

**Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School**

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes – Special Meeting, Wednesday, April 27th, 2022, 6:30pm

**Present:** In-person: Kate Saccento, Kathleen Szegda, Daniel Klatz, Tala Elia, Rashida Krigger, Kathleen Hulton, Matt Dube, Sara Scheiffelin,

By Zoom: Marguerite Durant, Emily Boddy, Rich Senecal

**Regrets:** Joe Wyman, Kate Ewall, Chris Korzcak

**Facilitator:** Matt

**Notetaker:** Bill Sweet

**Guests: In person:** Gina Wyman, Rebecca Belcher-Timme

**By Zoom:** Dawn Gracian-Moore, Alex Niemiec, Amy Chapman, Andrea Hermans, Andrew Coate, Anne Schlereth, Bill Sweet, Cait Browne, Ed Welch, Emilie Woodward, Emily Endris, Jenn Stauffer, Melissa Flanders, John Abbott, Kerri Simonelli, Landon, Lisa Mascaro, Mary Price, Melissa, Myssie Casinghino, Nan Childs, Rebecca Rose-Langston, Scott Remick, Polly Normand, Acheray, Sarah Buttenwieser, Alison Bent, Monique, Zoe Klatz, Scott Remick

**List keeper:** Matt

**Timekeeper:** n/a

**Mission statement read by:** Lara

Topic	Discussion	Action (if necessary)
<b>Announcements, appreciations, acknowledgements</b>	None.	
<b>Public Comment</b>	None requested.	
<b>Open Director Position (Discussion + Decision)</b>	<p><b>Matt Dube</b> opened the meeting, called especially to discuss course of action now that Lara has accepted a position from another school district. Thanked her for her service, and noted that it is an increasingly difficult job. We now face continuing discussions about the job description.</p> <p><b>Lara Ramsey</b> read from a prepared statement, [full text available in the packet]. In summary, she said she was as surprised as anyone about her taking a new position, but she leaves the school with strong team in place. She thanked <b>Rashida Krigger</b> and <b>Kate Saccento</b> for making the work manageable, and</p>	A search committee will be formed, and chaired by <b>Kathleen S.</b>

	<p>added that the Long Range Planning Committee should be allowed to continue its work realigning the administrative roles. She expressed support for <b>Gina Wyman</b> and <b>Rebecca Belcher-Timme's</b> proposal for teacher leaders.</p> <p><b>Rebecca and Gina</b> next presented their proposal [full text available in the packet], saying that the job description of Director of Teaching and Learning encompasses more than is possible for one full-time person to reasonably do. Urgent school matters involving students often get in the way of addressing big-picture structural needs, especially those having to deal with curriculum and teacher content. At the same time, there is no pathway for teacher advancement outside of moving into an administrative role. Many teachers possess deep knowledge about curriculum and best practices and are eager for leadership opportunities, but don't want to leave the classroom. As a result, teachers often informally take on administrative and leadership responsibilities, which usually aren't officially recognized or compensated without a formal structure in place, and it can be challenging to offer professional support to colleagues in a way that feels appropriate, they said.</p> <p>They proposed compensated, formalized teacher leadership positions as a creative solution to help with the retention of experienced teachers and to keep the school running most effectively. Responsibilities could include curriculum adoption, professional development, licensure renewal, etc. This would allow the new administrator to focus on day-to-day and urgent matters, knowing that long-term curriculum and personnel goals are being tended to by experienced staff.</p> <p><b>Kate Saccento</b> spoke in support of the teacher leadership positions, noting that this touched on themes that the Long Range Planning Committee (on which Gina and Rebecca serve) has been already discussing. But time is of the essence, as administrative positions run through June 30.</p> <p><b>Dan Klatz</b> replied that while there's been discussion by the committee, there has yet to be input from staff</p>	
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	<p>and parents about the long-range plan. He said the teacher leadership proposal is strong, but the Board's sole focus right now should be on hiring a new DTL. If we fail to have someone hired in time for summertime administrative operations, the task will either fall disproportionately to <b>Kate</b> or the school will fall out of regulatory compliance, he warned. He also said that the Board needs to decide whether to hire an interim or go into the search intending to find a permanent replacement. He noted that interim positions tend to limit the pool of qualified candidates, according to one HR professional who served on the BOT previously. He suggested advertising for the best person we can find in the short timeframe, and having a backup plan if that person isn't found.</p> <p><b>Andrea Hermans (6th-grade teacher and parent)</b> said that she has taught at a variety of schools for over a decade, and agreed with Dan that advertising for an interim puts a limit on the pool of candidates. She suggested it would be better to streamline the process and get a permanent hire with a stronger skill set and understanding of the school, who can dedicate themselves to the position. She said, as a teacher, it's been hard when she has worked under interim administrators. She expressed support for Gina and Rebecca's proposal, which would streamline the position and unburden the next person to hold it.</p> <p><b>Lara</b> also said that the teacher leadership idea has been cooking for a long time, and now is an opportunity to work on a starting draft. She said she could work on it this week because it's not something that requires a board decision to do.</p> <p><b>Andrew Coate</b> an Indigos parent, expressed concern that the teacher leadership proposal might confuse families, especially those in need of special services, about how to navigate the school hierarchy. In addition, he worried that teachers saddled with these new responsibilities might not have the bandwidth to engage with more nuanced issues.</p> <p><b>Kathleen S.</b> noted the consensus seems to be that the position as it exists now is untenable, and therefore it doesn't make sense to forge ahead and recruit for the</p>	
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	<p>position as written.</p> <p><b>Dan</b> responded that he doesn't think this is necessarily about the job description per se. The position needs help and delegation, but their responsibilities should be unchanged. He said this is more an issue of having the proper amount of support staff, and not the job description itself.</p> <p><b>Kathleen S.</b> noted it could be about delegating, but it's hard to know, given the past year. In particular, the Domain Council was discussing just the sheer amount of time spent on behavior issues, which would indicate caution on simply proceeding with a permanent hire. In terms of delegation, how do you delegate matters that need to be done directly, such as disciplinary intervention? She said that everyone agrees that the position needs more support.</p> <p><b>Kathleen Hulton</b> pointed out that the Long Range Planning Committee had talked of hiring somebody to deal with behaviors and making Lara's job more than Teaching and Learning. Restructuring the job to fit Lara's strengths doesn't make that much sense anymore, because it's not going to be Lara she said. How the job is restricted might depend on the strengths of the new person.</p> <p><b>Lara Ramsey</b> said the board should decide now if this is a closing position or if it's an interim position, and then supply support.</p> <p><b>Sara Buttenweiser</b> said, having been on the Governance Committee, that she has seen how time-consuming the process can be. We should just go with the job description that still exists, and notes that collaboration and improvisation are part of the job.</p> <p><b>Dan</b> said any successful candidate has to be able to collaborate. We should see a new person working collaboratively with teachers, school administration, and the board to figure out whatever the next chapter is because it will have to be wholly new.</p> <p><b>Rebecca</b> said that it's important that the incoming candidate know what the position entails. She was on the hiring committee when Lara was hired and did not feel involved or informed as a teacher. The process</p>	
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	<p>needs to include an accurate description of the position, she said.</p> <p><b>Amy Chapman</b>, who works at a public school in Amherst, said that schools throughout the country are facing behavioral issues and kids need more support now. She suggested moving forward with the job description, but also considering drafting a new position handling and helping with student behavioral issues.</p> <p><b>Rashida</b> said that she doesn't think the description matches the actual job. It makes it appear like students are a small part when they are actually most of it.</p> <p><b>Marguerite Durant</b> agreed with the urgency but noted that the current job description is not accurate with what the day-to-day situation looks like. Who would go about rewriting it, she asked. [Response: the domain council and hiring committee.]</p> <p>There was a discussion about the roles that could be played by the domain counsel and the hiring committee.</p> <p><b>Lara</b> shared a pie chart describing how her time was split between students, caregivers, curriculum, staff, and administration. Time for students was about half.</p> <p><b>Matt Dube</b> said that the consensus appears to be that the board should have the job posted, with a revised description, and move quickly to have the search committee start the process.</p> <p>Other board members said that the support should be detailed, to not surprise the new hire.</p> <p><b>Dan</b> noted that Lara's pie chart is typical of the way things have always been and it was something she didn't know coming into the job was unfortunate, he said.</p> <p><b>Lara</b> said that the behavior support and teacher leadership components could and should be implemented separately from the discussion about the new candidate's responsibilities.</p> <p><b>Marguerite</b> responded to Dan's comments, saying the</p>	
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	<p>time of the teaching and learning position has always been split roughly this way, but support for staff has decreased as the intensity of the student part has increased. She supported the idea of a designated position for behavioral support.</p> <p><b>Matt Dube</b>, noting a consensus, said the board should move forward by forming a search committee. He said he was willing to serve, but as he only has two months left in his term, he didn't think he should. Kathleen S., as incoming president, should be. He said the intention would be to not list the position as interim.</p>	
<b>New Business</b>	None.	
<b>Meeting Wrap-Up/ Evaluation</b>	<p>Next Meetings: Wednesday May 10th, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. in-person and on Zoom  Facilitator: Kathleen S.  Snacks: XX  Drinks: XX  Newsletter blurb: Matt</p>	
<b>Review Action Items</b>	Motion to form a search committee, appointing Kathleen S. chair.	Motioned by Dan Klatz; seconded by Sara S.; Approved by consensus.
<b>Adjournment</b>	Meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.	Kathleen S motioned to adjourn; Tala seconded; the meeting was adjourned.

**Tentative Agenda Topic for the May 10th Board Meeting:**