

**HCCPS Board of Trustees
Meeting Agenda**

May 14, 2025 6:30pm

HCCPS, 1 Industrial Pkwy, Easthampton, MA 01027

Also: Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83679293502?pwd=bjZya3FvVTFmd216WikvZDVPLzhjZz09>

Meeting ID: 836 7929 3502

Passcode: 7dvsWu

The Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School was founded in 1995 as a Massachusetts Public Charter School. Our mission is:

- To engage students in a school that uses experiential, hands-on activities, the arts, and interdisciplinary studies to foster critical thinking skills and a joy of learning.
- To sustain a cooperative, intimate community of students, staff, families and local community members, which guides and supports the school and its educational program.
- To cultivate children’s individual voices and a shared respect for each other, our community, and the world around us.

Facilitator: Ben Carlis

Topic (estimated time)	Who	Action	Estimated Time
Welcoming (read mission statement): (5 min) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Announcements, appreciations, acknowledgements ● Agenda Check: Appoint timekeeper, list keeper ● BOT Visibility this month ● Approve minutes from 4/9/2025 BoT meeting 		Decision	6:30
Public Comment (5 min)			6:35
Teaching and Learning Updates (10 min)	Rebecca	Update	6:40
Head of School Updates (15 min) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Family and Community Engagement ● General School Updates 	Chris	Update	6:50

New Interim Co-Vice President Approval (5 mins)	Emily, GABS	Proposal and Decision	7:05
Head of School Evaluation and Rubric Next Steps Proposal (10 mins)	Neal Teague	Proposal and Decision	7:10
Head of School Compensation Proposal (10 mins)	Ben Carlis, Co-VP	Proposal and Decision	7:20
Budget Review (15 mins)	Finance Committee	Discussion and Decision	7:30
Student Climate Survey (15 mins)	Kathleen S. and Chris	Update and Discussion	7:45
Wednesday Kids Club Policy (5 mins)	Chris	Update and Decision	8:00
Civil Right Policies/Family Handbook Amendment (10 mins)	Rebecca & Chris	Review & Decision	8:05
Substance Use Policy (5 mins)	Chris	Update, Discussion and Decision	8:15
Committee Report questions (5 min)			8:20
Meeting Wrap-up (5 min) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Minutes Finalization ● Snacks + Drinks for next meeting ● Newsletter Blurb ● New business for next Board meeting ● Review action items 			8:25
Adjournment			8:30

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes DRAFT– Wednesday, April 9, 2025, 6:30pm

Location: Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School, 1 Industrial Pkwy, Easthampton, MA 01027;
Also by zoom

Present: Chris Kusek, Kathleen Hulton, Rebecca Belcher-Timme, Neal Teague, Steve Sell, Ben Carlis, Lily Newman, Tala Elia, Kathleen Szegda, Andrea Hermans

By Zoom: Emily Boddy, Kelly Vogel, Grace

Regrets: Kylan Mandile, Kate Aleo

Guests: Jess Williamson

By Zoom:

Facilitator: Kathleen Hulton

Notetaker: Steve Sell

List keeper: Kathleen

Timekeeper: Ben

Mission statement read by: Kathleen

Topic	Discussion	Action (if necessary)
<p>Welcoming (read mission statement) (Kathleen H.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Announcements, appreciations, acknowledgements ● Agenda Check: Appoint timekeeper, list keeper ● BOT Visibility this month 	<p>Announcements, Appreciations, Acknowledgements:</p> <p>ArtsSpark on Friday: Great opportunity to connect with Hilltown alumni, current families and other members of the community. Thank you to those who have contributed to organizing.</p> <p>Nicole had a baby.</p> <p>Thanks to DJ Theory for performing at ArtsSpark</p> <p>Thank you to everyone that helped set up Annual meeting</p> <p>Thank you to all those that attended Mass Charter Zoom on Friday</p> <p>Agenda Check -</p>	

	Board Visibility: - ArtsSpark	
Approve minutes from previous BOT meeting, 3/12/25	None.	Tala motioned to approve 3/12 meeting minutes; Lily seconded; the Board approved meeting minutes by consensus.
Public Comment (Kathleen)	None.	
Teaching and Learning Updates (Rebecca) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● General ● Professional Development ● Staffing 	Staffing Updates: Hired Emily Nan and Peter announced retirement Smith interns in TA roles Grade 1+2 / 3+4 Openings: internal candidates have opportunity to apply Also anticipate posting Special education services (eg Speech Pathologist; occupational therapist and school psychologist) Professional Development: April 2nd: New grade teams were able to meet and look at curriculum Chris and Rebecca attended Transforming Education for Social Justice Conference Jess doing behavior training with TA General Updates: Student JEDI committee launched a harmful language survey after the break. Translate Gender working with students Student events committee helped organize spirit week	

	<p>Holocaust Survivor coming to speak to the Prisms.</p> <p>Member asked about potential for opening this opportunity up to broader community</p>	
<p>Head of School Updates (Chris)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Family and Community Engagement ● General School Updates 	<p>Details included in the Domain Director Report.</p> <p>Community and Family Engagement Updates:</p> <p>ArtsSpark coming up on Friday May events: staff appreciation lunch, musical. Read the Hilltown Happenings for more details and information.</p> <p>Facilities update:</p> <p>Playground: Wetlands have expanded so need to go before the conservation committee before proceeding with work. New design will involve a rotating structure.</p> <p>Parking lot: Need to repair pot hole. Potential Hilltown parent will help with supporting this.</p> <p>General Updates:</p> <p>Climate survey is complete. Will share data at future board and faculty meetings to examine trends.</p> <p>Student government is reviewing student handbook and will be setting up a meeting with Chris and Rebecca to share findings.</p> <p>Visit from the police department during the school day today. They were onsite to support a student. Everyone is fine and safe. Please help with stemming any rumors you might here.</p>	
<p>Student Behavioral Support Systems Update, Jess and Chris (Update)</p>	<p>Chris put this on the agenda to share goals and update the board on Hilltown Behavioral Support Systems to address and support student behaviors.</p>	

	<p>Behavioral support flow chart outlines different tiers of support. Focus on tier 1 interventions will require fewer tier 2 + 3 interventions.</p> <p>Staff have a student behavior log they complete to capture behaviors happening throughout the day. Jess is able to monitor data from this throughout the day and follow up with staff and students. Working with staff on identifying and understanding the nuances in student behaviors and identifying best interventions/next steps.</p> <p>Behavior violation levels: developed to provide more clarity around specific actions and appropriate levels of response. Hope to put this document in the family handbook to provide more transparency.</p> <p>Goal is to develop systems that are focused on supports for students and less on response.</p> <p>Member shared appreciation for the transparency and clarity of systems shared.</p> <p>Member asked about putting this in handbook and whether this is something students could potentially see before the end of the year. Jess agreed this transparency will be useful to the community.</p> <p>Member shared personal experience working with Jess and appreciation for her promptness and sharing the clear process/steps she was taking.</p> <p>Member shared appreciation for the clarity these systems provide and relationships Jess is building with parents through the process. Member asked what trends she is seeing in the data.</p> <p>Jess shared that the majority of the issues are in the classroom. Because it is a new system it is hard to know whether every instance is being captured on the form.</p>	
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	<p>Member shared appreciation for the work. Acknowledged the importance of consistency and all adults being calibrated around the same norms/expectations. Wondering what the plan/next steps are to norm responses to student behaviors.</p> <p>Jess hopes to continue supporting staff in being calibrated. Including developing consistent sets of expectations among all staff.</p> <p>Chris shared that this is our best attempt to “lay the groundwork” to build consistency to both proactively mitigate behavioral issues and provide transparency. The data we collect from this will allow our school to identify trends and reflect on what we need to address and refine going forward.</p>	
<p>Board Self Evaluation: Committee Reflections on Progress toward Goals, Lily (Discussion)</p>	<p>Goal to hear from committees around alignment to board goals. These goals are for the next two years so they are a work in progress so important to hear where committees are today.</p> <p>Domain Committee: This group is focused on supporting school leaders. Work of this committee aligns with supporting goals 1 and 2. For example, developing plans and strategies with Chris and Rebecca for what pieces of information are relevant and necessary to bring to the board.</p> <p>JEDI Committee: Focused on integrating their work with other committees and initiatives to sustain work of the committee.</p> <p>GABS Committee: Aligned with goal 1/C: establish and share detailed BOT and committee roles, responsibilities, and decision-making. Kathleen shared appreciation for the work of this committee to help codify work of the board. Working on</p>	

	<p>recruitment and succession planning, as well as board feedback form for all board members.</p> <p>Personnel Committee: Focused on job descriptions and salary scales. Tied with support JEDI goals around improving transparency and equity.</p> <p>Finance Committee: will share at the next meeting.</p>	
<p>Administrative and Coordinator Staff Salary Scale proposal, Personnel Committee (Discussion and Decision)</p>	<p>Personal Committee sharing proposal for Administrative and Coordinator Staff Salary Scale proposal. Need to address the current lack of formal review process by standardizing compensation for positions such as Administrative Assistants, Community and Family Engagement Coordinator, Director of Teaching and Learning, and Finance Manager.</p> <p>Chris shared scales presented in a board packet. Teacher and TA scales are already agreed upon. However, scales for Administrative Assistants, Community and Family Engagement Coordinator, Director of Teaching and Learning, and Finance Manager are new.</p> <p>Member asked where the coordinator roles are in the scales shared. Those roles would be moved to the teacher scale. For example, Behavioral coordinator would be moved to the teacher scale.</p> <p>Chris shared that all of these roles are full FTE. If staff work a part time FTE their salary would be prorated based on the proposed scales shared.</p> <p>Member asked if there is objective criteria to decide where coordinator would fall in the teacher scale.</p> <p>Chris shared that this is something that is still administrator discretion. This would be determined during the hiring process by reviewing a candidate's relative prior experiences, credentials, etc. in order to identify appropriate scale.</p> <p>Member asked how they would address Finance</p>	<p>Kathleen S. motioned to approve policy as presented; Ben seconded; The Board approved by consensus.</p>

	<p>Manager role that may appear in leadership lane in terms of responsibilities.</p> <p>Tala clarified the Finance Manager role is a 220 day role which explains the difference between it and the teacher scale.</p>	
<p>HoS Evaluation Committee Proposal, Kathleen (Update, Discussion and Decision)</p>	<p>Kathleen shared a proposal to BoT to create an AdHoc evaluation committee. Purpose to develop a comprehensive process for the evaluation of the head of school. Goal for this year is to develop the process this year and propose it to the board for approval in the coming months. Creating a committee to work on this will help streamline the work of developing a process that supports the need to develop an HoS evaluation system. Developing a rubric, identify timeline for evaluation, determine relevant data points.</p> <p>Kathleen will serve as board chair. This committee will need to meet a handful of times over the coming months to work on the committee’s scope of work. Selection of committee members will be based on interest, background and availability. This is a later agenda item to approve members who will serve on this committee.</p> <p>Member raised concern about the timeline and lift of the work.</p> <p>Kathleen shared that DESE does have some rubrics available that the committee can use as a starting point, but there will be homework for the committee to do. She has collected various resources and has a firm idea of a direction for this work.</p> <p>Member asked about the timeline.</p> <p>Kathleen shared the goal is to have it complete by May, or June board meeting. The rubric is probably</p>	<p>Kathleen S. motioned to approve committee as presented; Neal seconded; The Board approved by consensus.</p>

	<p>element of the process that needs the most work. Perhaps could present evaluation process in two parts to help focus the work of the committee.</p>	
<p>HoS Evaluation Committee Member Selection, Kathleen (Decision)</p>	<p>Members who offered to join the committee: Neal, Tala, Steve and Kathleen</p> <p>Member asked about staff joining the committee.</p> <p>Kathleen will work to identify a staff member to join the committee.</p>	<p>Lily motioned to approve the committee as proposed; Kathleen S. seconded; The Board approved by consensus .</p>
<p>Charter School Funding/MCPSA Call to Action Update, Chris and Lily (Update and Discussion)</p>	<p>Chris wanted to reserve time to update the call to action he shared with the school community. Common theme that there are signals at the state level that are concerning charter schools and potential change in climate. Currently 9% is the cap for sending districts, a potential bill could limit that to 5%. Our school community had a great response to this potential concern.</p> <p>Member shared that students need choices. Western MA needs a representative on the board to ensure the region has representation.</p> <p>Chris shared that the focus is not on battling against local school districts, but ensuring that Hilltown is able to continue to do work in support of its mission.</p>	
<p>Wednesday Dismissal Time Proposal, Chris and Rebecca (Discussion and Decision)</p>	<p>Rebecca shared ongoing concern about time on learning and after care requirements for current early dismissal. Proposal also includes a staggered dismissal time throughout the week. Goals will be to increase time on learning for our elementary students; Reduction of duration of fee-based after school care necessary for K-5 families; and Supports the potential for a full subsidy of Wednesday after-school care for</p>	<p>Tala motioned to approve the new time dismissal proposal; Lily seconded; The Board approved by consensus.</p>

	<p>families that qualify. Currently, families that qualify receive 1/2 discount on all after school activities, including Wednesday Kids Club.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The clearer staggered dismissal will help alleviate congestion in the parking lot that causes unsafe conditions <p>Chris mentioned the listening session was very helpful in informing this proposal.</p> <p>Member shared that transportation issues came up.</p> <p>Chris shared that Easthampton bus is shared with Smith/Voc. This Wednesday dismissal time will still allow students to take the yellow bus at 3. Students would also have to wait until 3pm for the PVRTA on Wednesday.</p> <p>Member asked for clarification around the need for students to have to stay until 3, and attend Kids Club, on Wednesday in order to take a bus.</p> <p>Chris clarified there will be a proposal to make kids club accessible to any family that needs it on Wednesdays to help with transportation.</p> <p>Member asked question about time on learning.</p> <p>Chris shared that time on learning will go up in the aggregate in the proposed schedule.</p> <p>Member asked about the staggered schedule.</p> <p>Chris shared that the current system is not effective and the proposal will allow enough time for the K-4 students to leave before the upper grades come out. The hope is this will ease congestion.</p> <p>Kathleen shared an appreciation for the clear messaging this will provide.</p>	
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<p>New member approval, Emily (Decision)</p>	<p>Emily proposed approving Lauren Ames, following approval at the Annual Meeting.</p> <p>Vote was taken by roll.</p> <p>Next step is that Emily will work with Chris to have Lauren approved by the state.</p>	<p>Kathleen Hulton Neal Teague Kate Aleo Steve Sell Ben Carlis Lily Newman Tala Elia Kelly Vogel Kathleen Szegda Emily Boddy</p>
<p>Stipend Policy Proposal, Personnel Committee (Discussion and Decision)</p>	<p>Revisiting a proposal from 2016 around stipends for staff work outside regular contractual hours. Duties such as: Additional Teaching Duties for 2025/26 the rate will be \$42/hr (based on step 6 masters rate) as the rates have not yet included in the salary scale review process, TA Duties & Chaperones (this is a new category) Extracurricular Stipends, Paraeducator Stipends. These rates will be a fixed rate, not hourly. Goal will be to revisit this in a couple years.</p>	<p>Neal motioned to approve the stipend policy proposal; Ben seconded; The Board approved by consensus.</p>
<p>Committee Reports - Questions, Kathleen H.</p>	<p>None.</p>	
<p>Meeting Wrap-up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Minutes Finalization ● Snacks + Drinks for next meeting ● Newsletter Blurb ● New business for next Board meeting 	<p>Next Meeting: <i>Wednesday, May 14 at 6:30pm</i></p> <p>Facilitator: Kathleen H Snacks: Neal Drinks: Kathleen S. Newsletter blurb: Emily</p> <p>New Business:</p> <p>Proposal from the Ad Hoc HoS Evaluation committee Presentation of school climate meeting Proposal for new Kids Club subsidy</p>	

	Draft budget for discussion	
Review Action Items	Reviewed action items. Kathleen will follow up with staff about joining the Head of School Evaluation Committee	
Adjournment	Meeting adjourned at 9:00pm	Kathleen motioned to adjourn; Lily seconded; the meeting was adjourned.

DRAFT



Proposal to the Board of Trustees
From
GABS Committee

Date: May 14, 2025

Name of Proposal: Proposal to name an interim co-VP

Priority Level: High

Approximate time needed for discussion: 5 mins

Proposal to be presented by: Emily Boddy, Chair GABS

Committee members drafting proposal: Emily Boddy, Chair; Kate Aleo, Member; Sara Scheiffelin, Parent/community; Lindsay Fogg-Willits, Parent/community

Text of proposal:

GABS proposes that Tala Elia be approved as interim Co-VP, alongside Ben Carlis.

Goals to be achieved by proposal:

As set forth in the Board Leader Succession plan, one of our co-VPs, Lily, has moved into the interim President role. As such, a new co-VP needs to be named. Tala has been in the role of VP and President, and thus she is in the best position to join the board leadership team through this transition.

Potential problems/dissenting views:

None anticipated.

Additional notes:



Proposal to the Board of Trustees
From
Interim Board President, Lily Newman

Date: May 14, 2025

Priority Level: High

Proposal to be presented by: Neal Teague, Board Member

Background:

Given the BOT leadership transition and the reality that our Head of School (HOS) has been working diligently towards three clear and specific goals all year and to implement the responsibilities in his job description and the Long Range Plan, the focus of his evaluation is clear even without a finalized, comprehensive leadership rubric.

Additionally, the top priorities for an effective evaluation for our HOS are clear criteria, which we have as noted above, clear and appropriate sources of feedback, data and evidence, and a transparent process. Therefore while we want a full rubric in place for goal setting and reflection and feedback going forward, the rubric can wait to be finalized.

After consulting with the HOS and gathering updates on the rubric process to date, the Interim President plans to take the approach below.

This request is for BOT approval of the adjusted timeline for the rubric development and the timing for evaluation review and vote.

Evaluation Steps:

1. The President will form an advisory group for the HOS evaluation, to advise the President on the process and details to ensure the Head of School evaluation is thorough and thoughtful, as the rubric and process is still under development.
2. Members in addition to Interim Board President, Lily Newman, include Board Vice President Ben Carlis, and Board member Neal Teague. Other members advising on the rubric may also join subject to availability.
3. The rubric will be ready for approval by the Board at the July meeting.
4. The Interim President will complete the full evaluation and report to be shared and voted on at the September Board meeting.

In the future the goal will be to complete the evaluation in June to account for any summer transitions or needs and to ensure the HOS has the most timely feedback possible.



Proposal to the Board of Trustees
From
Interim Board President, Lily Newman

Date: May 14, 2025

Priority Level: High

Proposal to be presented by: Ben Carlis, Vice President, on behalf of Lily Newman and as part of Board Executive Leadership

Background: The Head of School position was set for one year at a salary carefully considered from the historical vantage point of the co-director model and with the explicit intention of revisiting the contractual details, roles and responsibilities, and associated compensation in advance of year two.

Enclosed is a proposal submitted to the Board President by the Head of School and passed on to me as Interim President. It outlines both a salary increase for FY26 and steps to follow over multiple years with justification for the proposal and high-level information about schools that could be compared.

While more work is needed on the longer-term compensation plan and consideration of a multi-year trajectory and contract, a significant raise is warranted in line with the Head of School responsibilities and realities, including supervision and oversight of all other leaders, and in comparison with both HCCPS salaries and similar charters in the region.

After negotiations with the President and Head of School, consultation with the Finance Manager who updated the budget, and budget review and approval by the Finance Committee, I propose the following:

Proposal:

1. Salary increase for FY26: 7% for a total of \$128,400
Rationale: Meet a little over halfway from the planned raise of 5% to the HOS request for 8.8%, to 7%.
2. Multi-year pay scale and steps: research during the fall and proposal by end Jan. 2026
Rationale: We need to do an official landscape analysis and consider how we can sync this up with similar reviews of staff pay. That requires more time and a dedicated committee (e.g., Personnel).
3. FY26 Head of School Contract: Renew for one year and evaluate whether multiyear makes sense as part of the research for #2.
Rationale: Many leaders have one year contracts and there may be other more appropriate ways to establish elements of the security and trajectory of a multi-year contract. We need more time to assess implications.



See Figure 1 attached for the Head of School's original proposal.

Figure 1: Original Proposal

Proposal to the Board of Trustees
From
Head of School

Date: May 14, 2025

Priority Level: High

Proposal to be presented by: Chris Kusek

The Head of School proposes a structured, transparent salary scale for the school's top leadership role to ensure alignment with Hilltown's values of equity, consistency, and fiscal responsibility. This proposed 6-step compensation system addresses the absence of a formal growth trajectory for current school leadership in the new governance model by establishing clear benchmarks informed by current regional salary data.

It includes a targeted adjustment in the second year to bring compensation more quickly in line with peer institutions, followed by gradual increases tied to performance. This approach ensures that Hilltown remains competitive in attracting and retaining strong leadership while supporting long-term financial planning.

Goals to be Achieved:

- Promote equity, transparency, and long-term sustainability in compensation practices.
- Support recruitment and retention through competitive, structured salary scale for school leadership.
- Establishes a clear 6-step salary progression for the Head of School role at Hilltown that is anchored in current regional compensation data (MCPSA 2024–25).

1. Equity

Western MA charter schools (<500 students):

- Salaries range from \$120K to \$179K
- Median range: \$150K–\$159K
- Hilltown target: ~ \$155K by Step 6 (midpoint of median range)

2. Sustainability

- Step increases average ~4.5% annually
- Predictable for budgeting

3. Entry Adjustment



- Larger adjustment from current salary to new Step 2 (8.8%) corrects for conservative initial entry salary

Step	Salary	% Increase
1	\$125,000	–
2	\$130,625	4.5%
3	\$136,497	4.5%
4	\$142,642	4.5%
5	\$149,081	4.5%
6	\$155,840	4.5%

* Proposed step scale movement to next step contingent on satisfactory Board evaluation.

** Scale will be reviewed for cost of living adjustments every three years in line with all other salary scales

Regional Benchmark Snapshot (MCPSA 2024–25)

Salary Range	# of Schools
\$120K–\$129K	1
\$130K–\$139K	1
\$140K–\$149K	1



\$150K–\$159K (Median)	1
\$160K–\$169K	2
\$170K–\$179K	1

Total sample: 7; *Source: MCPSA Compensation Survey; Filter: Western MA schools; <500 students*

Conclusion

- Compensation proposal aligns with regional data
- Promotes retention and transparency
- Encourages thoughtful investment in leadership

Potential Issues / Dissenting Views:

- Budget impact over time: While future annual increases are consistent and predictable, the immediate impact and cumulative effect over six years require careful long-term budgeting.
- Limited benchmark data: The MCPSA dataset includes only 7 Western MA schools, which may have unique contexts and circumstances. This can limit the strength of comparisons and makes it harder to assess true market parity.
- Evaluation-based advancement: Tying salary increases to Board evaluations introduces the need for a consistent, objective, and well-documented process to ensure fairness across years and changing Board membership.

FY26 Budget Presentation

May, 2025

Overview

Hilltown's FY26 budget reflects modest growth in core revenue while accounting for increases in personnel expenses and the phase-out of temporary pandemic-related funding. The approach is conservative and prioritizes sustaining essential programs and staffing.



July
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Broad Overview

- **FY26 continues stable enrollment** and modest per-pupil tuition increases.
 - **Total income remains relatively flat** despite the expiration of several temporary grants.
 - **Increases in personnel costs** align with step increases, grade restructuring, and programming changes.
 - **The budget remains mission-aligned** and responsive to ongoing operational needs.
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Main Revenue Drivers

- **Projected Overall state tuition increase of \$137,169 (+3.6%)**, serving as the primary source of revenue.
 - **Most DOE grant allocations** (Title I, II, IV) are consistent with prior years.
 - **ESSER III and Safe & Supportive Schools grants** are **fully phased out** in FY26.
 - **DESE Competitive grant applications totaling over \$20,000** (e.g., *Civics Action Project*, *PRISMS Reading Grant*) have been or will soon be submitted, but are **not included in the proposed FY26 budget**, as decisions are still pending. If awarded, they will support enhanced programming without impacting the base budget.
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Main Expense Drivers

- **Teacher salaries** rose by ~**%, primarily due to step increases & programmatic restructuring (Math specialist, Drama teacher, related service providers).
 - **Director and administrative staff costs** rose modestly with board-approved increases.
 - **Professional development spending** continues to support teacher growth and school-wide initiatives, including training related to curriculum integration, behavior strategies, and diversity/equity.
 - **Curriculum expenses** include targeted investments in humanities, SEL, and civics programming and reflect alignment with school priorities and potential external grant support.
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Thank you!
Any questions?

41	Workers Compensation						15,727	16,199
42	College Credit Reimbursement						3,000	3,000
	Total Personnel Costs						3,340,457	3,560,215
	Consultants and Outside Services							
43	Administrative Data Management System/Services						25,000	7,000
44	Administrative Consultant						11,000	5,000
45	Auditor						16,500	17,000
46	Curriculum Consultants						600	6,000
47	FSA/HRA Administrative Cost						2,600	2,678
48	Legal Fees						10,000	10,000
49	Payroll Service						4,223	4,350
50	Professional Development						8,000	15,000
51	SPED Contractors - PT, psychologist						120,000	25,000
52	Summer SPED services						4,760	5,000
	subtotal						202,683	97,028
	Occupancy							
53	Cleaning Services						55,702	57,373
54	Copier Rental						6,000	6,180
55	Electric						26,000	26,780
56	Elevator Maint						5,000	5,150
57	Fire/Sprinkler Alarm Services						3,000	3,090
58	Heat						10,000	10,300
59	HVAC Maint						10,000	10,300
60	Insurance						39,983	41,182
61	Interest Expense USDA						85,251	83,544
62	Internet						4,500	4,635
63	Landscaping						8,000	8,240
64	Minor Repair/Maintenance						30,000	30,900
65	Plowing						8,500	8,755
66	Telephone						1,200	1,236
67	Trash Removal						6,684	6,885
68	Water Sewer Fees						3,500	3,605
	subtotal						298,321	308,156
	Supplies							
69	Educational Supplies						45,000	46,000
70	Food						1,000	1,030
71	Household Supplies						5,750	5,923
72	Health & Safety Supplies						3,600	3,708
73	Office Supplies						4,750	4,893
74	Playground supplies						1,000	1,030
75	Postage						500	514
76	Printing						500	515
77	Testing/Evaluation Supplies						6,760	6,963
	sub total						68,860	70,575
	Equipment							
78	Chromebook Replacement						7,269	8,000
79	Furnishings						1,500	1,500
80	Minor Equipment<\$500 ,						12,500	1,500
81	SPED Equipment						3,000	3,000
82	Tech Repair/Replacement						10,000	10,000

	subtotal								34,269		24,000
	Grant Funded Expenses										
83	FOH Rolling Arts/ Class Grants/Kiln								500		0
	subtotal								500		0
	Miscellaneous										
84	Advertising								3,000		3,000
85	BOT Discretionary Fund								500		500
86	Community Domain Expenses								3,844		3,750
87	Sunshine/Staff Appreciation								1,500		1,000
88	Community Service Projects								500		500
89	Director's Discretionary Fund								2,500		2,000
90	Field Trips								4,500		4,500
91	Fundraising Expenses								1,400		1,500
92	Graduation Expenses								1,500		1,800
93	Kids Club Program Expenses								1,500		1,500
94	MCPSA Dues (.3% of state tuition dollars)								10,905		11,787
95	Miscellaneous								7,000		7,000
96	School lunch expense								20,000		20,000
97	Special 6-8th grade Trip Expenses								12,000		10,000
98	SPED/Medical Contingency								0		25,000
99	Student Activity Expenses (dances, sports, choirs, drama)								10,000		5,000
	subtotal								80,649		98,837
97	Total operating expenses								4,025,739		4,158,810
98	Over/Under								50,000		(0)
	Non-cash liability-depreciation								106,385		104,773
	Principal payment from Fund Balance								61,293		63,000

Hilltown Cooperative Charter School Report - Revenues & Expenditures vs. Budget July 2024 through March 2025

	Jul '24 - Mar 25	Budget	\$ Over Budget	% of Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense				
Income				
State Sources				
Per-Pupil Revenue	2,817,159	3,791,907	-974,748	74%
Total State Sources	2,817,159	3,791,907	-974,748	74%
Federal Grants-DESE Administer				
ESSER III 119	1,440	1,440		100%
Safe & Supportive Schools (335)	6,600	10,000	-3,400	66%
SPED 262 Early Childhood	797	797		100%
SPED 240	45,795	45,795		100%
SPED 274				
Teacher Quality 140	3,514	3,514		100%
Title I 305	22,628	22,628		100%
Title IV	10,000	10,000		100%
Total Federal Grants-DESE Administer	90,774	94,174	-3,400	96%
Friends of HCCS Grant				
FOH Rolling Arts Grants	1,426	500	926	285%
Friends of HCCS Grant - Other	128			
Total Friends of HCCS Grant	1,554	500	1,054	311%
Private Grants				
MA Cultural Council		5,000	-5,000	
Total Private Grants		5,000	-5,000	
Fundraising Income				
Field Trip Fund	4,776	4,776		100%
Winter Fair	8,382	8,382	-0	100%
Total Fundraising Income	13,158	13,158	-0	100%
Other sources				
Earnings on Investments	19,906	20,000	-94	100%
School Lunch Receipts	17,010	15,000	2,010	113%
Special Trip Receipts				
Prisms Special Trip Receipts	9,107			
Purples Special Trip Receipts	3,156			
Special Trip Receipts - Other		12,000	-12,000	
Total Special Trip Receipts	12,262	12,000	262	102%
SPED Medicaid reimbursement	2,921	6,000	-3,079	49%
Total Other sources	52,099	53,000	-901	98%
Kid's Club Income	83,966	92,000	-8,034	91%
Student Activity Fees	25,133	23,000	2,133	109%
Miscellaneous Income	3,410	3,000	410	114%
Total Income	3,087,253	4,075,739	-988,486	76%
Gross Profit	3,087,253	4,075,739	-988,486	76%
Expense				
Personnel Costs				
Personnel				
Professional Educational Staff	950,794	1,612,097	-661,303	59%
Paraprofessional Educ. Staff	318,309	451,459	-133,150	71%
Administrative Staff	336,665	385,344	-48,679	87%
Directors	172,357	224,901	-52,544	77%

Hilltown Cooperative Charter School
Report - Revenues & Expenditures vs. Budget
July 2024 through March 2025

	Jul '24 - Mar 25	Budget	\$ Over Budget	% of Budget
Kids' Club Staff	49,792	69,247	-19,455	72%
Stipends - Student Activities	5,174	7,000	-1,826	74%
Stipends - Program	14,985	40,000	-25,015	37%
Longevity Pay	16,997	16,998	-1	100%
Total Personnel	1,865,073	2,807,046	-941,973	66%
Payroll Taxes				
FICA	39,896	57,849	-17,953	69%
Medicare	26,298	40,702	-14,404	65%
PFML Tax	7,920	10,000	-2,080	79%
SUTA	4,855	8,421	-3,566	58%
UHIC	2,686	2,713	-27	99%
Total Payroll Taxes	81,655	119,685	-38,030	68%
Fringe Benefits				
College Credit Reimbursement	1,000	3,000	-2,000	33%
HRA Benefit	56,680	65,000	-8,320	87%
Health Diversion	16,119	20,000	-3,881	81%
Health insurance	243,396	310,000	-66,604	79%
Worker's Compensation Insurance	14,359	15,727	-1,368	91%
Total Fringe Benefits	331,554	413,727	-82,173	80%
Total Personnel Costs	2,278,282	3,340,458	-1,062,176	68%
Consultant & Other Svcs-Fixed				
Administrative Consultant		11,000	-11,000	
Admin Services/Data Managemnt	15,734	25,000	-9,266	63%
Annual Audit	16,500	16,500		100%
FSA/HRA Service	1,527	2,600	-1,073	59%
Payroll Service	3,434	4,223	-789	81%
SPED Contractors	107,023	120,000	-12,977	89%
SPED Summer Services	4,760	4,760		100%
Total Consultant & Other Svcs-Fixed	148,978	184,083	-35,105	81%
Consultant & Other Svcs				
Curriculum Consultants	585	600	-15	97%
Legal Fees	5,509	10,000	-4,491	55%
Staff Development	8,726	8,000	726	109%
Total Consultant & Other Svcs	14,820	18,600	-3,780	80%
Occupancy				
Cleaning Services	33,338	55,702	-22,364	60%
Copier Rental	4,382	6,000	-1,618	73%
Electricity	16,237	26,000	-9,763	62%
Elevator Maintenance	3,045	5,000	-1,955	61%
Fire/Sprinkler Alarm services	1,684	3,000	-1,316	56%
Heat	8,248	10,000	-1,752	82%
HVAC Maintenance	5,570	10,000	-4,430	56%
Insurance-Liability/Propty/Auto	39,983	39,983		100%
Interest Expense - USDA Loan	64,096	85,251	-21,155	75%
Internet	2,200	4,500	-2,300	49%
Landscaping	3,171	8,000	-4,829	40%
Minor Repair/Maintenance	20,879	30,000	-9,121	70%
Plowing/Snow Removal	8,620	8,500	120	101%
Telephone	715	1,200	-485	60%
Trash Removal/Recycling	4,726	6,684	-1,958	71%
Water/Sewer	2,489	3,500	-1,011	71%
Total Occupancy	219,382	303,320	-83,938	72%

Hilltown Cooperative Charter School
Report - Revenues & Expenditures vs. Budget
 July 2024 through March 2025

	Jul '24 - Mar 25	Budget	\$ Over Budget	% of Budget
Supplies				
Educational Supplies/Textbooks				
*Atelier supplies	2,126	2,500	-374	85%
*Blues Ed Supps	453	600	-147	75%
*Indigos Ed Supplies	321	600	-279	53%
*Greens Ed Supps	536	630	-94	85%
*Yellows Ed Supps	443	600	-157	74%
*Oranges Ed Supps	199	660	-461	30%
*Reds Ed Supps	143	660	-517	22%
*Purples Ed Supps				
Purples - STEM	533	510	23	104%
Purples - ELA/HUM	53	510	-457	10%
Total *Purples Ed Supps	586	1,020	-434	57%
*Prisms Ed Supps				
*Prisms ELA	433	443	-9	98%
*Prisms Math	258	443	-184	58%
*Prisms Science	86	443	-357	19%
*Prisms Social Studies	74	443	-368	17%
Total *Prisms Ed Supps	851	1,770	-919	48%
*Minicourses	92	400	-309	23%
*Music/movement supplies				
*Music Supplies - K-5	16	375	-359	4%
*Music Supplies - 6-8	53	285	-232	18%
Total *Music/movement supplies	69	660	-591	10%
*Physical Education Supplies	148	875	-727	17%
*SPED Ed Supps	3,272	3,000	272	109%
*Reading Specialist Supplies	241	300	-59	80%
*Other Ed Supplies/Textbooks**	14,607	25,725	-11,118	57%
Educational Supplies/Textbooks - Other				
Total Educational Supplies/Textbooks	24,087	40,000	-15,913	60%
Food and Supplies		1,000	-1,000	
Health & Safety Supplies	2,248	3,600	-1,352	62%
Household Supplies	4,176	5,750	-1,574	73%
Office Supplies	3,683	4,750	-1,067	78%
Playground Supplies	267	1,000	-733	27%
Postage	239	500	-261	48%
Printing and Reproduction	79	500	-421	16%
Testing & Evaluation Supplies	3,833	6,760	-2,927	57%
Total Supplies	38,613	63,860	-25,247	60%
Equipment				
Chromebook Replacement	7,269	7,269	0	100%
Furnishings/Rugs	811	1,500	-689	54%
Minor Equipment	6,047	12,500	-6,453	48%
SPED Equipment	1,816	3,000	-1,184	61%
Tech Repair/Replacement	6,412	10,000	-3,588	64%
Total Equipment	22,355	34,269	-11,914	65%
Grant-funded expenses				
Friends of HCCS Grant Expense				
FOH Rolling Arts Grant Expense		500	-500	
Total Friends of HCCS Grant Expense		500	-500	
MA Cultural Council Grant	-5,000			
Total Grant-funded expenses	-5,000	500	-5,500	-1,000%

Hilltown Cooperative Charter School
Report - Revenues & Expenditures vs. Budget
July 2024 through March 2025

	Jul '24 - Mar 25	Budget	\$ Over Budget	% of Budget
Other expenses				
Advertising	480	3,000	-2,520	16%
BOT Discretionary Fund		500	-500	
Community Domain Expense	2,108	3,844	-1,736	55%
Community Service Projects	45	500	-455	9%
Graduation Expenses		1,500	-1,500	
Field trips				
Indigos Field Trips	295	681	-386	43%
Blues Field Trips	295	681	-386	43%
Greens Field Trips	840	814	26	103%
Yellows Field Trips	840	814	26	103%
Oranges Field Trips	303	755	-453	40%
Reds Field Trips	303	755	-453	40%
Field trips - Other				
Total Field trips	2,875	4,500	-1,625	64%
Fundraising Expenses	1,279	1,400	-121	91%
Kid's Club Food/Supplies	236	1,500	-1,264	16%
MCSA Dues	10,905	10,905		100%
Miscellaneous Expenses	4,946	7,000	-2,054	71%
School Lunch Expense	20,957	20,000	957	105%
SPED Contingency				
Special Trip Expenses				
Prisms Special Trip Expense	6,080		6,080	100%
Purples Special Trip Expenses	2,080		2,080	100%
Special Trip Expenses - Other		12,000	-12,000	
Total Special Trip Expenses	8,160	12,000	-3,840	68%
Sunshine/Staff Appreciations	431	1,500	-1,069	29%
Student Activity Expenses	6,846	10,000	-3,154	68%
Total Other expenses	59,269	78,149	-18,880	76%
Directors' Discretionary Fund		2,500	-2,500	
Total Expense	2,776,698	4,025,739	-1,249,041	69%
Net Ordinary Income	310,554	50,000	260,554	621%
Other Income/Expense				
Other Expense				
Depreciation Expenses	79,789	106,385	-26,596	75%
Board Designated Expenditures				
BOT Appvd Improvement Projects		50,000	-50,000	
Total Board Designated Expenditures		50,000	-50,000	
Total Other Expense	79,789	156,385	-76,596	51%
Net Other Income	-79,789	-156,385	76,596	51%
Net Income	230,766	-106,385	337,151	-217%

Hilltown Cooperative Charter School
Balance Sheet
As of March 31, 2025

	<u>Mar 31, 25</u>	<u>Dec 31, 24</u>	<u>Mar 31, 24</u>
ASSETS			
Current Assets			
Checking/Savings			
Easthampton Savings			
ESB-General Reserve x0819	228,707	225,910	217,538
ESB Checking - XXXXX4269	386,188	513,665	342,447
ESB-Capital Reserve x1886	263,582	260,359	331,174
Total Easthampton Savings	<u>878,477</u>	<u>999,934</u>	<u>891,158</u>
Total Checking/Savings	878,477	999,934	891,158
Other Current Assets			
Suspense	-150	-150	0
Due from employees	0	0	0
Prepaid Expenses	0	0	849
Security Deposit	4,631	4,831	4,831
Total Other Current Assets	<u>4,481</u>	<u>4,681</u>	<u>5,680</u>
Total Current Assets	882,958	1,004,615	896,838
Fixed Assets			
Property 1-3 Industrial Pkwy			
Building	3,317,751	3,317,751	3,317,751
Land	472,975	472,975	472,975
Total Property 1-3 Industrial Pkwy	<u>3,790,726</u>	<u>3,790,726</u>	<u>3,790,726</u>
Accum. Depreciation - Building	-669,197	-649,860	-591,848
Property Improvements	346,218	288,137	191,806
Accum. Dep - Property Imprvmnts	-172,863	-166,104	-145,665
Property and Equipment			
Classroom Equip./Furnishings	34,508	34,508	34,508
Accumulated Depreciation - F&E	-32,213	-31,713	-30,013
Total Property and Equipment	<u>2,296</u>	<u>2,795</u>	<u>4,495</u>
Total Fixed Assets	<u>3,297,179</u>	<u>3,265,695</u>	<u>3,249,513</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>4,180,137</u>	<u>4,270,310</u>	<u>4,146,351</u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY			
Liabilities			
Current Liabilities			
Accounts Payable			
Accounts Payable	36,971	52,654	26,232
Total Accounts Payable	36,971	52,654	26,232
Credit Cards			
American Express	14,578	1,019	706
Capital One	220	0	3,469
Total Credit Cards	14,798	1,019	4,175
Other Current Liabilities			
Deferred Revenue - Grants	742	742	1,058

Hilltown Cooperative Charter School
Balance Sheet
As of March 31, 2025

	<u>Mar 31, 25</u>	<u>Dec 31, 24</u>	<u>Mar 31, 24</u>
Payroll Liabilities			
403B Plan Payable	0	0	1,264
Dental Plan Payable	-478	-395	-452
Employee Health	-8,705	-5,669	-3,568
Employee Life	226	226	226
MA Retirement	-32	-32	-32
Sect 125 - FSA	-4,454	-4,314	-5,476
Total Payroll Liabilities	<u>-13,442</u>	<u>-10,183</u>	<u>-8,038</u>
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>-12,701</u>	<u>-9,441</u>	<u>-6,980</u>
Total Current Liabilities	39,069	44,232	23,426
Long Term Liabilities			
Note Payable - USDA	3,082,173	3,097,548	3,143,047
Total Long Term Liabilities	<u>3,082,173</u>	<u>3,097,548</u>	<u>3,143,047</u>
Total Liabilities	3,121,242	3,141,780	3,166,473
Equity			
General Reserve Account	225,910	225,910	212,227
Res'd for Capital Expenditures	260,359	260,359	319,053
Contingency Fund	50,000	50,000	50,000
Investments in Fixed Assets	94,571	94,571	142,767
Undesignated Fund Balance	197,029	197,029	68,834
Net Income	231,027	300,661	186,997
Total Equity	<u>1,058,895</u>	<u>1,128,530</u>	<u>979,878</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u><u>4,180,137</u></u>	<u><u>4,270,310</u></u>	<u><u>4,146,351</u></u>



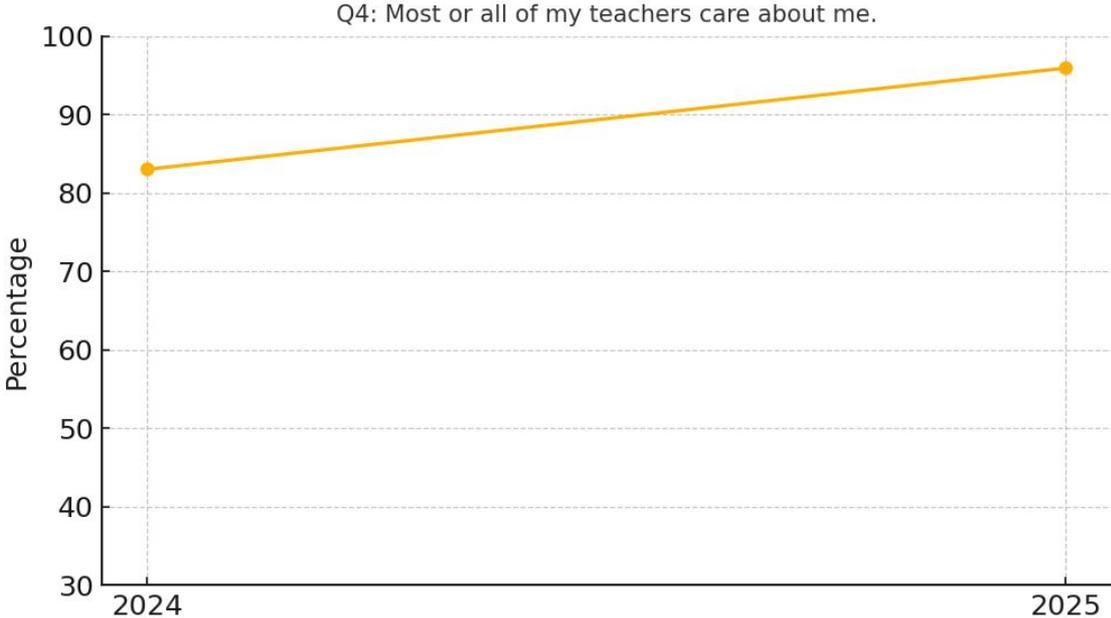
Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School
Student Climate Survey: Selected Summary and
Longitudinal Comparison
Grades 5–8 | Winter 2024 to 2025

Overview

- ❖ This presentation summarizes longitudinal trends from our annual 5–8 student climate survey.
- ❖ Surveys were conducted in Winter 2024 & 2025.
- ❖ Focused analysis on nine key indicators aligned with relationships, belonging, equity, and safety.



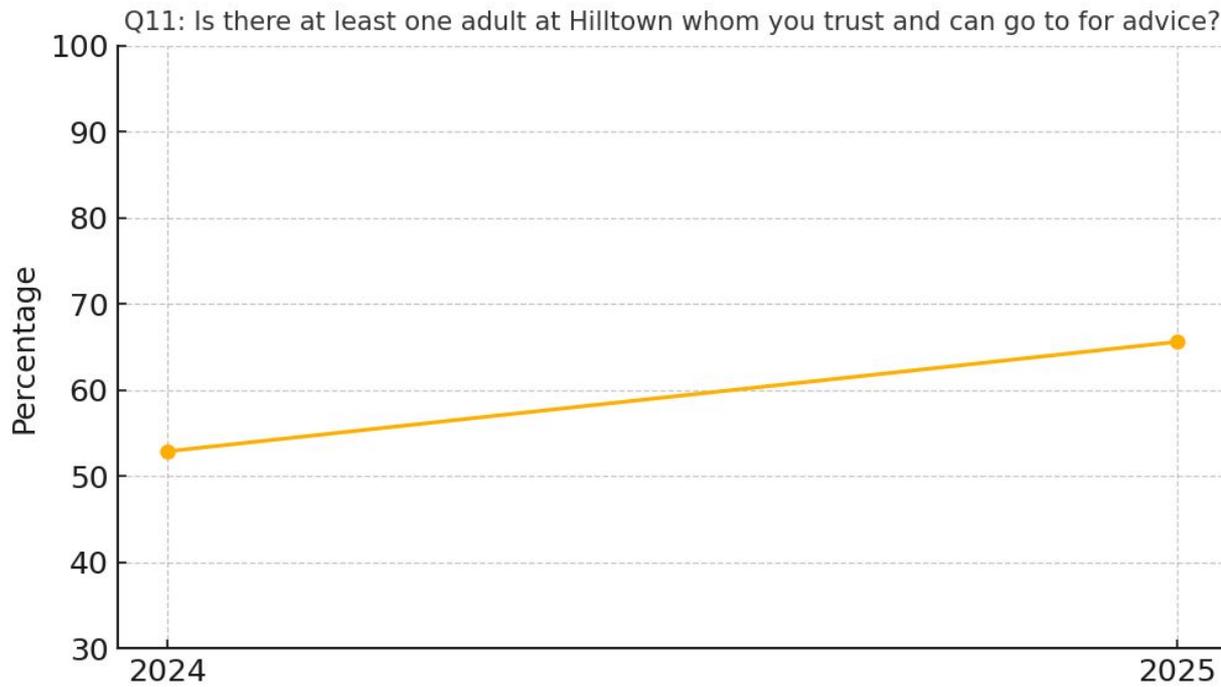
Q4: Most or all of my teachers care about me.



Year	Positive %
2024	83.0%
2025	95.9%

 *Notable increase in 2025, suggesting strengthened student-teacher relationships.*

Q11: Is there at least one adult at Hilltown whom you trust and can go to for advice?

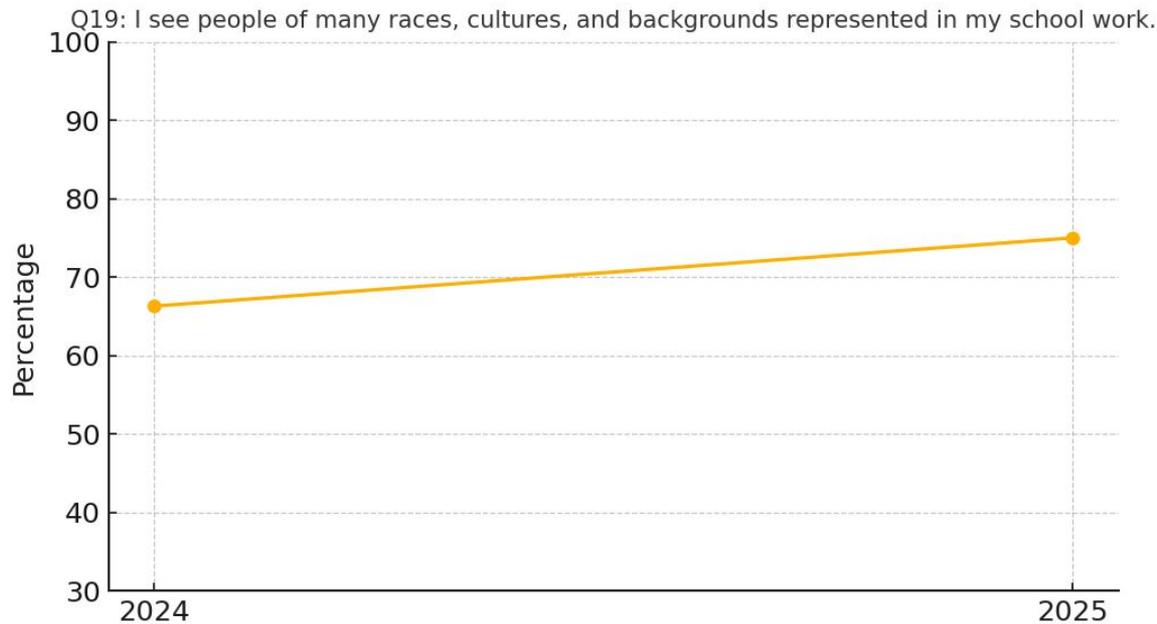


Year	Positive %
2024	52.9%
2025	65.6%



More students report having a trusted adult at school, but still room to improve in this key indicator

Q19: I see people of many races, cultures, and backgrounds represented in my school work and homework.



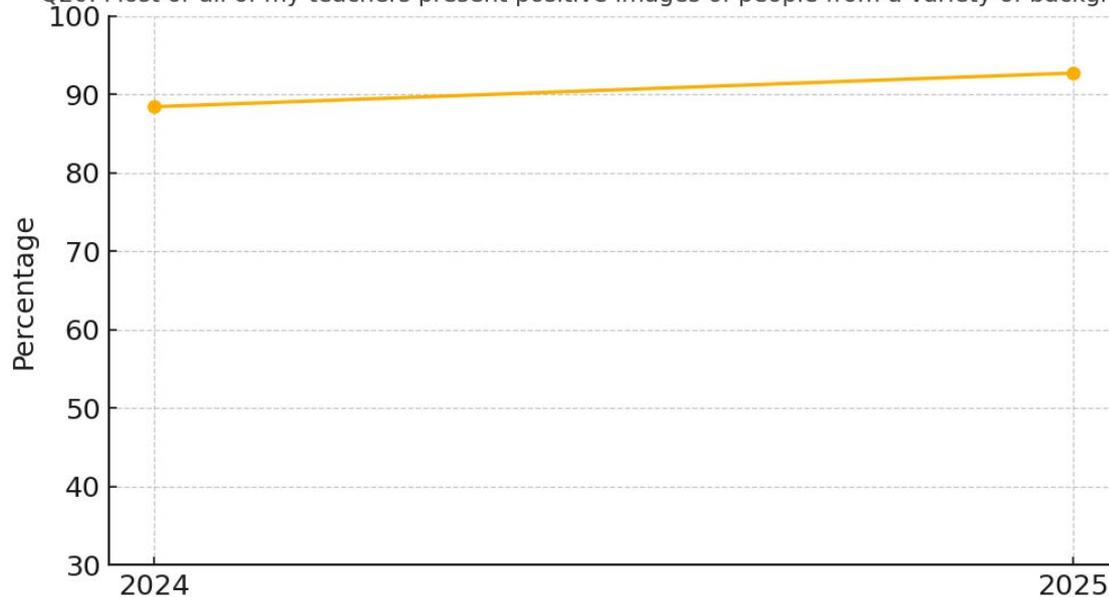
Year	Positive %
2024	66.3%
2025	75.0%



Improved perception of representation in schoolwork.

Q20: Most or all of my teachers present positive images of people from a variety of races, cultures and backgrounds.

Q20: Most or all of my teachers present positive images of people from a variety of backgrounds.

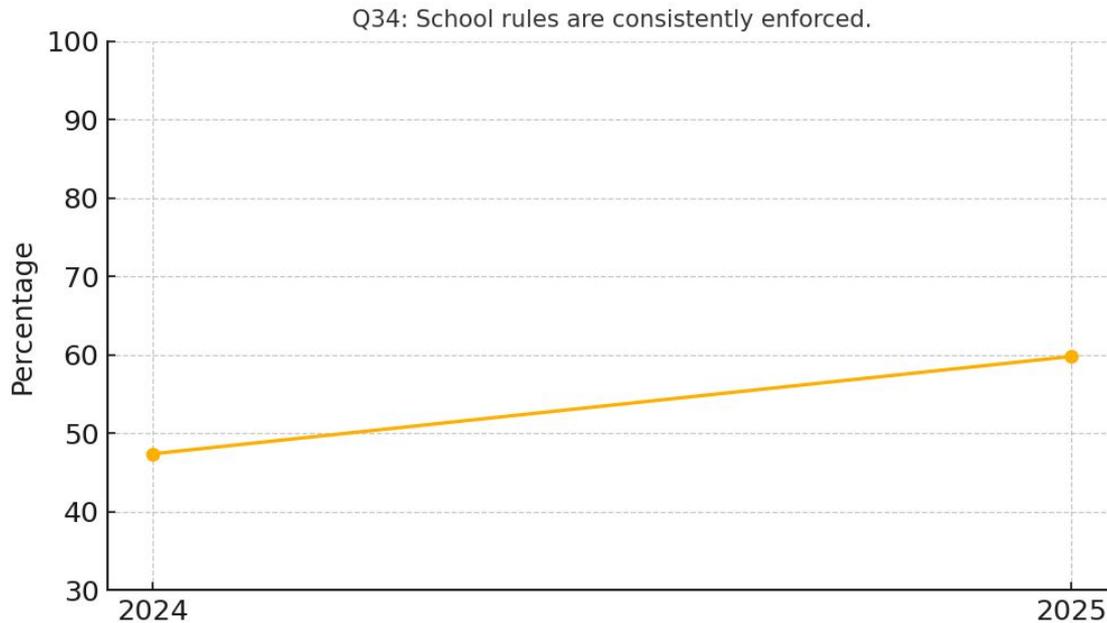


Year	Positive %
2024	88.4%
2025	92.7%



Strong and increasing use of inclusive imagery in teaching.

Q34: School rules are consistently enforced.

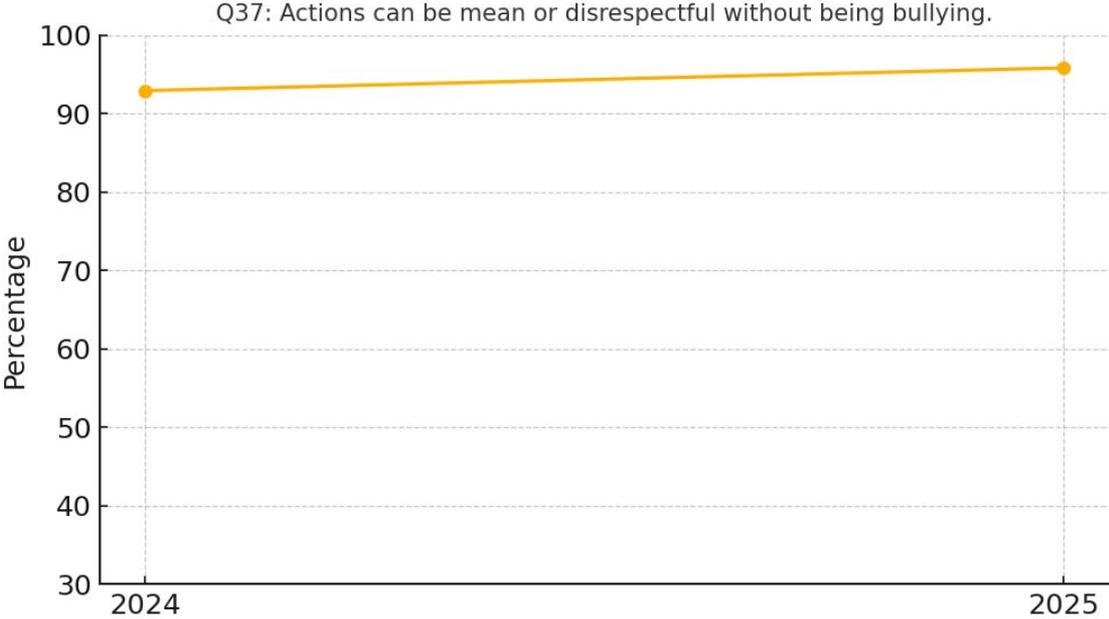


Year	Positive %
2024	47.4%
2025	59.8%

 *Students see rules as more consistently enforced this year, but still in need of improvement moving forward.*



Q37: Actions can be mean or disrespectful without being bullying.



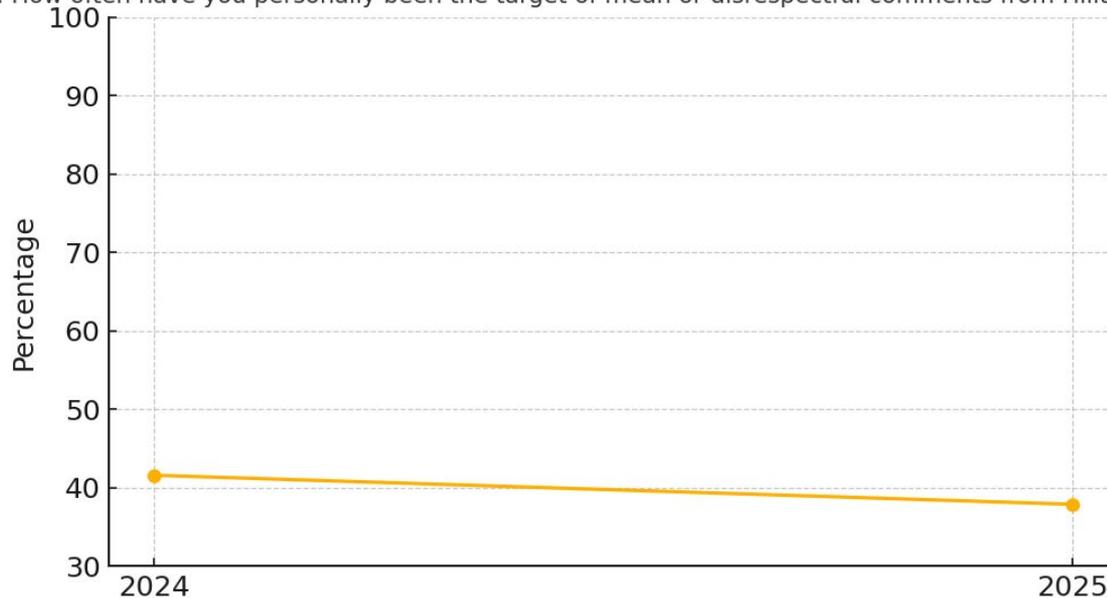
Year	Positive %
2024	92.9%
2025	95.8%



High and rising student understanding of nuanced social behavior.

Q55: How often have you personally been the target of mean or disrespectful actions or comments from Hilltown students?

5: How often have you personally been the target of mean or disrespectful comments from Hilltown students?

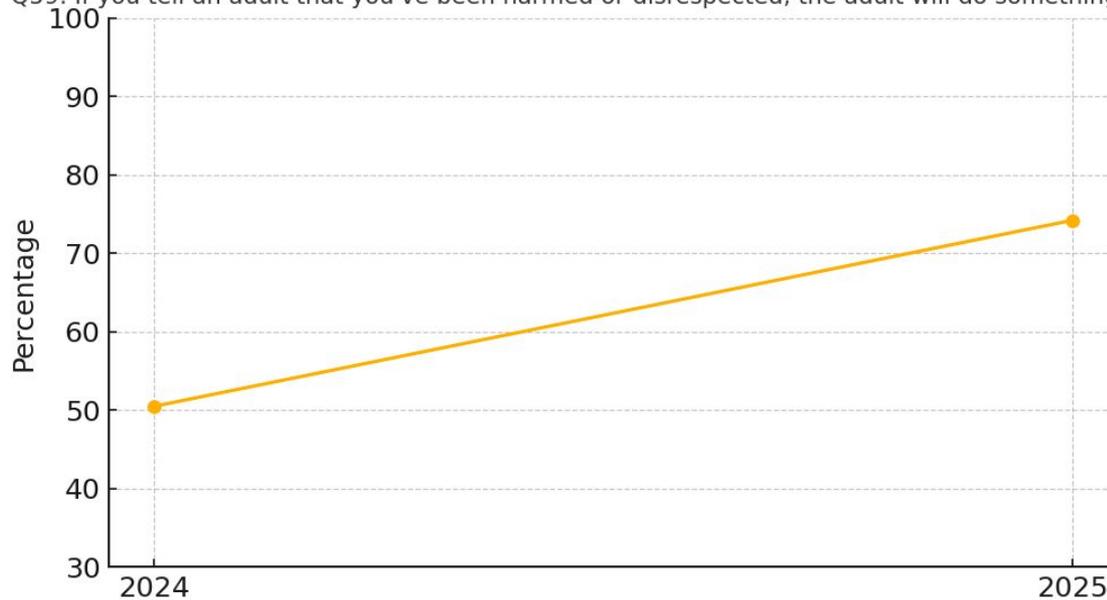


Year	Positive %
2024	41.6%
2025	37.9%

 Slight drop in students reporting harm, though concern remains.

Q59: If you tell an adult that you've been harmed or disrespected, the adult will do something to help.

Q59: If you tell an adult that you've been harmed or disrespected, the adult will do something to help.



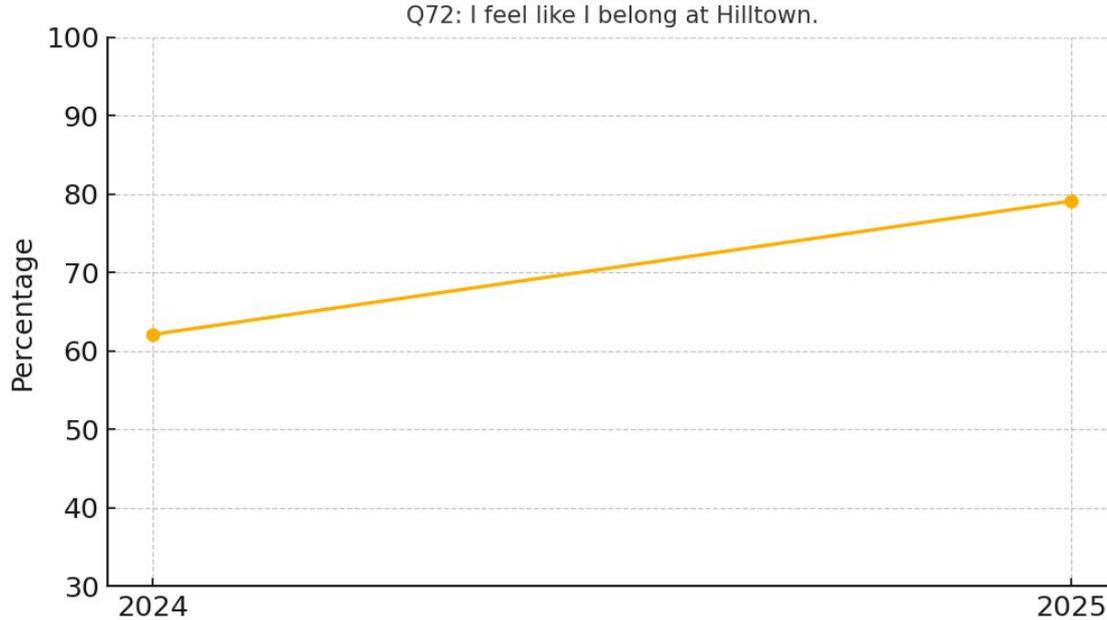
Year	Positive %
2024	50.5%
2025	74.2%



Substantial growth in trust that adults will help.



Q72: I feel like I belong at Hilltown.



Year	Positive %
2024	62.1%
2025	79.1%



Marked rise in student sense of belonging at Hilltown.

Key Takeaways



- ★ **Increased Student Connectedness**

There was a notable rise in students feeling cared for by their teachers (Q4, +12.9%) and having a trusted adult at school (Q11, +12.7%), suggesting meaningful growth in supportive relationships between students and staff.
- ★ **Gains in Belonging and Representation**

Students reported a stronger sense of belonging at Hilltown (Q72, +17%) and greater representation of diverse cultures in both content (Q19, +8.7%) and imagery (Q20, +4.3%), reflecting success in inclusive curriculum efforts.
- ★ **Improved Trust in Adult Intervention**

The percentage of students who believe an adult will help when they report harm jumped significantly (Q59, +23.7%), signaling increased trust in adult responsiveness.
- ★ **Understanding of Social Harm Remains High**

Students continue to demonstrate high awareness that actions can be harmful even if not bullying (Q37, +2.9%), an important foundation for empathy and accountability.
- ★ **Discipline and Climate Progress, but Work Remains**

While perceptions of consistent rule enforcement improved (Q34, +12.4%) and reports of being targeted by mean comments decreased slightly (Q55, -3.7%), these remain areas of concern where continued work is needed.

Recommended Next Steps



- ❑ **Celebrate and Sustain Positive Relationships**
Reinforce practices that build trust and care between staff and students. Continue professional learning on relationship-centered teaching.
- ❑ **Deepen Representation and Belonging Work**
Expand curriculum audits to ensure inclusion of historically marginalized voices in all subject areas and grade levels.
- ❑ **Focus on Schoolwide Response Protocols**
Build on student trust by ensuring all adults have training in responsive, trauma-informed approaches to student harm or conflict.
- ❑ **Strengthen Clarity and Consistency of Rules**
Engage students in reviewing and understanding the school's behavioral expectations and consequences to support fair and consistent enforcement.
- ❑ **Address Social Harm Proactively**
Continue to normalize conversations about harm and respect—possibly through restorative practices, advisory time, and peer-led initiatives.



Wednesday early release subsidy proposal

Date: May 14, 2025

Submitted to: Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School Board of Trustees

Proposal to be presented by: Chris Kusek, Head of School

Background and Rationale

HCCPS is dedicated to equity and inclusion. Currently, early release on Wednesdays can create childcare challenges for families experiencing economic hardship. By subsidizing this hour for qualifying families, we remove barriers, support family stability, and align with our commitment to economic diversity.

Proposal

This proposal recommends fully subsidizing Kids Club childcare for students who qualify for free or reduced lunch on Wednesdays from 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM. This initiative aligns with Hilltown's commitment to Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI), promoting equitable access to childcare for economically disadvantaged families. All other extracurricular programs will remain subsidized at 50% for eligible students.

Objectives and Goals

- Promote Equitable Access: Ensure all students have access to childcare during early release.
- Support Family Stability: Ease the financial burden for families in need.
- Enhance Recruitment and Retention: Align with school goals to increase economic diversity.
- Advance JEDI Principles: Demonstrate commitment to justice and equity.

Budget Implications

Projected financial impact is minimal, with estimated annual costs manageable within the existing budget. Any unforeseen expenses will be reviewed as needed.



HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

Appendix H: Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

(Revised 5/2025)

HCCPS is committed to creating a safe, caring, respectful learning environment for all students and strictly enforces a prohibition against bullying, including without limitation, cyberbullying, of any of its students by anyone and also strictly enforces a prohibition against retaliation on any person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying or witnesses, or has reliable information about bullying. Site-based initiatives, developed collaboratively between school administration and personnel, students, families, and community members will seek to: (1) help students of all ages and abilities stay safe, act wisely, and believe in themselves; and (2) help adults respond effectively to students' reports and their own observations.

1. Definitions

Bullying is defined as the **repeated use** by one or more students or by a member of school staff (including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, athletic coach, advisor, bus drivers, to an extracurricular activity or teaching assistant) of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target/victim that:

- (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the target/victim or damage to the target/victim's property;
- (ii) places the target/victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or damage to their property;
- (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the target/victim;
- (iv) infringes on the rights of the target/victim at school; or
- (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For purposes of this policy, bullying shall include cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying is further defined as bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo-optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications.

Cyberbullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the



HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

Aggressor or Perpetrator is defined as a student or a member of school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional, school volunteer or a vendor, contractor or other person working under a contract with the school who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation.

Hostile environment is defined as a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

Retaliation is defined as any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

Staff is defined to include, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, clerical staff, or teaching assistants/paraprofessionals.

School is defined to include the school, school grounds, travel to and from school and/or school-sponsored events or functions, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, school-sponsored or school-related activities, functions, programs whether on or off school grounds (such as social events, trips, sports events, or similar school-sponsored events and functions), at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the school, on the way to and from school or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the school and at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the school, if the act creates a hostile environment at school for the target/victim or witnesses, infringes on the rights of the victim or witnesses at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Target or Victim is defined as a student or an adult against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

2. Prohibition

Bullying of students occurring in schools is prohibited by law and will not be tolerated by HCCPS. Bullying can take many forms and can occur in any setting. Bullying can include but is not limited to, intimidation such as name-calling or threatening, social alienation such as shunning or spreading rumors, or physical aggression such as assaults on a student or attacks on a student's property.



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Bullying can create an atmosphere of fear for all members of the school community. It also can create unnecessary and unwarranted anxiety that affects the ability of a student to attend school, learn in school, walk in school corridors, eat in the school cafeteria, play in the schoolyard or recreation areas, participate in or attend special or extracurricular activities or travel to and from school.

Bullying behaviors that are not addressed can lead to devastating consequences for young people, including depression, and drops in school performance and attendance. The failure to address bullying behaviors also gives other students the message that it is permissible to engage in negative behaviors.

Consistent with state law, HCCPS recognizes that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including: race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one (1) or more of these characteristics.

3. Process and Response

HCCPS takes allegations of bullying seriously and will respond promptly to complaints and allegations of bullying. Additionally, allegations of retaliation against a person who reports bullying provides information during an investigation of bullying or witnesses; or has reliable information about bullying also shall be taken seriously and HCCPS will respond promptly to such complaints and allegations.

If any student, caregiver/guardian of a student, staff member, or other community member believes that a student has been subjected to bullying, or to retaliation for reporting bullying, providing information during an investigation of bullying or witnessing or having reliable information about bullying, they should bring the matter to the attention of the Head of School, Director of Teaching and Learning, or Behavior Support Coordinator. This may be done verbally, electronically, or in writing.

Reports of bullying and/or reports of retaliation for reporting bullying, providing information during an investigation of bullying, or witnessing or having reliable information about bullying also may be made anonymously to the Head of School, Director of Teaching and Learning, or Behavior Support Coordinator. Please note; however, that no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report having been received.

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the Head of School, Director of Teaching and Learning, and/or Behavior Support Coordinator will take steps to assess the need to



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restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the target; and altering the aggressor’s schedule and access to the target. The Head of School, Director of Teaching and Learning, and/or Behavior Support Coordinator will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, if necessary.

Where it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, HCCPS will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and will impose corrective action as necessary, which may range from requiring the aggressor to work with school personnel on better behavior, the recommendation for the provision of counseling or other therapeutic services and/or disciplinary action where appropriate, up to and including suspension, expulsion and/or court involvement.

Additionally, consistent with state law, if it is determined that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the Head of School or Director of Teaching and Learning shall:

- (i) notify local law enforcement if school administration believes that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor
- (ii) take appropriate disciplinary action
- (iii) notify the caregivers/guardians of the aggressor; and
- (iv) notify the caregivers/guardians of the target/victim, to the extent consistent with state and federal law, of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation.

Furthermore, if it is determined that a student has knowingly made a false accusation of bullying or retaliation, they shall be subject to discipline, up to and including suspension, expulsion and/or court involvement.

All students shall be afforded the same protection regardless of their status under the law.

In notifying the caregivers/guardians of the target and the aggressor, the Head of School, Director of Teaching and Learning, and Behavioral Support Coordinator must comply with the confidentiality requirements of the Massachusetts Student Record law and regulations and the Federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act and corresponding regulations.

More specifically, school administration may not disclose information from a student record of a target or aggressor to a caregiver/guardian unless the information is about the caregiver/guardian’s own child.

The Head of School or Director of Teaching and Learning may disclose a determination of bullying or retaliation to a local law enforcement agency without consent of a student or their parent/guardian,



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but the school administration shall communicate with law enforcement officials in a manner that protects the privacy of targets, student witnesses and aggressors to the extent practicable under the circumstances.

Additionally, if the Head of School, Director of Teaching and Learning, and/or Behavioral Coordinator has determined that there is an immediate and significant threat to the health or safety of the student or individuals, school administration may disclose student record information about a target or aggressor to appropriate parties in addition to law enforcement in connection with a health or safety emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals. In this latter situation, the disclosure is limited to the period of the emergency and the Head of School and/or the Director of Teaching and Learning must document the disclosure and the reasons that the Head of School and/or Director of Teaching and Learning determined that a health and safety emergency exists.

4. Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

The Head of School and/or Director of Teaching and Learning will develop and keep updated on at least a biennial basis, as required by law, a plan to address bullying prevention and intervention. Such a plan shall, as required by law, be developed in consultation with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents, and guardians.

The HCCPS' Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan will address training and professional development for staff and will also address sharing information with parents/guardians and students about bullying, including information on prevention of bullying, reporting of bullying, and the potential legal consequences of engaging in bullying. Additionally, the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan will include specific steps that schools will take to support vulnerable students and to provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies needed to prevent or respond to bullying and harassment.

Hilltown provides annual professional development about bullying that includes training for all staff members including, but not limited to educators, administrators, school nurses, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities and teaching assistants, to prevent, identify and respond to bullying. The content of such professional development shall include, but not be limited to:

- (i) developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying incidents;
- (ii) developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
- (iii) information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between



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11. Describe the details of the incident (including names of people involved, what occurred, and what each person did and said, including specific words used). Please use additional space if necessary.

12. Date of report:

13. Form given to (Name, Position):

(For official use only) Date received:

Appendix I: Due Process for Suspensions

EMERGENCY REMOVAL

A student may be temporarily removed prior to notice and hearing when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of HCCPS and, in the Director of Teaching and Learning's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days, following the day of the emergency removal.

The Director of Teaching and Learning may not remove a student from school on an emergency basis until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

During the emergency removal, the Director of Teaching and Learning shall make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and student's parent/guardian of the emergency removal and the reason for the emergency removal. The Director of Teaching and Learning shall also provide the due process requirements of written notice for suspensions and provide for a hearing which meets the due process requirements of a long-term suspension or short-term suspension, as applicable, within the two (2) school day time period, unless an extension of time for the hearing is otherwise agreed to by the Director of Teaching and Learning, student, and parent/guardian.

A decision shall be rendered orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day. The decision shall meet all of the due process requirements of a Director of Teaching and Learning's determination in a long-term suspension or short-term suspension, as applicable.

NOTICE OF PROPOSED SUSPENSION

Except in the case of an emergency removal or disciplinary offense defined under M.G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H½ or an in-school suspension as defined by 603 CMR 53.02(6), HCCPS shall provide the student and parent/guardian with written and oral notice of the proposed out-of-school suspension, an opportunity to be heard at hearing, and the opportunity to participate at the hearing. Notice shall set forth in plain language:

- A. the disciplinary offense;
- B. the basis for the charge;
- C. the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
- D. the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the Director of Teaching and Learning concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent/guardian to attend the hearing;
- E. the date, time, and location of the hearing;
- F. the right of the student and student's parent/guardian to interpreter services at the hearing if

needed to participate;

The Director of Teaching and Learning shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent/guardian orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. In order to conduct a hearing without the parent/guardian present, the Director of Teaching and Learning must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent/guardian. Reasonable effort is presumed if the Director of Teaching and Learning sent written notice and documented at least two attempts to contact the parent/guardian in the manner specified by the parent/guardian for emergency situations.

All written communications regarding notice of proposed suspension shall be either by hand delivery or delivered by first-class mail, certified mail, or email to address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications (or other method agreed to by the Director of Teaching and Learning and parent/guardian) in English, and in the primary language in the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS PRIOR TO SUSPENSION UNDER M.G.L. CHAPTER 71, §37H¾

A student may not be suspended under M.G.L. Chapter 71, §37H¾, unless one or more of the following apply:

- A. Alternative remedies have been employed and their use and results documented, following and in direct response to a specific incident or incidents.
- B. There are documented specific reasons why alternative remedies are unsuitable or counterproductive.
- C. The situation is such that the student's continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm upon another person while in school.

SHORT-TERM SUSPENSIONS: HEARING AND DIRECTOR OF TEACHING AND LEARNING DETERMINATION

A short-term suspension is the removal of the student from HCCPS premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive days or less. Out-of-school short-term suspensions which do not cumulatively over the course of the HCCPS year exceed ten (10) days of suspension shall be conducted in accordance with this section.

Director of Teaching and Learning Hearing.

The purpose of the hearing with the Director of Teaching and Learning is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student has committed the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts. A parent/guardian present at the hearing shall have the opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances.

Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the Director of Teaching and Learning will make a determination whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so,

the consequence. The Director of Teaching and Learning will provide notification in writing of their determination in the form of an update to the student and parent/guardian, and provide reasons for the determination. If the student is suspended, the Director of Teaching and Learning shall inform the parent/guardian of the type and duration of the suspension, and shall provide an opportunity for the student to make up assignments and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal.

If the student is in grades pre-k through 3, the Director of Teaching and Learning shall send their determination to the Head of School and explain the reasons prior to imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

All written communications regarding the hearing and Director of Teaching and Learning determination shall be either hand delivery or delivered by first-class mail, certified mail, or email to the address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications (or other method agreed to by the Director of Teaching and Learning and parent/guardian) in English, and in the primary language in the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate.

LONG-TERM SUSPENSIONS: HEARING AND DIRECTOR OF TEACHING AND LEARNING DETERMINATION

A long-term suspension is the removal of a student from HCCPS premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. The purpose of the hearing with the Director of Teaching and Learning is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student has committed the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the Director of Teaching and Learning will consider in determining whether alternatives to suspension such as loss of privileges, detention, an apology, a student contract, restitution, and/or probation are appropriate.

Additionally, the student shall have the following additional rights:

1. In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the Director of Teaching and Learning may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;
2. the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's and or parent's/guardian's expense;
3. the right to produce witnesses on their behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so;
4. the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by HCCPS district;
5. the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the Director of Teaching and Learning. All participants shall be informed that the hearing is being recorded by audio. A copy of the audio recording will be provided to the student or parent/guardian upon request.

Based on the evidence submitted at the hearing the Director of Teaching and Learning shall make a determination as to whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension (the use of evidence-based strategies and programs, such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive interventions and supports) what remedy or consequence will be imposed. If the Director of Teaching and Learning decides to impose a long-term suspension, the written determination shall:

1. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
2. Set out key facts and conclusions reached by the Director of Teaching and Learning;
3. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
4. Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive a specific list of education services to make academic progress during removal, and the contact information of a school member who can provide more detailed information;
5. Inform the student of the right to appeal the Director of Teaching and Learning's decision to the Head of School or their designee (only if a long-term suspension has been imposed) within five (5) calendar days, which may be extended by parent/guardian request in writing an additional seven (7) calendar days;
6. There will be a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing and to send written notice to the parent of the date, time and location of the hearing;
7. If requested, arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student and the parent, and the superintendent's responsibility to inform all parties before the hearing that an audio copy will be made of the hearing

The long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the Head of School decides to reverse the Director of Teaching and Learning's determination on appeal.

If the student is in grades pre-k through grade 3, the Director of Teaching and Learning shall send their determination to the Head of School and explain the reasons prior to imposing an out-of-school suspension, whether short-term or long-term, before the suspension takes effect.

All written communications regarding the hearing and Director of Teaching and Learning determination shall be either hand delivery or delivered by first-class mail, certified mail, or email to the provided by the parent/guardian for school communications (or other method agreed to by the Director of Teaching and Learning and parent/guardian) in English, and in the primary language in the home if other than English, or by other means of communication where appropriate.

APPEAL OF LONG-TERM SUSPENSION

A student who is placed on a long-term suspension shall have the right to appeal the Director of Teaching and Learning's decision to the Head of School if properly and timely filed. A good faith effort shall be made to include the parent/guardian at the hearing. The hearing shall be held within three (3)

school days of the appeal, unless the student or parent/guardian requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, which the Head of School shall grant.

The student and parent/guardian shall have the same rights afforded at the long-term suspension Director of Teaching and Learning hearing. Within five (5) calendar days of the hearing the Head of School shall issue their written decision which meets the criteria required of the Director of Teaching and Learning's determination. If the Head of School determines the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Head of School may impose the same or a lesser consequence than that of the Director of Teaching and Learning. The Head of School's decision shall be final.

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION UNDER 603 CMR 53:02(6) & 603 CMR 53.10

In-school suspension is defined as the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not HCCPS premises, for not more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions over the course of HCCPS year.

The Director of Teaching and Learning may impose an in-school suspension as defined above according to the following procedures:

The Director of Teaching and Learning shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the Director of Teaching and Learning determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Director of Teaching and Learning shall inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed ten (10) days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.

On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the Director of Teaching and Learning shall make reasonable efforts to notify the caregiver orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. The Director of Teaching and Learning shall also invite the caregiver to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such meetings shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the Director of Teaching and Learning is unable to reach the caregiver after making and documenting at least two (2) attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the caregiver of the in-school suspension.

The Director of Teaching and Learning shall send written notice to the student and caregiver about the in-school suspension, including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the caregiver to a meeting with the Director of Teaching and Learning for the purpose set forth above, if such meeting has not already occurred. The Director of Teaching and Learning shall deliver such notice on the day of the suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the caregiver for school communications, or by other method of delivery agreed to by the Director of Teaching and Learning and the caregiver.

SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION FOR DISCIPLINARY OFFENSES UNDER M.G.L. 71 §§37H and

37H½

The due process notification and hearing requirements in the preceding sections do not apply to the following disciplinary offenses:

Possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, or assault of staff

A student may be subject to expulsion if found in possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, or the student assaults a member of educational staff, and the Director of Teaching and Learning determines the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of HCCPS.

The Director of Teaching and Learning shall notify the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) in writing of the opportunity for a hearing, and the right to have representation at the hearing, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses. After said hearing, a Director of Teaching and Learning may, in their discretion, decide to levy a suspension rather than expulsion. A student expelled for such an infraction shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Head of School. The expelled student shall have ten (10) days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Head of School of their appeal. The student has the right to counsel at the hearing before the Head of School. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student was guilty of the alleged offense.

Felony complaint or issuance of felony delinquency complaint

Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony, or the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the Director of Teaching and Learning may suspend a student for a period of time determined appropriate by the Director of Teaching and Learning if the Director of Teaching and Learning determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of HCCPS.

The Director of Teaching and Learning shall notify the student in writing of the charges, the reasons for the suspension (prior to such suspension taking effect), and the right to appeal. The Director of Teaching and Learning will also provide the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) the process for appealing the suspension to the Head of School. The request for appeal must be made in writing within five (5) calendar days. The hearing shall be held within three (3) days of the request. The suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing before the Head of School. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, and the right to counsel. The Head of School has the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Director of Teaching and Learning. The Head of School shall render a decision on the appeal within five (5) calendar days of the hearing.

Felony conviction or adjudication/admission in court of guilt for a felony or felony delinquency

The Director of Teaching and Learning may expel a student convicted of a felony, or has an adjudication or admission of guilt regarding a felony, if the Director of Teaching and Learning determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general

welfare of HCCPS.

The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for the proposed expulsion. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal the decision to the Head of School, as well as the appeal process. The expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Head of School.

The student shall notify the Head of School in writing of their request for an appeal of the decision no later than five (5) calendar days following the date of the expulsion. The Head of School hearing shall be held with the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) within three (3) calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, and shall have the right to counsel. The Head of School has the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Director of Teaching and Learning. The Head of School shall render a decision on the appeal within five (5) calendar days of the hearing.

Any student expelled from school for such an offense shall be afforded an opportunity to receive educational services and make academic progress.



HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

HCCPS Substance Use Prevention and Education Policy

Draft 05/2025

I. Purpose and Philosophy

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School (HCCPS) is dedicated to creating a safe, inclusive, and healthy environment for all students. We recognize that substance use, even in the broader world, can impact children and families in many ways. Our goal is to educate, prevent, and support, without fear or stigma. Through developmentally appropriate instruction, community partnerships, and supportive responses, we aim to help students build lifelong skills for making healthy decisions.

II. Scope

This policy applies to all HCCPS students during school hours, on school grounds, during school-sponsored activities, and while using school transportation. It addresses the use, possession, sale, or distribution of substances including (but not limited to):

- Alcohol
- Tobacco or nicotine products (e.g., cigarettes, e-cigarettes/vapes)
- Marijuana and other controlled substances
- Inhalants
- Prescription or over-the-counter medications used improperly
- Steroids, Misuse of Herbal or dietary supplements for non-medical purposes

III. Education and Prevention

Our approach emphasizes education and prevention first, using age-appropriate materials and methods with the goal of helping students make informed and safe choices.

- **Elementary Students (K–5):** Students do not address substance use explicitly, but explore related broad wellness themes like making good choices, understanding feelings, peer influence, and caring for their bodies through Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and classroom discussions.
- **Middle School Students (6–8):** Health and Wellness classes directly address substance use, the effects on the brain and body, and strategies for saying no.
- **Family Engagement:** HCCPS provides resources to help adults talk with children about substance use, understand laws, and access support services.
- **SBIRT Screening:** HCCPS implements the Massachusetts-mandated SBIRT screening (Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment) annually for all 7th grade students.
- **Faculty:** The school offers professional development for faculty and staff to enhance understanding of substance use risks, Massachusetts law, and available support.

IV. Community Resources and Support

HCCPS maintains relationships with local agencies and service providers, including:

- ServiceNet, Northampton
- Clinical and Support Options
- Children's Clinic, Northampton

V. School Policy and Procedures

A. General Prohibition

The possession, use, sale, or distribution of alcohol, tobacco/nicotine products, marijuana, controlled substances, inhalants, or the misuse of prescription or over-the-counter medications is strictly prohibited on school grounds, during school hours, at school-sponsored activities, and while using school transportation. This includes imitation substances such as non-alcoholic beer or wine.

This policy applies to all students, regardless of age, and includes both legal and illegal substances when used inappropriately or against school rules.

B. Response Protocols

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School prioritizes early intervention, support, and education when responding to concerns about student substance use. The following procedures aim to ensure student safety while maintaining a fair, compassionate approach:

1. Voluntary Self-Disclosure by Student

If a student voluntarily confides a substance use issue to a staff member, the staff member will notify the school counselor. The counselor will support the student using the school's self-harm/safety protocol and involve the family in planning next steps. If a student voluntarily discloses substance use to a staff member:

- The staff member will immediately notify the school counselor.
- The counselor will assess needs and plan next steps with the family.
- No legal action will be taken solely based on voluntary disclosure. The focus will be on educational support, appropriate school discipline and provision of resources to the student and family.

2. Suspected Use During School

If a student appears to be under the influence during the school day:

- The student may be removed from class and may be assessed by trained staff.
- The student's parent/guardian will be contacted immediately.
- The student will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the code of conduct.
- A re-entry meeting with the family may be required before the student returns to class.

3. Confirmed Use or Possession of Substances

If a student is confirmed to have used or is found in possession of a substance on school grounds or at a school event:

- Substances will be safely confiscated, documented, and either returned to the parent/guardian (if legal), disposed of, or turned over to law enforcement (if illegal).
- The family will be notified and a conference scheduled.
- The student may be referred to counseling or an external treatment provider.
- A suspension may be imposed.
- Expulsion will only be considered in accordance with Massachusetts law (MGL Ch. 71, Sec. 37H or 37H½), and depending on the nature and severity of the offense.

4. Distribution or Intent to Distribute

If a student is found distributing or in possession of a quantity suggesting intent to distribute:

- Parents/guardians and local law enforcement will be notified immediately.
- The student will be removed from school property.
- A suspension will be issued.
- A parent/guardian conference will be required prior to reentry.
- In accordance with Massachusetts law, expulsion will be considered based on the severity of the incident.

5. Reentry and Support

Following any substance-related disciplinary action:

- A reentry meeting will be held with the student, family, counselor, and relevant staff.
- The school may require participation in counseling, educational sessions, or other support services as a condition of return.
- The goal of all interventions is to help the student re-engage with school and access appropriate resources.

Seeking Help for your Child

If you are concerned about your child's use of alcohol, other drugs or misuse of prescriptions, the Department's Bureau of Substance Abuse Services can help.

For free and confidential information and referral services for youth and young adults (up to age 24) who are experiencing a problem with alcohol, or other drugs, contact BSAS' Youth Central Intake & Care Coordination service:

Toll Free: 866-705-2807 / 617-661-3991

TTY: 617-661-9051



Domain Committee Meeting Minutes – March 31, 2025 8:30 am (Approved)

Meeting Location: HCCPS

Present: Kathleen Hulton, Chris Kusek, Rebecca Belcher-Timme, Tiffany Ross, Lily Newman, Ben Carlis

Guests: -

Regrets: Emily Boddy

Notetaker: Kathleen Hulton

Topic	Discussion	Action (if necessary)
Approve Last month's Minutes	Review & Approve March 3 Domain meeting notes	March 3 Minutes approve
Community and Family Engagement Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from Annual meeting - it was a success, well-attended, lots of parent feedback/gratitude; many great ideas for improving cooperative • Talking to Beili Yang about a volunteer dashboard - early planning stages at this point • Spirit Week is coming week of April 14 • ArtSpark is coming up, Tiffany outlined some last minute planning around activities, auction, and refreshments; Guests should register as soon as possible • Several things coming up in May (Staff Appreciation Lunch, The Music Festival, The Musical) 	-
Director of T & L Updates	Staffing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math Interventionist will be Emily Endris • Seana hired as drama teacher • Peter has officially announced his retirement 	Personnel Committee will consider possible ways to improve hiring process efficacy



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Projected grade level teams for next year have been shared with the community● Smith intern next year● A 1-2 job will be posted● Hiring process efficacy● Personnel admin salary review● Student Government● Governance and Policy committee is continuing to work on Family Handbook revisions● Student JEDI is continuing work on their harmful language survey● Translate Gender is coming to work with the Student Council and the GSA on gender identity programming for K-8● The social events committee is helping to plan Spirit Week● Professional Development● Grade level teams for 25-26 will have time on Wednesday afternoon to meet with newly aligned curriculum scope and sequence● Chris and I attended the Transforming Education for Social Justice conference and learned about the “Solutionary Framework” which will be the perfect frame for our civics action project● TAs have been receiving behavior training with administrators on new behavior logging and tracking systems	
Head of School Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● MCPSA call to action: Chris provided some context about MA political climate affecting charter school sustainability● Facilities update<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Playground project<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Wetlands delineation - wetlands have expanded since last time; will be working with Conservation Commissioner re effects on playground project	Chris will communicate with Lily, and Lily with Emily Boddy about how to communicate with parents about MCPSA call action



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Parking lot maintenance needed ○ Sprinkler test scheduled ○ Capital needs assessment quotes ○ Property management company - Chris is looking into this idea for ongoing building issues ● JEDI update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 25-26 Climate survey complete ○ K. Szegda to assist with analysis ○ Harmful Language/"Slur" survey initiative ongoing ○ Student gov. rep visit to faculty meeting ○ Family handbook review ○ Longer term plans include civics action project/TMI/Institute for Humane Education/Solutionary learning initiative ● Dismissal time recommendation update <p>Wednesday Dismissal time recommendation will likely be a recommendation for staggered Weds dismissal 1:30-1:45 (and possibly more concrete stagger for other days too); Will consider cost of Weds after school care, especially for low income families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Personnel update: Personnel Committee will consider categorization of Administrative positions for salary scale purposes ● Civil Rights/SpEd review ongoing ● Head of School evaluation plan - Kathleen will call for volunteers for a ad hoc committee to work on establishing a process 	<p>Kathleen will communicate with Personnel Committee about salary scale proposal prior to April 9 BoT meeting</p>
<p>BoT Meeting Agenda Check</p>	<p>Kathleen asked for items to be included on agenda. Weds dismissal Personnel Committee proposal Board visibility - ArtSpark - buy tickets now!</p>	
<p>Next Meeting Date</p>	<p>Meetings start at 8:30. Upcoming Meetings:</p>	



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	Monday, May 5 Monday, June 2	
Adjournment	9:45am	



Finance Committee Meeting Minutes - May 2025

Group: Finance Committee Meeting	Date and time: Wed., May 7, 2025 8:30 am
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Location/Link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88364987634?pwd=cFFOR081T3ViZjh0eTNTUEdOSWZldz09

Online Meeting ID: 883 6498 7634	Online Meeting Password: budget
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Attendees: Chris Kusek, Carla Clark, Grace Mrowicki, Alex Porter, Kylan Mandile, Lisa Plaza, Andy Tilbe

Regrets: None

April 2025, Chris motions to approve, Carla. Minutes approved.

Kylan to send minutes to Kate.

- Facilities updates
 - o Parking lot - was repaired during April break.
 - Add exit near donation - Need to explore permitting to explore exit for adding another exit. Andy will look into getting approval for curb cut
 - Playground - approval
 - Sprinklers - Had 5-year test for sprinklers. Showed corrosion so recommend flush and maintenance.
 - Property management companies that would want to work for school
 - Discuss engaging a consultant for property condition assessment. Moved to summer work
 - Review Q3 2025 financial statements - Financial statements very consistent with budget. Deposits towards the playground project have been paid out of checking accounts. Property improvement line item includes deposits towards
 - Chris motions to approve, Kylan seconds
 - Carla to sent to Kate Aleo
 - Review and discuss FY2026 budget
 - FY continues stable enrollment and modest per pupil tuition increases
 - Total income remains
 - Uncertainty in grants - Most DOE grant allocations are consistent with prior years. ESSER II and Safe & Supportive school grants are fully phased out in FY26. DESE Competitive grant applications total over \$20k (
 - Projected state per pupil will increase 3.6%
 - Teacher salaries rose due to step increases, scale alignment, and programmatic restructuring. Director and admin staff costs rose modestly with board approved increases
 - Professional development spending continue to support teacher growth and school wide initiatives including training related to curriculum integration, behavior strategies
 - Kylan motion to approve the budget and send to Bot for approval and Lisa seconds. Carla to send Budget to Kate.
 - No new business
- Review action items
- June 4'
 - Chris proposes adjournment and kylan seconds

Next meeting Wednesday, June 4, 2025 at 8:30 am



GABS Committee Meeting Minutes DRAFT – Weds, March 18, 2025, 8:30 am - Approved

Meeting Location: HCCPS

Present: Emily Boddy; Tiffany Ross; Lindsay Fogg-Willits

Guests:

Regrets: Sara Schieffelin; Kate Aleo

Notetaker: Emily

Topic	Discussion	Action (if necessary)
Check-in/ Announcements	Checked in.	
JEDI	Woven into other discussions	
Approve Feb 2025 Minutes	Approved by consensus.	
Annual Meeting Date and Event plan - Discussion and Decision	March 26, 2025 Review last year's agenda and minutes. Reviewed Committee Report, which will be included in the Annual Packet	
Succession Planning + Recruitment, Discussion	Lauren and Steve make up the slate for the annual meeting. Kelly is stepping off the board one year before term end, June 2025 will be her last meeting. We need to figure out JEDI chair. Priority is finding a community member. Bring Tara back into the fold for help. Network at ArtSpark for an alumni.	
Review Board Goals, Discussion		



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Board book Organizational Plan Discussion	Discussed with Crhis about a plan around the book, policies and procedures. Emily and Kathleen will address spreadsheet regarding board book reorganization.	Emily and Kathleen will collaborate on this
New Business	Board Book Organizational Plan Review Board Goals Update on Succession Planning action steps	
Next Meeting Date/Time/Location	Meeting dates for the year, 8:30am: Mar 18 April TBD; May 6; June 3	
Adjournment	9:35 am	

Agenda items for next month:

GABS agenda items for next BOT meeting: Annual Meeting.



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JEDI Committee Meeting Minutes- May 2nd, 2025
9:00 - 10:00 a.m.

Present: Kathleen Szegda, Garrett Washington, Seth Harwood, Rebecca-Belcher Timme
Guests: Grace Mrowicki, Ben Spooner, Amy Dawn
Regrets: Chris Kusek

Topic	Discussion	Action
Approve March Minutes	Minutes approved	
Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unsure who will be Board member chairing JEDI next year• Civics Grant supporting JEDI efforts– notifications pushed back until middle of May• Translate Gender – met with student council which went well; another meeting on Tuesday as well; students asking for more space for facilitating discussion of things of concern to them – more student voice; Translate Gender will help think through how to have more student led activities, gave good suggestions for government and policy committee• Implementing new health and emotional learning curriculum next year. Have 0.1 person to help coordinate bringing in external people	
Survey Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sent out to grades 6-8 students this week• Tried to have educational piece in place where JEDI student committee met with homeroom first. Balanced having it in good enough shape to go out and still be able to tweak. Had feedback that didn't know what slur was. Discussed being responsive to students and sharing it with them since doing every couple of weeks. Important to support faculty in	



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	having these discussions. Lot of existing resources to share with faculty.	
Student Climate Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Comparing 2024 and 2025 results• Reviewed key indicators. Improvements in belonging, trusted adult, feeling like concerns addressed. Discussed sharing data with broader community.	If have questions or thoughts about additional indicators to share, let Rebecca know
JEDI Committee Goals SY24-25	JEDI Incorporated into Governance: Personnel committee – salary scales for non-teacher positions and stipends policies for Board to consider	
Next Steps		
Next meeting time/date/location	5/23 from 9:30 – 10:30 a.m.	
Adjournment	The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.	

Personnel Committee Meeting Minutes
Date: April 1, 2023

[Zoom Link](#)

Passcode: w8iLua

Present: Rebecca Belcher-Timme, Carla Clark, Tala Elia, Chris Kusek, Cecilia Darby, Neal Teague

Regrets:na

Topic	Discussion	Action
Meeting Roles		
Stipend Policy review and update	<p>Reviewed updated policy.</p> <p>Addendum made to add the hourly rate for 2025/26 as the rate is not yet included in salary scale review process</p>	Proposal to come to BoT
Admin/Coordinator staff salaries	<p>Background-there has been transparency and collaboration around teacher and TA salary scales in the past but less so with other positions</p> <p>Some positions already tied to teacher scales but modified but the number of extra days required to work</p> <p>Evaluation was undertaken with each of the positions to determine what is the appropriate number of extra days needed for the position outside of school days</p> <p>Discussed tying some other roles to teacher scale -family and engagement coordinator role to teacher scale but filling current role to 0.8FTE -behavioral coordinator and academic support coordinator already on teacher scale but prorated for additional days</p>	Proposal to come to BoT

	<p>Discussed creation of admin assistant scale with positions either falling into 190 day or 220 day category</p> <p>What qualifies for step credit for each of the positions? Question posed that should experience that qualifies for increasing step live within each job description?</p> <p>What qualifies for relevant masters for positions tied to teacher scales?</p>	
Hiring policy review	Addition of HoS to hiring policy to more accurately current leadership structure	
Job Description Archive	deferred	
Review action items		
Tentative agenda topics for next meeting	Job description archive and updates	
Next meeting time/date/location	May 13th, 3:15pm	
Adjournment	4:30pm	