discussed the impact of learning through many lenses - eg learning about Salmon involved making clay salmon, learning dances, songs, raising salmon and releasing into the river.</p> <p>Arts-integrated programming honors the whole child - both in the ways they learn, but also in utilizing many skills and interests in the study of one subject.</p> <p>Important how Hilltown honors the arts as core to education, and not secondary to the standard</p>	

	subjects.	
<p>Proposal - Interim Student Behavior Support Coordinator Laura/Kate (Discussion/Decision)</p>	<p>Proposal is included in the packet.</p> <p>Laura explains that the Director of Teaching and Learning is too broad, and behavior management is significant and is impacting ability of the Dir of Teaching and Learning to do other parts of the job. It's affecting relationships, teacher morale, impacts Kate, Tiffany and others around the school who have to take on some of the tasks.</p> <p>Initial proposal (November) led to collaboration with staff to come up with a new solution.</p> <p>Lily met with small group of teachers; Domain Council moved to after school so teachers could come; ideas were brought to teacher meetings (proposal brought in January for a discussion facilitated by Kathleen S.) - resulted in a simpler, more streamlined proposal which garnered staff feedback in order to understand goals, barriers, needs.</p> <p>This role is intended to add capacity to the school. This is a short term solution. Capacity building is long term.</p> <p>Full Time FTE. Salary is on the teacher scale, based on prior exp in schools, other therapeutic settings. Proposing a March 1 start, but will likely happen later than that. Relational, restorative, can work with families. Internal applicant would be ideal, as they'd know the community.</p> <p>This role would stay on until the end of the school year, with the hope it continues into the following year. But this would need to be reviewed, based on budget and other restructuring plans.</p> <p>This role is intended to manage student behavior support. Supporting teachers in the classroom, eg taking a student into the hall to have a conversation about behavior, observe student behaviors to strategize interventions, loop back to teachers, and communicate with parents.</p>	<p>Matt motioned to approve; Lily seconded; the Board approved by consensus.</p> <p>Laura will post the job.</p>

	<p>Kate adds that the salary implications will be elaborated on during the budget portion of the meeting. But with the departure of the Behaviorist mid year, the cost to have the interim position through the end of the year will be similar.</p> <p>BoT Discussion:</p> <p>Tala asks about Behaviorist position - will that be filled also, or left vacant? Roles seem similar and budget concerns.</p> <p>Kate responds that these are very different roles. In next budget, the behaviorist role has been removed. The school continues to consult with behaviorists. Kate cautions us not to look at this as a swap, due to budget constraints - we will be looking much more broadly at structure for the three domains, so this can all shift.</p> <p>Laura adds that the behaviorist was not intended to be student facing, but since seeing that role in action, they've realized that they need a student facing person.</p> <p>Kate E asks about teacher reaction to proposal.</p> <p>Laura explains that the teachers are in support of this role. Initial opposition pertained to the way it was proposed initially - that a consensus process wasn't followed.</p> <p>One big change with this recent proposal is that the level of credentials needed for this role has been reduced, so Laura will still be holding some of the much larger pieces (eg suspensions). Admin also took on much of the feedback from teachers and collaborated to put improved systems in place to support behaviors that have already been set in motion.</p> <p>Kelly raises concerns about attracting great candidates if it's billed as an interim position. Laura notes that they'd try to have good conversations with candidates, and to explain the intention to continue into the following year. Also notes that for people coming from non-school settings, the mid school year onboarding won't be an issue.</p>	
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	<p>Kate E asks about timing, and if it would make sense to wait until the next school year.</p> <p>Matt responds that teachers and staff agree that this is important now. Kathleen H. adds that this will be a great way to gather data and information as we think about restructuring. Lily adds that the needs are outsized and the scrutiny on schools is such that this is needed now. She emphasizes that Kate and Laura went through a long and necessary process and the need is now.</p>	
<p>LRP Updates Tiffany/Kate (Discussion)</p>	<p>Goal 1B: Cultivate a vibrant culture and community: School Culture/Family Engagement:</p> <p>Tiffany reviews the relevant LRP goals</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Managed many events this year, much done to reintroduce and reinvigorate 2. There are new and different ways family and community are engaging (mini courses, volunteering in Atelier, sending in supplies, fixing things, organizing the attic). Wide swath/spectrum of families participate. Other ongoing efforts - consistent newsletters, regular coffee hours, All School, some class parents in action. 3. This piece seems to come down to communication. People are appreciating precise, clear information - knowing how they can contribute, be helpful. This is key to reinvigorating engagement. <p>How do we do more? How do we do better? What types of events are wanted/needed? How important are the traditions/events? What is the goal of All School, are we meeting that, how can we?</p> <p>Discussion: Community - collective effervescence that comes from things like celebrations, rituals, etc. How do we get there? Likely this has happened historically.</p> <p>How do we get that sense of belonging, meaningful, important, it matters - engaging families to want to engage and uphold the values of community engagement.</p>	

	<p>Kathleen H remarks on how families were previously much more engaged in the singing at school - active participants. Uses the example of ‘throw it out the window’, how parents were included. Kathleen feels parents need to be drawn into the singing more, that type of engagement brings buy in.</p> <p>Kate E remarks that she feels there has been a distancing of parents from the school, which ultimately affects buy in, child excitement, engaging parents in reinforcing behavior.</p> <p>Lily remarks that she’d love to see the older kids in more leadership roles. Also like to see community building in new year meetings, as in parents connecting with each other.</p> <p>Reinstatement of cross class buddies supports the kids engaging with each other, but also parents meet each other through the relationships their children form.</p>	
<p>Board Retreat Recap + Follow-up, Kathleen S. (Update/Discussion)</p>	<p>Approval of Board Retreat Minutes.</p> <p>Kathleen reviewed what we did, which is included in the minutes.</p> <p>Kathleen notes that we didn’t hold the discussion on Board Culture, and presented a jam board of the things that were written down at the retreat.</p>	<p>Matt motioned to approve Board Retreat minutes; Emily seconded; the Board approved by consensus.</p>
<p>Revised FY24 Budget Kate S. (Discussion/Decision)</p>	<p>Q2 Financials need to be approved</p> <p>Fundraising income is very high - something to celebrate!</p> <p>These were looked at and approved by finance.</p> <p>Revised budgets come through because needs/expenses shift. \$2 surplus, but there will be fluctuations by the end of the year.</p> <p>The BCBA salary is not in the revised budget, but the Behavioral Coordinator prorated is in this budget, as is the new TA.</p>	<p>Matt motioned to approve Q2 financials; Kathleen S seconded; the Board approved by consensus.</p> <p>Matt motioned to approve Revised FY24 budget; Kathleen S seconded; the Board approved by consensus.</p>

FY25 Budget Planning, Kate S. (Update)	PowerPoint presentation included in packet Questions: Grace asks about ESSER funds disappearing from our budget ahead of district budgets. When do they disappear from district budgets? Unclear at this point.	
GABS Updates + Annual Meeting Emily (Discussion)	May 22nd for Annual Meeting Emily discussed GABS recruitment efforts; asked members to be in touch with GABS if they have people in mind, if they are having conversations about potential new Trustees, etc. Updated BoT that we have an exit interview process in place, questions devised by Stacey and Sara S.	Grace will put on the school calendar.
Lunch Team Update, Kate S. (Update)	Kate brought out the challenges that we are facing. The committee has decided to push the outcomes of the survey and a comprehensive look at challenges to the community to allow for feedback and questions from the community. Emily emphasized that given the challenges, the committee's priority is on how we provide the best possible options for our families with the most need.	
Committee Reports - Questions, Matt	None.	
Meeting Wrap-up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Minutes Finalization ● Snacks + Drinks for next meeting ● Newsletter Blurb 	Next Meeting: March 13, 2024 6:30pm Facilitator: Matt Snacks: Tala and Kate E. Drinks: Ben Newsletter blurb: Emily New Business:	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New business for next Board meeting 		
<p>Review Action Items</p>	<p>Reviewed action items.</p>	
<p>Adjournment</p>	<p>Meeting adjourned at 9:11 pm</p>	<p>Tala motioned to adjourn; Kate E seconded; the meeting was adjourned.</p>

Tentative Agenda Topics for the March Board Meeting: