

**Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School**

Board of Trustees Final Meeting Minutes – Wednesday November 10th, 2021, 6:30 pm

- Location:** HCCPS and Zoom
- Present:** In-person: Kate Saccento, Matt Dube, Sara Schieffelin, Kathleen Szegda, Kate Ewall, Kathleen Hulton, Daniel Klatz, Lara Ramsey, Tala Elia, Emily Boddy, Rashida Krigger  
By Zoom: Rich Senecal, Marguerite Durant, Chris Korczak
- Regrets:** Joe Wyman
- Facilitator:** Matt
- Notetaker:** Sara
- Guests:** In-person: Jodi Shaw  
By Zoom: Mary Price, Nan Childs, Melissa Flanders, Cait Browne, Myssie Casinghino, Rosehill Family, Tiffany Ross, Jenn, Jeff Dan
- List keeper:** Lara
- Timekeeper:** Kate E.
- Mission statement read by:** Kathleen S.

Topic	Discussion	Action (if necessary)
<b>Announcements, appreciations, acknowledgements</b>	<p>Matt clarified the process of BOT meetings, including overview of Open Meeting Law, process of meetings (e.g. raise hand to get on the list, BOT members engage first in conversation about agenda topics, then time allowing, the public can also comment, public can comment during public comment period); and read Shared Agreements as written up by JEDI and posted on wall of meeting room (see text of agreements in Oct. BOT meeting minutes which are included in the final Nov. packet).</p> <p>Matt thanked Kate, Lara and Rashida for an email sent to community (for details see email from Nov. 4th) which reminded school community of Community Compact as it relates to respect for community members in order to create and maintain a physical and emotional safe space for all.</p>	
<b>Any Thank You Notes Needed?</b>	None noted	

<b>BOT Visibility This Month?</b>	Events coming up in December include Winter Fair and Solstice Celebration.	
<b>Minutes</b>	No edits proposed.	Dan moved to approve the Oct. meeting minutes; Kate E. seconded; the Board approved the Oct. meeting minutes by consensus.
<b>Public Comment</b>	Jodi read a poem. Jodi shared that she had attended the Northampton School Committee meeting recently where there was a discussion about prohibiting unvaccinated children from participating in extracurricular activities. Jodi expressed her opinion that exclusion of children from these activities due to medical status is discriminatory. Jodi read another poem.	
<b>Board Goals: (Update) Matt</b>	<p>Matt thanked Committees for sharing their goals at last month's BOT meeting.</p> <p>BOT goals for 2021-2022:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Begin and progress on LRP</li> <li>2) Equity Audit</li> <li>3) Establish Performance Review Protocol for Directors</li> </ol>	
<b>Health + Safety Update: (Update) H+S Team</b>	<p>Kate shared about H and S update which was sent to parents, and is included in meeting packet. She reported that at the end of Oct. decision was made that staff and students are no longer required to wear masks outdoors except at All School due to singing. H and S team continues to meet weekly. Kate reviewed update from DESE with FAQs which was included in email to community (for details see email from Oct. 27th). Indoor mask requirements extend through at least Jan. 15th per DESE.</p> <p>Kate and Mary shared that the school will host a vaccination clinic next Wednesday Nov. 17 from 6-9pm. Siblings can come as well.</p> <p>Negative results from pool testing continus.</p> <p>Jodi asked a clarifying question about DECE guidelines. Mary reported DESE is concerned about supplies running out and has been asked to track carefully.</p>	

<p><b>GABS</b>  <b>Announcements:</b>  <b>(Update + Discussion)</b>  <b>GABS</b></p>	<p>Emily shared the process and background of how/when to bring on new members to BOT, and that this usually happens in May at the Annual meeting. Emily shared discussion GABS is having re bringing new members on mid-year and shared pros and cons of doing this (for list of pros and cons see GABS Oct. meeting minutes in meeting packet). Clarifying question asked about when BOT votes (May) and when term starts (July 1). Clarifying question about when terms end (June 30). Lara asked a question about numbers since Directors are no longer BOT members, which was a change made a few years ago. BOT can have 15 voting members, ideally <math>\frac{2}{3}</math> are parents and <math>\frac{1}{3}</math> are community members. Dan said the reason to bring someone on mid-year is to fill a hole that was lost in terms of skill set. He asked if we currently have holes that need to be filled. He asserted that it can be disruptive to group dynamics to bring someone on mid-year unless it is absolutely necessary. He reminded the team that BOT holds the charter and this is a huge responsibility. Dan said the most important thing for a BOT member to possess is the desire and willingness to work in a consensus based model. He also asserted that certain skill sets are essential for the BOT to perform its functions (i.e. someone with expertise in finance to be the Treasure and Chair of Finance, etc.). Rashida shared concerns about the use of language of “specific skill set” as feeling intimidating to some who don’t necessarily feel their skills set would be useful to the BOT. She and Emily shared personal stories about this as examples, and said now they are on the BOT they realize they do have helpful skills to contribute. Discussion about blurb that GABS put into newsletter--came up in Domaine Counsel that language in blurb was of concern to some people as they felt it devalued expertise needed by members. GABS shared that the blurb was meant as a response to feedback from the teacher listening session that the BOT is exclusive and only recruits certain kinds of people. Comments made that it is important for some BOT members to have specific skills for the BOT to function AND it is important to make the BOT feel inclusive and accessible.</p> <p>With regards to when to bring new BOT members on, Tala expressed opinion that staff wanted more transparency around process of BOT membership, and that having community members vote during annual meeting would add more transparency to the process, as opposed to BOT deciding to bring people in</p>	<p>GABS will encourage interested new potential BOT members to join a committee and attend BOT meetings for now, with the plan of proposing them at the annual meeting for vote by the community unless the need for their service arises sooner.</p>
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	<p>mid-year without input from community.          Kathleen S. spoke about importance of development of diversity on the BOT, and being thoughtful in regards to recruitment as it relates to diversity.</p>	
<p><b>Justice Equity Diversity Inclusion (JEDI): (Update + Discussion) JEDI Group</b></p>	<p>For the “JEDI Minute” Kathleen H. offered a brief presentation about Dominant Culture from a sociological perspective (see attached slide show in packet). Tied in how our Group Agreements are an example of examining and attending to culture.          Kate E. appreciated the presentation.          Dan spoke about looking at demographics of school and that it would be good to look at how dominant culture affects the demographics of the school.          Chris suggested a book, Ishmail by Daniel Quinn, that speaks to this topic.          Dan offered an example of how dominant culture has impacted Hilltown in the past and created (perceived) safety issues for some families/students.          Rashida spoke to different dominant cultures that co-exist in our area and to be aware of larger dominant culture in the country that we sometimes are not as aware of living in Western MA.</p>	
<p><b>Special Ed Update: (Update) Cait</b></p>	<p>Cait Browne, Academic Support Coordinator, shared about the new program offered through the special education department, Skylab (see slide show included in final meeting packet for details). Skylab is a classroom space where kids who are having trouble remaining in the classroom can access social/emotional and education support throughout the day. Gaby Blaustein, Zoe Klatz, and Kate Kamins are the staff.          Two avenues to use the space: 1) Response to Intervention (RTI) process to see if student would benefit from support (doesn’t need an IEP or 504); and 2) stabilization for students unable to remain in classroom.</p>	
<p><b>Open Meeting Law Webinar Highlights: (Update) Rashida + Kate</b></p>	<p>Rashida and Kate shared information about a presentation put on by the Charter School Association and Attorney’s General office about Open Meeting Laws (OML). Rashida shared slides and notes from this presentation (see slides in final meeting packet). Important to note that if there are standing agenda items, and if there is something specific that people might be interested in (like an important topic to be voted on) standing agenda item needs to be updated with more details so that people who would be</p>	

	<p>interested would know to come to the meeting.  Reviewed what needs to be included in meeting minutes. Reviewed how, when, and where meetings need to be posted and what meetings need to be posted. Reviewed process of meetings, and what can be discussed during meetings, and what cannot be discussed outside of meetings.  Question about why our meetings are not recorded.  Answer: they could be.  Question about if short-term/sub-committees fall under OML--they do.  Clarification/reminder that Committee Chairs have to send agendas for all meetings to the state 48 hours in advance of meeting per OML.  Clarification that work needs to be done and communication needs to happen during the committee meeting--committee members cannot communicate business outside of meetings.</p>	
<p><b>MCAS Update:  (Update) Lara (10 min)</b></p>	<p>Lara shared a slide show about MCAS report (see slideshow in BOT packet).  MCAS are mandated for all public school students from grades 3-8. Families can opt their students out and do so for various reasons, though this is not advised.  Because Hilltown is a small school, a small number of students can change the percentage points dramatically. Data is used to raise questions, not to answer them. MCAS was changed during COVID. 2021 test was ½ as long and tests happened at home. Data will not be used for accountability purposes, nor will the Commissioner be using it for making decisions as it has been used in the past.  Shared information about scoring. Score of 500 or better is “met or exceeds expectations”, 499 and lower is “partially met or did not meet expectations.”  Hilltown performed better than the state average in all areas (ELA, Math and Science).  In 2021 students at Hilltown had higher achievement in ELA compartment to Math at every grade level. Growth percentiles were down across the board.  Question to Lara about if there is a benefit to state not counting last year’s score? Lara thinks it is important information to look at. Some trends were repeated from past years and some were not. For example, we did better than the state average last year (COVID year), and this is not always the case. Questions about why that could be?  Questions about how we look at information regarding economically disadvantaged students, and</p>	

	<p>how we define that. Lara shared that this information helps us make decisions with regards to choosing curriculum.</p>	
<p><b>Bot Meetings-Hybrid or Remote?: (Discussion + Decision) Emily/Matt</b></p>	<p>Discussion about if we should go back to remote meetings due to barriers to participation when BOT members are remote. Comment that participation is harder due to being remote, and that having a remote option makes it more flexible for people to attend. Comment that hybrid is helpful due to accessibility. Comment that recording the meeting could be helpful so people could watch at other times. Opinions shared by many that there should be an effort for BOT members to be in person if they can be unless there are extenuating circumstances (illness, out of town, for example). Question about when we are supposed to go back to inperson--April 2022. This doesn't preclude continuing with the Zoom option, which we intend to do to make meetings accessible to community members. Kate shared we are looking into getting an Owl camera and microphone which increases the ability of remote viewers to see and hear in-person members. Currently there is no requirement for a quorum of BOT members to be present in person. That might change in April or be extended. Comment about the importance of increasing access and visibility of BOT through continuing to offer hybrid models.</p>	<p>BOT members are encouraged to attend meetings in person unless there are extenuating circumstance that prevent them from attending in person.</p>
<p><b>Long Range Plan Update: (Update) LRP Team</b></p>	<p>Kathleen is staying on LRP. LRP is in the information gathering stage currently. BOT may be a focus group for the LRP in the early winter.</p>	
<p><b>Committee Reports -- Questions Only</b></p>	<p>none</p>	
<p><b>New Business</b></p>	<p>Sub-committees need to present an overview of the work they are doing a la annual meeting reports over next few months. Non-BOT committee members should be invited to join these meetings GABS to present in December.</p>	<p>Emily will invite Sarah B, non-BOT member of GABS, to come to Dec. meeting</p>

<b>Meeting Wrap-Up/ Evaluation</b>	Next Meetings: Wednesday Dec. 15th, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. in-person and zoom Facilitator: Matt Snacks: XX Drinks: XX Newsletter blurb: Matt	
<b>Review Action Items</b>	Reviewed action items.	
<b>Adjournment</b>	Meeting adjourned at 8:47 p.m.	Dan motioned to adjourn; Tala seconded; the meeting was adjourned.

**Tentative Agenda Topics for December 15th, 2021 Board Meeting:** GABS to present overview of committee work