

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes – Wednesday, June 10, 2020, 6:30 pm

Location: By Zoom (pursuant to Governor Baker’s March 12, 2020 Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law)

Present: Lara Ramsey, Dan Klatz, Joe Wyman, Noelle Barrist Stern, Liz Preston, Kelly Woods, Matt Dube, Karen Sise, Paula Ingram, Dawn Reesman, Deirdre Arthen, Myssie Casinghino, Rich Senecal, Tim Reynolds

Regrets: None

Facilitator: Matt

Notetaker: Noelle

Guests: Kate Saccento, Marguerite Durant, Tala Elia, Penny Leverett, Sara Schieffelin

List keeper: None. People made a comment in the chat or raised their hands if they wished to speak.

Timekeeper: Kelly

Mission statement read by: Karen

Topic	Discussion	Action (if necessary)
<p>Announcements/ Appreciations/ Acknowledgements</p>	<p><u>Announcements:</u></p> <p><u>Appreciations/Acknowledgements:</u></p> <p>Paula gave an appreciation to Lara for everything she has done for the teachers during the COVID-19 crisis.</p> <p>Noelle gave an appreciation for Deirdre and Lara for putting together an excellent Zoom Annual Meeting that still gave a sense of community.</p> <p>Deirdre gave an appreciation for Dan and Nurse Deb, both of whom are retiring, for all that they have done for the school.</p>	
<p>Any thank you notes needed?</p>	<p>Karen suggested thank you notes for Jared Libby and Jim Olsen, President of Signature Sounds, for everything they have done for the eighth-grade graduation. Deirdre suggested a thank you note for Aram for everything he is contributing for the graduation.</p>	

BOT Visibility this month?	N/A	
Minutes	Noelle noted that we need to add Kate Saccento and Marguerite Durant as guests at the top.	Matt moved to approve the minutes, as amended; Liz seconded; the BOT approved the minutes, as amended, by consensus.
Public Comment Period	Tala thanked everyone for the Annual Meeting. Marguerite thanked everyone who serves on the BOT and on BOT Committees. Kelly noted that Angie Gregory had sent an email to the BOT members about accountability for racial justice. Deirdre explained that this would be considered new business and placed on the agenda for the next meeting. Matt stated that he would consult with Tim and they would respond to Angie and let her know this will be on the agenda for the next BOT meeting and invite her to attend.	
School Closing Updates/Annual Meeting Feedback (Dan, Lara, Kate, Deirdre)	<p>Lara said there was a very high level of participation in on-line learning and that HCCPS did a lot to hold the community together. She suggested that there be more training for Google classrooms. She said the most successful things were book groups and independent research projects; math was the hardest thing to learn remotely. The school received a grant to provide remote math instruction over the summer and next year. She said that students will be assessed when they return and the school will meet students where they are.</p> <p>Deirdre commented that she thought the Annual Meeting went well and is looking forward to talking to parents more over the summer and into the fall to keep us connected.</p> <p>Members shared what was discussed during their breakout groups at the Annual Meeting.</p>	

	Dan said that the Administration will be bound by what DESE decides, although HCCPS will do everything it can to solicit feedback from families.	
Accountability Plan (Lara)	Lara summarized the Accountability Plan and each of the objectives. There is a proposal to switch from the IOWA test to SAT10 test. We have learned from the COVID-19 crisis that people may be more likely to participate if they can do so remotely. This plan will be submitted to DESE.	
Budget (Dan)	<p>Tim noted that there is a proposal to hire Dan part time to assist with the administrative domain and provide training and transitional support to the Director of Administration and other administrative staff. Dawn commented that the 60 hours budgeted for will go very quickly and asked if there was a way to budget for 60-80 hours. Kelly and Joe agreed. Tim responded that Kate and Lara thought that 60 hours would be sufficient. Matt also explained that, if there was a real need for additional consultation, they would bring the issue back to the BOT. They also felt it was important not to make the amount unnecessarily large in light of the upcoming budget crisis and because people will not be getting raises this year. Kate said that she will also have consultation two times per month with someone who works for the charter school association; they have a new leaders program. The consultant will be able to provide guidance and feedback. Tim noted that the budget would need to be amended, because the figure set aside for the consultant fee had changed.</p> <p>Dan presented the proposed FY21 budget. They are anticipating that the budget will be frozen, but they don't know. This is a conservative approach. They will also receive funds from FOH. The total income decrease is 3.8%. There will be a salary freeze for all employees; there will be two graduate interns in place</p>	<p>Tim moved that we approve the proposal to hire Dan as a consultant; Matt seconded; the Board approved the proposal by consensus.</p> <p>Tim moved to approve the budget, as amended; Matt seconded; the Board approved the budget, as amended, by consensus.</p>

	<p>of TAs; the cost of health insurance will increase; Kate’s position as a full-time Student Services Coordinator will be replaced with a .6 Special Education Team Leader. There will be decreased trip costs (there will be no Purples trip; the facility has notified the school that they will not be operating). There will be a lot less Kids’ Club and student activity money. They are not projecting money from the Winter Fair. Dan and Tim pointed out that, once the State gives more guidance, the budget can be revised. However, by statute, the BOT must pass a budget by the end of June.</p>	
<p>Designated Field Trip Fund Proposal (Lara, Dan)</p>	<p>Money for field trips was not spent, because school closed early. The money the school has at the end of a fiscal year goes into reserves unless the BOT designates otherwise. Domain Council proposes that, because this money was requested from families specifically for field trips, it be put into a fund for field trips when they resume. Families will then not be asked for money for field trips until that is used. Karen suggested that this be communicated to families, particularly new families who may be confused when they do not have to pay for field trips, but are asked to pay the following year. Deirdre said that, once it is passed, this can be communicated.</p>	<p>Noelle moved to approve the proposal; Liz seconded; the Board approved the proposal by consensus.</p>
<p>New Business</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) The letter the BOT received regarding anti-racism action. This will be placed on the agenda for next month and will also involve a discussion on the measures the school has taken over the last few years. (2) Status of Student Services Coordinator position (3) Procedure for forming a new BOT committee (do we need to wait for a new Long-Range Plan or can we do it at any time). 	
<p>Committee Reports - Questions only</p>	<p>None</p>	

Meeting Wrap-Up/ Evaluation	Next Meeting: July 8, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. Facilitator: Tim Snacks: N/A Drinks: N/A Newsletter blurb: Joe	
Review Action Items	Reviewed action items.	
Adjournment	Meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.	

Tentative Agenda Topics for July 8, 2020 Board Meeting:

HCCPS Accountability for Racial Justice/Response to Angie Gregory’s Email
Ratification of New BOT Members
BOT Roles and Committees for FY21
Update on Hiring of New Student Services Coordinator
Procedure for Forming a New BOT Committee

Public Comment by Gina Wyman
Hilltown BOT Meeting 7.8.2020

I'm here to talk about plans for reopening school and specifically about the guidelines for distance between students.

As you know, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education released initial back to school guidelines on June 25.

DESE's guidance states that "schools should aim for a physical distance of six feet [between students] when feasible, [but that] three feet is the minimum distance allowed." They also say that schools "should seek to maximize physical distance among individuals."

I am speaking tonight because I want to urge the Board and Hilltown's administrators to submit a back to school plan that requires a **minimum** of 6 feet of distance between students, **even** if that means we can accommodate fewer students in the building at one time.

Three feet of distance is only half of the six feet I am afforded in every other public place that I might visit. Grocery stores, the Northampton bike path, retail stores, etc. all require patrons to be a minimum of six feet apart. And these are places that we do not linger for hours at a time. Why would we loosen restrictions for someplace that children and teachers are going to be for six hours a day?

Mass.gov states that our state currently allows a maximum of 10 people per 1000 square feet. My classroom is approximately 500 square feet, yet I was told that I was aiming to fit all 22 students and three teachers in the room. How is it okay for 25 people to be in 500 square feet of space, when the state is only allowing 10 people to be in 1000 square feet of space? And I get to choose whether I want to shop or have my groceries delivered.

If students are placed six feet apart, and the teacher has to walk down the aisles to help students, then we would be able to stay about two or three feet from students. If students are only three feet apart, then teachers would be inches from students if they walk through the spaces between desks/tables.

As a small school, I think we should be thinking flexibly. Please note that the guidelines say that schools should plan for an in-person return to school five days per week. If six feet of distance cannot be achieved in one shift, then I think we should consider a morning and afternoon school shift to ensure that kids can be in school five days as the guidelines suggest.

It's worth noting that in DESE's "In-person learning with new safety requirements" model (#1)-- which has the least restrictions-- DESE concedes that schedules may need to be modified to meet health requirements.

I urge you to think about a schedule where we can accommodate a safe number of students in the building. To me, that would mean having students at least six feet apart from each other. Please keep in mind that Hilltown does not have a union advocating for teachers' rights, thus we are relying on the board and administrators to keep our health and safety in mind as they make transparent decisions and hopefully communicate openly with staff.

Thank you for hearing my concerns. I urge the Board and administrators to take a stand for teachers' and students' health by submitting back-to-school plans with an adequate amount of distance.

Respectfully,
Gina Wyman
Oranges' Teacher

June 17, 2020

Dear Hilltown Community: the administration, the board, teachers and families:

Last week, a group of us wrote a letter to Lara, Dan, Deirdre and Kate, expressing our gratitude to the school for publishing a “Responding to Racism” statement in the last school newsletter; while also challenging the school community to think more deeply about what social justice and racial justice mean for us as an institution led by mostly white people.

Lara responded, explaining that the crisis team discussed our letter, and was open to engaging in ongoing dialogue. She asked how we would like to proceed.

We would like to proceed in two main ways:

1. by sharing this emerging conversation with the larger Hilltown community and
2. by moving forward with several action steps.

The moment we are in as a nation is a time of reckoning. We write these letters in the spirit of reckoning with the ways that Hilltown is falling short of engaging in the kind of equity that is necessary for enacting racial justice in the here and now, and for the future.

At issue are questions of representation, policy, institutional practices, pedagogy, and curriculum, and how these shape our children’s day-to-day experiences, and most importantly, how these shape their day-to-day learning.

Hilltown engages in daily practices of white bias that hurt our children. We can do better. We must do better. In this time of deep reckoning, we are energized to join the movement for Black Lives and to heed the call for Black Lives Matter by taking steps to engage collective change, right here where our children learn and play together.

It is incumbent upon us to see how pedagogical considerations about developmental age, for example, are always also racialized conversations. What a black child knows, indeed, has to know about police violence is always more than what white parents feel comfortable telling their young white children. The protection of innocence is a racialized matter. The way the recent newsletter suggests that parents address conversations about police brutality by age and developmental stage invisibilizes this racialized reality. In doing so, the newsletter invokes a white audience and alienates students and families of color who have been talking with their children about police brutality for generations.

Likewise, a simple question in the elementary classroom about why not everyone has health care has to be articulated through a lens that does not reify unquestioned systemic inequality by simply telling young children that “many people of color are poor and therefore just don’t have access to adequate health care” – an example that came out of one of our children’s recent

classroom experiences. In this example, poor children of color are positioned as not existing at Hilltown, while white children are positioned as well-resourced, thereby accepting inequality as normal, while also denying major facets of inequality. This kind of positioning is exactly what creates and maintains a white savior mentality. And we know that this is not unusual – it is a normal positioning. It happens all the time.

Our children need more. They need better. Much much better. They need more spaces that are led by parents and students of color. They need more teachers of color. They need more peers of color. They need white teachers to do more work – to consider the myriad ways that our actions and pedagogies are raced; and to consider the ways in which to do the ongoing work of eliminating white bias from curriculum, from pedagogy, from school rituals, and from community assumptions of all kinds. This work has to be an ongoing dialogic practice: racial justice practice. One conversation will not serve; racial justice is best facilitated by a set of principles and processes that are continually scrutinized and made public to all members of the community. In order to engage these practices, we need spaces and institutional frameworks through which to do the work.

As we said in our first letter, we believe BIPOC (and our own children of color) do not need saving by white children or educators. What we need is to be in the struggle for equity together. It is past time to do this work and to do it better. Our lives are intertwined: what affects children of color directly, ultimately creates an unjust world that all children endure. As parents of color and as parents of children of color, we are acutely aware of the ways that our children experience Hilltown as Asian, Brown and Black, multiracial, biracial people. Our children have stories about pedagogical choices that are made -- and not made -- that have caused them harm. Further, these harmful choices reify the centrality of whiteness in our society, teaching white children to accept their dominance while children of color must navigate their marginalization in isolation.

To this end we would like to jumpstart the following priorities and actions:

- That the board implement an official equity committee
- That the board take a closer look at its hiring policies to prioritize the recruitment of people of color
- That the administration and the board prioritize the recruitment of faculty, administration, and staff of color.
- That the current curricular equity committee be opened up to include at least one parent of color and one student of color.
- That the community work together to create and support a parent support group for families of color.
- That the community work together to create a parent support group for families of children of color.
- That the administration and teachers work together to create an official student group that facilitates cross-grade interaction and support for students of color.
- That the administration create a newsletter section for the articulation of social justice and racial justice issues

- That the administration and special education staff create a working group that reflects on the intersection between special education services and racial justice.
- That the administration increase the amount of professional development devoted to the dismantling of white supremacy
- That the administration consider engaging the support of Drs. Romina Pacheco and Safire DeJong of the Collaborative for Educational Services to conduct audits, surveys, focus groups, strategic planning, as well as professional and community development and training around issues of equity and bias at Hilltown.

Thank you for your consideration.

Cinzia Pica
Joseph Smith
Helen Korczak
Chris Korczak
Casey Daigle
Celia Oyler
Florence Sullivan
Natasha Anderson
Vanessa Adel



**Anti-Bias Education and Anti-Racism Work
2017-2020**

In the wake of recent national events, community interest in Hilltown’s work on anti-racism and anti-bias education has increased. This document is offered in order to update and engage the community about [some of the] recent and ongoing work so that we can join together to advance our progress toward becoming a more diverse, inclusive, equitable, and just institution. This is a living document and can be added to and edited for accuracy at any time.

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Board

Date	Item	Description
Spring 2019	Hilltown began to use NEMNET for advertising positions in the school.	Hilltown became a member of NEMNET, a national resource organization committed to assisting schools and organizations in the recruitment and retention of diverse teachers, administrators and coaches. The Personnel Committee keeps track of the yield of applicants from NEMNET in order to evaluate this financial investment for the school.
Spring 2019	The Personnel Committee brought a proposal to the Board to change the hiring requirements for TAs from Bachelor’s degree to Associate’s Degree or Equivalent Experience. The proposal passed.	A review of applicants for teaching assistant positions determined that we would have a more diverse applicant pool if we changed the requirement to have a Bachelor’s degree.



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Fall 2020	The Personnel Committee (Board subcommittee) set three goals for the year, one being to develop a strategy for increasing and supporting staff diversity.	
Spring 2020	The Personnel Committee raised the question, does our internal hiring process need to change in order to hire a more diverse staff at Hilltown?	At a Board meeting, a teacher meeting, and a TA meeting, the Director of Teaching and Learning (with support from the Personnel Committee) raised the question of whether our internal/external hiring process (a benefit to staff) is important to change in order to diversify our staff. Strong feelings on both sides mean that this question will continue at the staff and Board level.
Spring 2020	The Personnel Committee determined that to achieve the goal of increasing and supporting a diverse staff, the school must work on multiple fronts at once (admissions, Board structure).	<p>Holding Equity and Justice as a Board (Topic for Discussion):</p> <p>For the past three years the Personnel Committee has worked on their goal of attracting and supporting a more diverse staff at Hilltown. While we have made some tangible changes to our practices, the diversity of our staff hasn't significantly changed. One thing we have learned is that long-term recruitment and retention of a diverse staff and community depends upon a demonstration of commitment and action at all levels of the organization in both policy and operations related to diversity, inclusion, equity, and justice (DIEJ).</p> <p>In order to advance the work of the Personnel Committee, we are asking for Board support in short term and long term ways.</p> <p>In the short term,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask Board subcommittees to report on the intersection of DIEJ and their committee's function for the school. • Keep this question on the Board agenda until we have an articulated statement and an actionable plan: How does the Board spearhead DIEJ work at the level of school governance? <p>In the long term,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify appropriate training in DIEJ for Board members • Consider DIEJ in the next Long Range Plan

Administration

Date	Item	Description
Spring	Head Start	Began visiting with Head Start program in order to

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2018		recruit more diverse kindergarten applicants.
Fall 2018	Bussing	Began working with Easthampton in order provide school bus services to eligible families.
Spring 2019	<p>Administration wrote the following document for the Charter School Renewal Application</p> <p>Civil Rights 25 Institutional Self-Evaluation for Bias Updated March 4, 2019</p>	<p><i>The district evaluates all aspects of its K-12 program annually to ensure that all students, regardless of race, color, sex, gender, identity, religion, national origin, limited English proficiency, sexual orientation, disability, or housing status, have equal access to all programs, including athletics and other extracurricular activities. It makes such changes as are indicated by the evaluation.</i></p> <p>Evaluation of access to all programs Hilltown is organized as follows:</p> <p>All Staff Professional Development: The school is committed to engaging in annual professional development to improve our ability to recognize obstacles to full access of Hilltown’s curriculum (social and academic) and programs (including athletic and other extracurricular activities).</p> <p>Equity Team: Voluntary group of staff (including teachers, TAs and administrators) meets monthly to review equity issues related to race and class including access to curriculum, resources, and school programs. Minutes are taken and action steps are documented. Recommendations are made to the full teacher group and, where appropriate, the Board of Trustees.</p> <p>School Climate Survey <u>2018-2019:</u> 7th & 8th grade only, administered electronically.* Data was analyzed and action steps were taken. Beginning in <u>2019-2020</u>, students, teachers, and administrators will self-evaluate on an annual basis. Youngest students may be interviewed as a group. We will use this model of Whole School Climate Survey.</p> <p>Analysis of Standardized Test Scores: analysis includes consideration of race/ethnicity, IEP/504, gender, English Language Learner status, and economic advantage/disadvantage.</p> <p>Analysis of Enrollment in Co-curricular and After-school Programs: analysis includes consideration of race/ethnicity, free & reduced lunch, IEP/504, gender, LEP status, and housing status. Programs include chorus, Hilltown Harmonies, rock ensemble, cross country, Ultimate Frisbee, Kids’ Club, improv, musical, drumming, Kung Fu, fiber arts, and the use of homework space. For every one of these activities, financial aid is available and we monitor to make sure the proportion of minority demographic groups participating in the activities is equal to the proportion of minority demographics in the school as a whole.</p> <p>Equity Walk- We partner with Four Rivers Charter School to facilitate an annual Equity Walk at one another’s schools. Equity Walks focus on the visual and physical environment as well as school data.</p>

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Spring 2020	As part of renewing our Charter, the administration updated all Accountability Criteria with the state by adding language related standards of equity.	For example, instead of stating that 80% of our 3-8 students will score in the top quartile on standardized tests, we now state that the 80% of our 3-8 students scoring the top quartile of standardized tests <i>will reflect our 3-8 demographics proportionately.</i>
Summer 2020	Community Meeting/Safire DeJong and Romina Pacheco	A group of parents recommended that Hilltown explore working with local social justice educators Safire DeJong and Romina Pacheco. Director of Teaching and Learning met with Safire. Plans in process for a summer community meeting to be facilitated by Safire and Romina.

Professional Development

Date	Item	Description
Fall 2017	Building our Collective Commitment to Advancing our Proficiency as Anti-bias Educators.	<p>Goal for the year: improving our ability to recognize, de-stress, and respond to actions and interactions (passive and assertive) that are unfair along the lines of power and social identity (race, class, gender, ability, religion, family structure, etc.). Workshop drew from,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Howard Stevenson’s model (RECAST) for coping and assertiveness in the face of racial stress (summer reading from the Equity Group) • Carol Dwek’s model of Growth Mindset (necessary mindset for empowering change) • Hye-Kiung Kang & Peggy O’Neill’s model of Critical Conversations (in which power dynamics in social context are illuminated, examined in the moment, and reflected upon in order to produce change) • Louise Derman-Sparks and Julie Olsen Edwards model of <u>Anti-Bias Education</u> (book) • Mindfulness work (already in progress at Hilltown)
Fall 2017	Special Education Referral training	Julie Anne Levin led workshop with special education teachers and related service providers: focused on the systemic likelihood of over-referring children living in poverty and chronic

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		stress for special education services (and how to systematically prevent this trend).
SY17-18	Read <u>Anti-Bias Education</u> a little at a time over the course of the year.	The book is essentially a straightforward survey course, providing a chapter on race, class, gender, religion, ability, and family structures. Reading and discussing this book as a staff is Beverly Daniel Tatum's suggestion.
SY17-18	Do short role-plays at staff and teacher meetings to expand our capacity to respond to unplanned instances of injustice. Begin to document instances of tension related to social identities (e.g. race, class, gender) that happen at Hilltown for future role plays.	<p><u>Sample Role Play Scenarios</u></p> <p>K/1st classroom, 85% white, 15 % students of color, on the playground: teacher overhears a group of 4 children playing together (two white, two brown). One child tells the another child that she ought to be the princess because she looks like one. The girl being appointed princess has white skin and blonde hair. The teacher overhears, and...</p> <p>2nd /3rd classroom, 85% white, 15% students of color, in the hallway by the cubbies: a white student (A) asks an African-American student (B) if she can touch his hair while already beginning to pat his head. He shirks away while she continues to touch, "I like it! It's fuzzy!" The teachers sees this, and..</p> <p>4th/5th classroom, 85% white, 15% students of color, most students are sitting with their teacher in morning meeting: an African-American student (A) arrives late. Her hair is, for the first time that year, not braided and combed out. When she enters the room a learning-disabled Asian student (B) reacts, "Aaah! Bad hair day?" The class freezes. Student A walks back out to the locker area. The teacher...</p> <p>6th grade classroom, 90% middle and upper-middle class, 10% on free-and-reduced lunch, morning meeting: a teacher tells the class, "Martin's dad is going to drive on the field trip. He's a plastic surgeon and he's got everything, like a lake house, and a brand new Tesla. I bet everyone wants to ride in that car, right?" Martin (A) looks uncomfortable. Several students (B&C) get excited about the Tesla and ask Martin about the Tesla and the Lake House. Two students (D&E) exchange a look that conveys that what the teacher said was "weird". The student teacher...</p> <p>7th/8th grade classroom, 85% white, 15% students of color, humanities class: students are discussing pre-Civil War slavery. Student A (white) "I know slavery was wrong but it must have been kind of nice to have a load of slaves to just do everything for you for free. I wouldn't mind that." Student B (white) "That's so wrong! That's totally racist." Student A "I wasn't being racist! I was just saying I would like to have someone do all my work for me. I don't care what color they are." Student C (Latino) "But slavery only existed because of racism, so you can't really like it at all without being racist." Student A "I think you just think that because you're not white."</p>

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		It wasn't your people who were enslaved, by the way." The teacher hears this exchange and...
Fall 2018	Josh Miller, Smith Professor and author of <u>Racism in the United States: Implication for the Helping Profession</u> , hired to consult with the Director of Teaching and Learning hired to help develop a school leadership strategy toward helping the institution adopt a meaningful commitment to anti-racism work.	Miller encouraged us to assess the depth of our current shared (among staff) commitment to an anti-racist school identity. What are the limits? Find our growing edge. Administration drafted commitments to ongoing anti-racism work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing annual professional development in anti-racism work • Asking teachers to review at least one curricular area per year with the intention of moving whiteness out of the center • Asking teachers to consider choosing an annual professional goal related to the work of anti-bias education and/or decentering whiteness • Assessing our progress (example:inventories of our visual environment or our book collections, inventories of our shared art and music collection, school climate surveys, participation in co-curricular activities) using walk-throughs and data inventories.
Spring 2019	Hilltown contracted with Mary Gannon from the Vermont Partnership for Fairness and Diversity. Her three-hour workshop focused on social identities, power, and becoming an anti-racism institution.	Staff feedback was mixed. There was concern that Hilltown (as an institution) was not ready to "declare" a commitment to bring an antiracist institution, while also a concern that not all staff were on board for making this a non-negotiable. Some teachers requested that the next facilitator for anti-racism work at Hilltown be a POC.
Spring 2019	Hilltown Contracted with Rachel Simmons, author of <u>Odd Girl Out</u> , to gain perspective on gender inequities in schooling.	This was an extremely successful PD. It led to action work on "community values and skills" in our progress reports. Teachers talked afterwards about how much more visible gender inequities are, and how they affect learning, after going through her interactive presentation.
Spring 2019	Hilltown adds memorandum to Civil Rights 25 (document filed with Charter School Renewal Application).	All Staff Professional Development: The school is committed to engaging in annual professional development to improve our ability to recognize obstacles to full access of Hilltown's curriculum (social and academic) and programs (including athletic and other extracurricular activities).



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Spring 2019	Director of Teaching and Learning participated in Smith College workshop in facilitating Critical Conversations at Smith College with Peggy O'Neill.	Critical conversations are those in which <i>power dynamics</i> in <i>social context</i> are illuminated, substantively examined <i>in the moment</i> and <i>subsequently reflected upon</i> in order to <i>produce change</i> —personal, systemic, institutional. The Smith School for Social Work has embarked on training faculty to facilitate critical conversations, a model developed by Professors Hye-Kyung Kang and <u>Peggy O'Neill</u> in 2015.
Fall 2019	August workshop for teachers: updates on our work as a school re: commitment to anti-racism and anti-bias education; how do we become accountable?	<p>1) Formalize institutional structures that promote anti-racism and anti-bias education 2) Build in a vehicle for accountability 3) Build in a schedule for goal-setting so that our structures are not only maintained but improve over time.</p> <p>Provisions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annual PD related to anti-racism and anti-bias education 2. Volunteer Equity Group meets monthly, keeps minutes with action steps 3. Analyze our standardized test scores, discipline data, and after-school enrollment. Share data with staff and Board. 4. Self-evaluation on an annual basis for all staff and students. Share data with staff and Board. 5. Proposed Equity Walk exchange with Four Rivers Charter School. Share data with staff. 6. Administration and teachers develop annual equity and justice goals that are meaningful and measurable; report to one another. <p>Administrative Commitments Report Back</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In September, share a report on hiring and recruitment • Keep the conversation visible • Support teachers is setting and reaching annual goals • Seek external feedback
October 2019	Anti-bias Education Accountability Questions: what questions do we want to ask and answer for ourselves (satisfactorily)? <i>Generated in teacher meeting 10/15/19</i>	<p>What kind of training has the school provided?</p> <p>Has time been allotted for curriculum development and revisions with colleagues?</p> <p>How have you changed your practice as a result of anti-bias education PD? Can you think of an example?</p> <p>Do the books that are available represent diverse perspectives and diverse authors?</p>



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		<p>How do we engage parents and families in being part of our commitment to anti-racism?</p> <p>Whole school events- what evidence do we have that everyone has an equal sense of belonging (e.g. All Schools, assemblies, fundraisers, family dance).</p> <p>What data, if any, offers evidence that we've acquired a more diverse staff and student body since identifying anti-bias education as our goal?</p> <p>What evidence do we have that once we've done all of the above, our school is moving in a more inclusive direction?</p>
January 2020	Hilltown contracted with Dr. Liza Talusan to lead a whole-staff workshop, <u>Building Conscious Leading and Learning: Building Capacity for Culturally Responsive Work.</u>	Excellent response from staff. Some said they felt we galvanized around this topic all together for the first time. One teacher said, "Now I know why you keep bringing this up in teacher meetings and doing so much PD around it. I thought it was just your thing, before."
February 2020	The Board supported the Director of Teaching and Learning's application to Dr. Talusan's summer institute for school leaders. The application was accepted and the school will underwrite the cost.	Join Dr. Liza Talusan for a 2 day intensive master class where you will dive deeper into issues of equity and inclusion as it relates to your personal and professional goals. You'll take your advanced knowledge of race, identity, justice and equity and put it all into a plan that works along side your values, goals, and motivation to #makethingsbetter in your life and community. At the end of the 2 day seminar, you will walk away with your personalized action plan for creating greater equity and inclusion in your personal and professional life in a way that aligns with your values, beliefs, and will to make change.



Teaching and Learning

Note: The work done in classrooms is constant and ongoing- examples of the kinds of work happening are listed below, but it would not be possible to enumerate the many ways teachers are intentionally addressing anti-bias and anti-racist work in classrooms both socially and through curriculum.

Date	Item	Description
Fall 2017 & 18	Artist in Residence grant	With a gift to the school, we prioritized bringing visiting artists to Hilltown who are POC (Bisko Kababa, drumming; Ally Garcia, hip hop dance).
Fall 2018	Renamed/refocused a 4 th /5 th history unit	Formerly 'Westward Expansion', currently 'European Explorers and Their Impact'. Adding resources to existing unit to de-center Eurocentric history.
Spring 2018	Director of Teaching and Learning obtained a grant from the Francis R. Dewing Foundation to build a Hilltown Community Library in which 75% of the children's books feature characters of color (beyond books about slavery and the civil rights movement) and in which all books are screened for positive messages about identity.	Hilltown acquired over 100 books and installed shelves in the Director's Corner. Using BookRetriever, families and teachers can check out books.
Spring 2019	Committee assembled to choose new reading program for K-5 chooses Being A Reader/Making Meaning	Curriculum chosen in part because the book selection is socially conscious, prominently including authors of color, communities of color, and characters of color. Recommended teaching techniques do not imply prior cultural norms. Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) [efforts to accelerate learning for all students] is explicit. A Board member for Collaborative Classroom is Zaretta Hammond, author of <u>Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain: Promoting Authentic Engagement and</u>



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		<p><u>Rigor Among Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students</u>. Her work informs Collaborative Classroom. An interview with her about equity in teaching can be found here.</p>
Fall 2019	RTI (Response to Intervention)	<p>For three years, Hilltown has been working to refine its RTI system in order to ensure precise assessments of students coupled with precise interventions. The goal of RTI is to use a team process and data (as opposed to individual, narrative impressions) to identify student needs as well as the most effective/least restrictive interventions that successfully support the learner. Teachers are empowered to intervene in the classroom. Systems of education are examined (what is available at Tier I? What is available at Tier II?) Special Education referrals are ultimately more informed, data-driven, team-generated, and less likely to be steered by bias and/or a teacher's need for help.</p>
Fall 2019	<p>Began review of Underground Railroad Study (grades 2/3) in light of questions about appropriateness, age level, fit with state standards, and the dangers of telling truths that are too hard too soon/lacking context/exceeding ability to process and the dangers of sanitizing U.S. history or centering white people in the story of abolishing slavery. Worked on making sure to center the African-American experience and African-American heroes of the movement.</p>	<p>Reviewed Teaching Hard History Standards (from Teaching Tolerance) to ascertain developmental appropriateness.</p> <p>K-2 Essential Knowledge:</p> <p>Students should be encouraged to think and talk about the meaning of freedom.</p> <p>Students should know that...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...slavery is when a person owns another person as property. ...enslaved indigenous people and Africans came from nations with diverse cultures and traditions and that they continued many of these traditions while enslaved. ...enslaved people had families that could be split up at any time. ...enslaved people hated being enslaved and resisted bondage in many ways. ...enslaved people tried to maintain their cultures while building new traditions that continue to be important. ...enslavers exploited the many types of highly skilled labor of enslaved people for their own profit. ...slavery and race are intimately connected. ...slavery came to be associated with blackness. ...white people developed racist ideas to justify enslaving people of color. ...many people worked individually and in groups to end slavery. ...slavery was the cause of the Civil War. <p>MA standards point toward learning about local history. Worked on revising unit to tell a local story. Worked with David Ruggles center to create a history mystery. Met with local teachers from other public schools</p>

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		with similar interests.
Fall 2019	Six classroom teachers wrote annual professional goals related to revising curriculum to incorporate multiple perspectives and more directly support anti-racism education.	
Fall 2019	Director of Teaching and Learning obtained a school-wide grant to expand the Hilltown Community Library.	Specifically, this grant increased diversity of authors in our collection and built a special collection of indigenous authors. Acquired 30+ new books.
Winter 2019	4th/5th grade teacher obtained a grant for the purchase of middle grade novel sets representing diverse communities, diverse characters, and diverse authors.	
Ongoing	Books added to the Prisms literature collection in the last three years are authored by authors of color.	<u>Gone Crazy in Alabama</u> Rita Williams-Garcia <u>Long Way Down</u> Jason Reynolds <u>Brown Girl Dreaming</u> Jacqueline Woodson <u>Inside Out and Back Again</u> Thannha Lai <u>All American Boys</u> Jason Reynolds

Equity Team

Date	Item	Description
Summer 2017	The Equity Team read (or read parts of) Howard Stevenson's book,	Met for discussion in late August, discussed how to use key points in staff training.

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	<u>Promoting Racial Literacy in Schools</u>	
Fall 2017	Helped develop role play scenarios for teacher meetings	
Fall 2018	Josh Miller Consult	<p>Josh Miller (Smith College, Racism in the United States: Implications for the Helping Professions) consulted with the Equity Group to help the committee think about next steps in affecting change. Some members of the committee read (or read excerpts from) Miller's book, <u>Racism in the United States: Implications for Helping Professions</u>.</p> <p>Miller asked the Equity Group to imagine what would be different in five-ten years if our school were to be more fully committed to anti-racism. Aspirations included decentering whiteness, having open conversations about race and power on the table at all times with students and staff, and creating a visual and curricular environment where all students are fueled and empowered and skilled to fight racism. The committee articulated that we want no one to have to don a persona to be here; repress their culture, style, language, or music, or feel like visitors passing through a white space. The committee envisioned the center of power being multi-racial and multicultural and all members of the community as participants in critical thinking about race and power and developed this vision statement for Hilltown:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be a school where students of color have multiple mentors and classmates who are also people of color • To be a school where the curriculum has been critically evaluated and includes a variety of affirming, multi-racial voices, images, histories & perspectives; where whiteness is not centered. • To be a school where teachers have a strong practice of professional reflection and development related to understanding dynamics of race and privilege • To be a school that feels like a safe place for all people, with healthy avenues for addressing racial tension. <p>This vision statement was shared with all staff in the fall of 2019.</p>
Spring 2019	Promoted computer loan program	Implemented
Spring 2019	Promoted a review of the after school ski program- is it equally accessible for all students?	School began to manage transportation and cost of ski program

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Fall 2019	Equity Team agreed to work on a statement about the school commitment to working against racism, describing practices to achieve progress. Also agreed to learn how other schools have evaluated and monitored progress toward becoming anti-racisms institutions	Draft in progress
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Not included in this document are the everyday, pivotal, unplanned, and school-changing moments that arise at Hilltown:

- When a student lets a teacher know that the Martin Luther King Jr. celebration makes her feel uncomfortable because she is a black student in a white school.
- When the police/guard presence on the Prisms field trip to Washington D.C. impacts black students differently than white students.
- When a student pulls on the corners of his eyes to indicate the appearance of a classmate.
- When white students stare at a student of color during discussions of slavery or immigration.
- When a staff person asks a student too many questions about care of her braids.
- When a staff person wonders why it matters if the literature selection is authored mainly by white people since the students are almost all white.
- When teams are doing class placement for students and confront the dilemma: what to do- put a child with his best friends or with the two classmates who also have brown skin?
- When a black student tells a white administrator that Hilltown is trying too hard.

We work with and through these moments, making changes and finding ways toward a more just an equitable school.



How Do We Hold Equity and Justice at Hilltown as a Board?

Topic for Discussion from the Personnel Committee:

For the past three years the Personnel Committee has worked on their goal of attracting and supporting a more diverse staff at Hilltown. While we have made some tangible changes to our practices, the diversity of our staff hasn't significantly changed. One thing we have learned is that long-term recruitment and retention of a diverse staff and community depends upon a demonstration of commitment and action at all levels of the organization in both policy and operations related to diversity, inclusion, equity, and justice (DIEJ).

In order to advance the work of the Personnel Committee, we are asking for Board support in short term and long term ways.

In the short term,

- Ask Board subcommittees to report on the intersection of DIEJ and their committee's function for the school.
- Keep this question on the Board agenda until we have an articulated statement and an actionable plan: How does the Board spearhead DIEJ work at the level of school governance?

In the long term,

- Identify appropriate training in DIEJ for Board members
- Consider DIEJ in the next Long Range Plan

Expectations of HCCPS Committee Chairs

- Coordinate committee meeting dates, times, and locations for the year
- Facilitate (or delegate facilitation of) committee meetings and ensure minutes are taken
- Ensure that notice of meetings are posted at least 48 hours in advance. Notice should include date, time, and location of the meeting and subject matters to be discussed. Location should be accessible.
- If meetings are rescheduled or canceled, Chair must notify Nicole, Deirdre, and Grace immediately so updates can be made to the posted meeting date (entryway bulletin board, school newsletter, and school website).
- Set goals with committee at beginning of year and submit to board by October meeting
- Submit written monthly report on committee business and decision-making to Board of Trustees. This should be submitted to Nicole by the Friday before any Board meeting, to ensure inclusion in the Board meeting packet. A form is provided.
- When bringing proposals to the Board, complete the Proposal Form and submit it for distribution at the same time as your monthly report.
- Communicate with the Governance and Board Sustainability Committee about recruitment needs for the committee. Orient new committee members.
- Submit summary of year activities for the Board annual report in a timely manner. These will be compiled and distributed at the Annual Meeting.

(revised 6/2018)



Job Description for HCCPS President of the Board of Trustees (revised 7/2020)

The Board President's main goals are as follows:

- ensure that the school adheres to its Accountability Plan: the success of the academic program, the viability of the organization, and the faithfulness to the mission and charter
- ensure that the Board has focus and direction and is setting and meetings its goals
- ensure that the Domain Coordinators and the Board are working as a team
- ensure that the Board is responsive to the cooperative and is perceived as such by the cooperative
- ensure that the school is compliant with all applicable state regulations

Duties include the following:

1. Schedule bi-monthly Domain Council meetings, draft and distribute meeting agendas, and have agendas posted to comply with the Open Meeting Law.
2. Attend Domain Council meetings, take and distribute meeting minutes, and write regular reports to the Board on Domain Council activity (see Expectations of Committee Chairs). This will keep the Board abreast of management issues and pending requests and proposals.
3. Schedule monthly Board of Trustees meetings, draft meeting agendas in collaboration with Domain Council, and timely submit meeting agendas for distribution and posting.
4. Facilitate or arrange facilitation for all Board of Trustees meetings, ensuring that the consensus process is followed.
5. Act as official representative of the Board to the Commonwealth Board of Education, and any other official body (signing documents, letters, reports as needed.)
6. Serve as a positive face for the Board within the school community. Find means to regularly inform parents of board discussions, agenda items, points of input, and to invite presence at board meetings. Attend community meetings whenever possible. Respond to community members on behalf of the Board as needed.

7. Ensure that the Board maintains a strong working relationship with its partner 501(c)3 organization, Friends of Hilltown.
8. Report annually on Board activity. Write a letter at the end of the year to the cooperative for the Board's Annual Report. Write a separate letter to be included in the official HCCPS Annual Report to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.
9. Help plan and run the Annual Meeting.
10. Provide ongoing support for Directors and ensure their supervision and evaluation, either personally or by appointment of committee.



Job Description for HCCPS Vice President of the Board of Trustees (revised 7/2020)

The Board Vice President's duties include the following:

1. Attend Domain Council meetings.
2. Facilitate the Complaint Procedure. (See the Complaint Procedure description for specific process and role.)
3. Support the President and assume the President's responsibilities (see the President job description) if the President is incapacitated.

The Vice President will normally transition into the role of President when the President's term is over.



**Job Description for HCCPS Treasurer of the Board of Trustees
(revised 7/2020)**

The Treasurer is responsible for ensuring that the Board of Trustees maintains the fiscal viability of the school.

Duties include:

1. Review and sign official documents such as the Financial Audit.
2. Be available to co-sign checks, if needed.
3. Monitor and provide support and assistance to the Director of Administration on financial matters.
4. Serve as chair of the finance committee.
5. Present quarterly financial reports to the BOT.
6. Assist with reviewing/refining the school's yearly budget.



Job Description for HCCPS Clerk of the Board of Trustees (revised 7/2020)

The Board Clerk's duties include the following:

1. Ensure that the Board of Trustees (BOT) is in compliance with all applicable Massachusetts reporting requirements.
2. Ensure all BOT documents (policies, minutes, records, etc.) are kept up-to-date and accessible to the HCCPS community. In particular, ensure that the BOT meeting support process is followed.
3. Ensure that all required BOT correspondence within the HCCPS community is completed in a timely manner.

Categories of duties

1. Reporting to the State
 - a. Summer letter regarding board membership
 - b. Annual financial disclosure forms
 - c. Conflict of Interest training
 - d. Certificate of receipt of Open Meeting Law materials
 - e. State approval of new board members
 - f. Resignations and end-of-term departures
 - g. BOT & Committee meetings and meeting date/time changes
2. Keeping on-line board materials up to date
3. Annual meeting support
4. Board of Trustees meetings support

(See HCCPS Clerk Procedures)



Domain Directors Report July 2020

1. On July 1 we officially welcome Kate Saccento as Hilltown's new Director of Administration.
2. We submitted our new Accountability Plan to the state. We received feedback and will continue to work on this through the summer.
3. Hilltown is fully enrolled for the fall. From last year, one student is moving from our 6th grade to PVPA for 7th grade. This student does not need to be replaced as we over-enrolled 7th grade last year to compensate for a smaller 8th grade cohort. We have 20 new kindergarteners and 10 new sixth graders.
4. The state has issued guidance (see memorandum [HERE](#)) directing all public schools in Massachusetts to plan on a full return to school in the fall while also developing hybrid and remote learning plans by the end of August. The Directors are working on these plans.
5. We sent out a survey to parents to gather information about the impact of hybrid and remote learning on families. We will use this data as we form contingency plans.
6. Kate and Lara submitted a grant to DESE for funding to support summer enrichment in math and reading for students with demonstrated needs.
7. Teachers volunteered to work on a number of summer committees unique to COVID.
 - a. Sounding board on school schedule
 - b. SEL support for students returning from COVID
 - c. Teacher-to-teacher (across schools): what did we learn from the spring that we can use going forward?
 - d. Equity under hybrid and remote learning circumstances
 - e. Optimizing hybrid and remote learning platforms (technology, communication systems)
 - f. System for passing information about students and curriculum forward to next year's teachers ("Passing On").



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Domain Council Minutes – June 19, 2020, 8:00am

<https://zoom.us/j/94324877177>

Present: Tim Reynolds, Matt Dube, Dan Klatz, Lara Ramsey, Deirdre Arthen, Marguerite Durant

Regrets:

Topic	Discussion	Action (if necessary)
Meeting Schedule	Next board meeting is July 8. We'll meet July 3.	
Equity and justice	Administrators are creating a report regarding steps the school has already taken and we will have a broader discussion at the July board meeting. We discussed how to form a special community-based group around the specific issue of racial justice separate from the current Equity Team, which has a different scope.	
Fall reopening	A parent asked if the school had considered acquiring additional space in the fall to accommodate the requirement for fewer students per room. It was reiterated that the Directors will necessarily be spending the majority of their time this summer on reopening plans.	Directors will consider the idea in their plans for reopening.
Next Meeting Date/Time/Location	July 3, 2020 8:30a https://zoom.us/j/94324877177	
Adjournment	9:00a	



HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE
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Domain Council Minutes – July 3, 2020, 8:30am

<https://zoom.us/j/81691654030>

Present: Tim Reynolds, Matt Dube, Dan Klatz, Lara Ramsey, Deirdre Arthen, Marguerite Durant

Regrets:

Topic	Discussion	Action (if necessary)
Domain Council Meeting	With Dan's departure we discussed the format and mechanics of Domain Council. We clarified that Tim will be responsible for sending BoT Agendas and Domain Council minutes to Noelle and Nicole.	Tim to send the agenda and minutes after the meeting.
BoT Agenda	Acceptance of new members School opening update Diversity, Inclusion, Equity, and Justice report	Tim will send the agenda to Noelle and Nicole.
Equity and justice	The Directors will be providing a report of the recent and ongoing work the school has engaged in around issues of bias and anti-racism.	Report to be delivered at the board meeting.
Fall reopening	The state has published guidelines for opening in the fall and has asked schools to prepare three plans for opening; one for completely on-site, one for a hybrid model, and one for all remote.	Kate will introduce the guidance and talk about the process.
Next Meeting Date/Time/Location	July 24, 2020 8:30a https://zoom.us/j/81691654030	
Adjournment	09:40a	



GABS Committee Meeting Minutes – July 1, 2020

Meeting Location: By Zoom

Present: Deirdre Arthern; Noelle Barrist Stern

Regrets: Paula Ingram

Topic	Discussion	Action (if necessary)
BOT Roles for Next Year	Reviewed and updated job descriptions for BOT President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Clerk and expectations for Committee Chairs	Noelle will submit descriptions and expectations to Nicole for 7/8/20 BOT meeting packet.
Review Action Items	Action items reviewed.	
Tentative Agenda Topics for Next Meeting	TBD	
Next Meeting Date/Time/Location	TBD following 7/8/20 BOT meeting.	
Adjournment	Meeting adjourned at 5:46 p.m.	

Personnel Committee Meeting Minutes- June 17, 2020

7:30 a.m. Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/148002843?pwd=eTFzcDBCY2RiSkxkUmttUmVqcFNoQT09>

Password = heypeople

Present: Lara Ramsey, Dawn Reesman, Kelly Woods, Nicole Grinaski, Gaby Blaustein, Liz Preston, Marguerite Durant, Kathleen Szegda

Regrets: None

Topic	Discussion	Action
<p>Proposal for Board Discussion</p>	<p>We discussed the statement Kelly drafted, explaining to the Board that attracting and sustaining a more diverse staff hinges somewhat on the visibility of equity and justice work at every level of the institution, including the Board level. We revised the statement after discussing the</p> <p>We identified several specific suggestions that we want to raise and discuss at the next Board meeting.</p> <p>Could every Board committee articulate how their domain intersects with equity and justice at Hilltown?</p> <p>Could we agree to keep the topic of how the Board holds equity and justice at Hilltown on the agenda until it is answered?</p> <p>Can we make it our practice to offer DIEJ training to Board members?</p> <p>Can we organize the role of DIEJ work in the next long range plan (starting in the fall)?</p> <p>We aren't sure whether an Equity Committee at the Board level is the way to go- that's why we want a</p>	<p>Submit statement to Board packet.</p> <p>Add to agenda though Domain Council.</p>

	discussion. Another way to hold the work is to embed accountability into all of the work of the Board. Some research says that isolating Equity work instead of integrating it holds the depth of the work back.	
Next Meeting	July 22, 7:30 a.m. Link	
Adjourn	9:00 a.m.	