

**APPLICATION FOR RENEWAL
OF A PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL**

**HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL
1 INDUSTRIAL PARKWAY
EASTHAMPTON, MA 01027**

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Introduction to the School

<i>Name of School</i>	Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School		
Type of Charter (Commonwealth or Horace Mann)	Commonwealth	Location	Easthampton, Aug 2014
Regional or Non-Regional?	Regional	Districts in Region	Amherst-Pelham, Belchertown, Central Berkshire Regional, Easthampton, Gateway Regional, Granby, Hadley, Hampshire Regional, Hatfield, Mohawk Regional, Northampton, South Hadley, Ware, Erving, Frontier Regional, Gill Montague Regional, Greenfield, Hawlemont Regional, Leverett, Mohawk Regional, New Salem-Wendell, Orange (Mahar Regional), Pioneer Valley Regional
Year Opened	1995	Year(s) Renewed	2000, 2005, 2010
Maximum Enrollment	218	Current Enrollment	175; 193 in September, 2014
Chartered Grade Span	K-8	Current Grade Span	K-8
# of Instructional Days per school yr	180	Students on Waitlist	243
School Hours: 8:15-3 Mon-Fri; Grades K-5 dismiss 12:30 on Wed		Age of School: 19 years	
Mission Statement	* To involve young people in a school which 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 operates through a consensus-based governance structure. * To cultivate children’s individual voices and a shared respect for each other, our community, and the world around us.		

School Performance and Program Implementation

Faithfulness to Charter

Charter School Performance Criteria Relating to Faithfulness to the Charter

Criterion 1: Mission and Key Design Elements

The Hilltown Philosophy Statement articulates the cornerstones of our approach to learning:

The Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School (HCCPS) was founded in 1995 as a Massachusetts Public Charter School. Inspired by the pre-schools of Reggio Emilia in Italy, our educational approach is grounded in knowledge of children's development and in a commitment to teaching creativity, critical thinking skills, and strong basic skills.

At HCCPS, we believe that children construct their understanding of the world through direct experience, with teachers serving as guides and resources. We create an engaging and joyful learning environment using an interdisciplinary, project-based curriculum. Emphasis is placed on asking children and adults to reflect on and document the learning process. The expressive arts play a critical role in the academic and social curriculum, and create a common language that brings our community together in meaningful ways.

HCCPS welcomes and relies on family involvement. Children, families, staff and community form an integrated, interdependent system whose governance structures guide and support the school and its educational program. Beyond academic curriculum, children learn essential life skills through participation in an intimate, whole school cooperative. Involvement in the local environment and its communities inspires learning and encourages social and civic responsibility as well as stewardship for the earth.

Parents and teachers help children to care for and respect themselves and each other. We strongly believe that cultivation of each individual voice within a community leads to inclusion of and respect for differences and multiple perspectives.

Our interdisciplinary, experiential, hands-on approach to learning is not only evident in the thematic based projects students tackle each year, but in the way staff meets to plan and adapt the curriculum. Teachers in Kindergarten-Grade 5 spend Wednesday afternoons working collaboratively to ensure that the arts, specifically visual art and music, are a central part of student learning experiences. Teachers in Grades 6-8 also meet regularly to

do this planning. In fact, collaboration among teachers is so important to our work that we include a collaborative project as part of our hiring process.

Multi-age learning experiences and the inclusion of parents in all aspects of the school are also ways that Hilltown builds this community beyond the boundaries of each classroom. Parents are welcome in any class at almost any time and they are regularly present there. Younger and older students meet each other in mini-courses, at lunch, on the playground, as “Buddies” and by doing special projects together, as well as during their time at our weekly All-School Assembly.

From our original charter in 1995 to today, a shared language has evolved at Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School - from the songs that we sing, to our mission statement, to the student-generated Code of Cooperation and the Hilltown Community Compact (see Attachments 1 and 2) – which gives both students and their families a powerful sense of belonging. Long-standing weekly and yearly traditions at the school serve to reinforce the collaborative identity of our school. These range from the Welcoming Ceremony at the beginning of the year, to our weekly All School gatherings, from our Solstice Celebration in December to our Grandparents Day in May. It all culminates each June when the members of the eighth grade class are uniquely acknowledged and affirm for their years in the school at graduation. All of these traditions reinforce and enhance the idea of an intimate community which guides and supports the school.

Part of sustaining an intimate community includes reaching out and sharing ourselves with others. Hilltown has developed a strong ongoing Community Service Learning relationship with The Overlook at Northampton, a nearby nursing home, which involves every student in the school every year. At the end of each year we have a culminating Summer Celebration including all of our school community and many of the residents and staff at Overlook. In anticipation of the move we have already begun to explore new partnerships in our new host community of Easthampton.

Special family or all-adult social events are also held on a regular basis to provide a way for parents to connect with one another and with the teachers and staff in an outside of school environment. Assigned “Link Families” and school-sponsored social gatherings during the summer offer incoming families a connection with returning families so that no one enters the school without knowing at least one other person.

Date	Amendment Requested	Approved?
7/25/2013	Relocation from Haydenville to Easthampton	yes
7/25/2012	Enrollment cap increase from 180-218	yes

Criterion 4: Dissemination

We have disseminated our work in a number of ways over the past five years:

Student Teachers

At Hilltown one of our primary means of dissemination is to support a regular flow of student teachers from several local universities and colleges. Over the past four years, 23 students from the University of Massachusetts, Smith College, Antioch University, and Westfield State involved in pre-practicum and full student teaching placements have spent time in HCCPS classrooms. Our Long Range Plan (see Attachment 3) initiates a process to establish a more formal internship program by partnering with a local institution of higher learning.

In addition we regularly host visiting professionals from local districts, other districts in Massachusetts and from other states.

Assessments:

Over the past four years HCCPS has collaborated with several institutions and our successful assessment strategies have been offered as models to educators throughout nearby districts and across the state. Our 8th grade independent culminating project and other tools have been well documented and shared numerous times over the past five years. Between 2010 and 2014 our teachers have:

- served on a team creating a performance assessment in history at the Collaborative for Educational Services in Northampton, and also worked there to develop K-5 professional development for teachers using the Library of Congress resources
- contributed to a book on performance assessment coauthored by Chris Gallagher, Writing Program Director, Professor, English Department, Northeastern University in which the 8th grade independent project at HCCPS is described at length
- completed a three-year commitment to work with BQPAI (Building Quality Performance Assessment Initiative) through the Center for Collaborative Education

to develop performance assessments in English Language Arts that can be used throughout the Commonwealth. All of our classroom teachers participated in the training and development of these assessments over three years. A team from BQ visited Hilltown during the 8th graders' final presentations in 2012, and is now sharing this practice as a model assessment with other schools.

Teaching methods:

- Over three years one of our teachers did extensive work with the Teaching American History programs, was a presenter in Emerging America's Teaching with Primary Sources program, taught in the "Let Freedom Ring 2011" summer Teaching American History Program and, in subsequent years, offered presentations for the Boston Public Schools, the most recent one drawing 80 participants for either PDPs or graduate credits.
- One of our 4/5th grade teachers lectured at Westfield State University about using primary source materials in elementary classrooms with an emphasis on women's history.
- A classroom teacher and her students were filmed to promote the use of primary source documents by the Emerging America program, and one was filmed for demonstration purposes related to high quality instruction of English Language learners by the Center for English Language Education.
- In 2012-13 one of our teachers took a one year leave of absence to serve as the Teacher in Residence at Westfield State University. While there she taught classes, supervised student teachers and shared approaches used at HCCPS with teachers from many area district schools. She also led a full day workshop, "Real Kids, Real Learning, Real History" for area teachers, interns, faculty and the mayor and superintendent of Westfield.

Community Service Learning:

Community Service Learning (CSL) has been integrated into all classrooms at HCCPS for the past decade.

- In 2010-11 a class of 5th graders shared their partnership experience with a local nursing home with the participants of the state-wide Massachusetts Community Service Learning Conference.
- In 2011-12 our Community Service Club developed a strong relationship with Whole Children, a local non-profit organization for children on the autism spectrum.

At the annual Massachusetts CSL Conference the member students lead a workshop on setting up a service learning club and the benefits of their experience.

Other types of dissemination:

In the past year we have shared methods directly in two ways with local districts:

- Our Education Coordinator consulted with Berkshire Trail Elementary School to share our success with multi-age classrooms. This is a local elementary school that will be instituting mixed grade classrooms. Given our 19 years of success with this model, they sought our expertise during their planning phase. We will continue to consult with Berkshire Trail during the next year.
- Together with the local Mass Audubon Society chapter we won a grant from the Community Foundation of Western Mass. We invited the faculty of the Easthampton and Williamsburg school districts to participate with our faculty in Project Wild, a program of two workshops for teachers on a nationally award winning environmental education curriculum. We are excited about continuing this collaboration, especially since our new facility is within a mile of the Audubon Sanctuary.

Academic Program Success

Charter School Performance Criteria Relating to Academic Program Success

Criterion 5: Student Performance

We believe that the core indicators of the accountability system, along with the measures outlined in our accountability plan, represent student performance accurately at Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School.

Criterion 6: Program Delivery

Curriculum Review Process

A major goal of our long range planning process was to implement a system of regular review of the major curricular areas; English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Physical Education, Health, Foreign Language, Art, Music and Technology. During the winter of 2014, the Education Coordinator, together with teachers designed a new process and sequence for these reviews, and the Board of Trustees was updated on this process. The process involves the following fourteen steps:

1. Establish a Curriculum Evaluation Committee whose primary role is oversight of the process.
2. Complete a Comprehensive Survey based on CCSS and MA Frameworks for teachers to document current practice for each curricular area.
3. Aggregate the data.
4. Identify curricula areas omitted duplicated and out of sequence
5. Curriculum Evaluation Committee makes recommendations to revise curriculum.
6. Realign areas if deemed necessary by Curriculum Evaluation Committee.
7. Document how multiple perspectives are presented in curricular areas with data from teachers.
8. Document differentiation strategies and methods for meeting the needs of diverse learners, with data from teachers.
9. Evaluate curriculum effectiveness using in-house data provided by teachers.
10. Evaluate curriculum effectiveness using standardized testing.
11. Identify areas for Professional Development and Implementation Support.
12. Identify budget implications of proposals.
13. Identify related needs for report card revisions.
14. Move to next curricular area.

The process will commence in the 2014-15 school year with an evaluation of the Reading Curriculum.

Math Curriculum

During the 2011-2012 academic year, we made the decision to adopt a new published math curriculum for K-8. In doing so, we established a set of selection criteria based on past experiences, and areas we were looking to improve our program. The criteria included:

- Alignment with the Common Core
- Balance between practice and applications
- A robust approach to place value in primary years
- Availability of differentiated materials
- Balance between direct instruction and experiential learning
- Smooth transition between elementary and middle school programs
- Emphasis on strong estimation skills and reasonableness of answers
- Transferability to real world situations
- Affordability on an annual basis
- Opportunities to explain thinking
- Emphasis on vocabulary

In the spring of 2012, we adopted Big Ideas Math for grades 6-8, and in the spring of 2013 we adopted Math Expressions for grade K-5. In both cases, we felt that these programs were overwhelmingly the best match for our needs. They met all our criteria we had identified, and we talked with teachers in several schools using these programs to learn about their experiences. They all gave excellent recommendations.

Math Expressions is notable for a very robust approach to understanding of numbers in the primary grades, as well as a rich use of language, critical thinking skills, and frequent opportunities for students to explain their thinking verbally and in writing.

Big Ideas Math is notable for its balanced approach to middle school math topics, and for offering the option of an accelerated course beginning in 7th grade. We have in fact experimented with a separate 8th grade Algebra class with some success.

Supporting Diverse Learners

Child Study Process--DCAP

Our collaborative approach to teaching requires staff and parents to work closely together to support all students. The district accommodation plan (DCAP) was developed in part to provide strategies for teachers to use when students struggle. It outlines possible interventions for teachers and parents depending on the presenting issues. It also includes a number of focused early intervention strategies involving the occupational, physical, and speech therapists working with our youngest classes. A child study (RTI) process has been in place for many years and allows any teacher or parent to refer a child to the team which consists of the education coordinator, the consulting psychologist, the school counselor, and other staff members as needed. The team recommends interventions and tracks progress. The child study process is often successful at addressing the need of different kinds of learners, and identifies both strategies and supports within the regular education program that are able to meet a student's needs. Parents are always invited to child study meetings, and have attended in almost all cases. When necessary, the child study process becomes the referral for eligibility for Special Education.

We are constantly adding supports for the full range of learners in our school. We find that when we offer greater supports, everyone benefits. The following are examples of curricular additions that have had a strong impact in our school over the past five years:

Thinking Maps

During the 2010-2011 school year, teachers discussed some of the problems we were encountering in teaching writing. A related issue was how we were using graphic organizers with our students. Teachers were using graphic organizers to help students with various tasks: webs, timelines, clusters, Venn diagrams, flow charts, specific organizers (hamburger, KWL chart, etc.). However, inconsistent and sporadic use resulted in students not being able to use the tools unless prompted by an adult. Teachers discussed using a more unified system of organizers.

In the fall of 2011, we were trained in and began using a systematic set of graphic organizers school-wide. Thinking Maps are eight different maps that correspond with different types of academic or "thinking" tasks. Once students learn what the different maps are and when they could be used, they can apply them in any appropriate academic activity. While this is especially helpful for students who may struggle with organizational tasks, they are extremely beneficial for all students. We see students applying these maps

in many areas of the curriculum. Obviously, writing is the place they may be used most often, but they are equally valuable in content areas as well.

S'cool Moves

A constant challenge for many learners is the need for physical movement throughout the day. We know there is a strong relationship between physical activity and enhanced academic performance. Over the years we have worked with occupational therapists to develop many classroom based strategies to support this need to move. While many of these methods have proven helpful, we are always looking for ways to expand our approach. With a limited P.E. program, we wanted to find additional ways to provide children with opportunities for physical movement.

In the fall of 2012, we introduced a program through our Physical Therapist called S'cool Moves. S'Cool Moves is a collection of movement activities that are integrated into the class routine throughout the day. These activities address a range of situations including transitions throughout the day, literacy warm-ups, free choice activities, push-in therapy sessions, postural stability, sensory processing, visual processing, auditory-visual integration, and bilateral integration. Initially, teachers were trained by the physical therapist, who also came into the classrooms and worked directly with students. Teachers can now use the program components independently and have found much success, particularly at the K-3 level.

Criterion 7: Culture and Family Engagement

HCCPS has a strong focus on creating community – among the students, within the school, in conjunction with parents and families and with our local neighbors. This conscious emphasis increases awareness and empathy within the population leading to a better learning environment. The Community Compact is an agreement which is signed by students, parents, teachers and administrators at the beginning of each school year. During the first weeks of school, all classes review and re-commit to this code, discussing strategies for inclusion, respect and conflict resolution. Throughout the year students are encouraged to engage directly with their peers to resolve conflict and, when necessary, to use the assistance of an adult mediator. Because of the schools' emphasis on these values, we see very little bullying or seriously aggressive behavior during the year. We do have the typical problems that any group of children may have when they work so closely together. We work to address these problems immediately and directly. In individual cases, behavioral plans and/or contracts are developed. These involve teachers, parents, and the student. The Education Coordinator works with teachers to implement these plans.

There are many formal structures in place to ensure that classrooms support student learning. Behavioral expectations are reviewed by all staff members at the beginning of the year. Weekly teacher meetings, as well as monthly professional development sessions focus on maintaining high quality experiences in the classroom. Regular meetings of curriculum integration teams ensure that the interdisciplinary aspect of our mission is fulfilled. And a weekly Community Time ensures that all school community experiences are active in every child's life.

As detailed in our Annual Reports, HCCPS has a remarkable record of parent and family participation is evident. A hundred percent of families are engaged in one or more ways with the school – through teacher conferences, volunteering in classrooms, governance. driving to field trips, planning classroom events, volunteering for school-wide events, organizing and implementing fundraisers, assisting with physical plant projects, helping with administrative tasks, creating the school website or managing social media .

We hold strongly to the concept that family participation strengthens the students' investment in their education and thus their success. We hold monthly events for parents – Education Forums, on current topics of interest, social events for families or adults only, and Coop meetings where school practices and policies are discussed and input is sought to help guide the board and school management.

We also send out a Family Satisfaction Surveys each year and the results over the last 5 years are not surprising. More than half of our families generally respond and over 90% indicate that they are very satisfied with the school. Many parents wrote notes of thanks and appreciation while still offering suggestions for improvement. We are especially encouraged by the fact that respondents answered the questions regarding elements of our core mission in the most positive manner. Every respondent either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "Hilltown has built a strong sense of community among students, staff and families.". Not a single respondent felt that there was too much arts and academic curriculum integration or that their child spent too much time doing community service learning. It is clear that our parents appreciate and value these aspects of our mission.

Our sense of community extends beyond parents to include grandparents and siblings. We invite grandparents to a special Grandparents' Day each year in addition to welcoming them into the school as volunteers throughout the year. We also include younger siblings as we are able, especially in our All School Assemblies.

Health/Safety:

After participating in an extensive training in a multi-purpose health curriculum developed by Planned Parenthood, our nurse and counselor implemented the new program in FY 12. Sixth-8th graders benefited throughout the years from workshops and discussions, spread throughout the school year, featuring decision making, informed choices, peer pressure, contraception, STD's and healthy relationships. It has been phenomenally successful.

This past year our nurse completed a train- the trainer certification program in CPR/first aid instruction so that she can now provide annual in-house training of all staff which happens in August before students arrive.

For the first 19 years of our existence we have been a tenant in a multi- tenant building with some common hallways open to the public. During the past two years we invested in some renovations to increase our school security. We constructed a new set of doors to create a secure entrance to the school, separating us from a common hallway. We also began installing locks on classroom doors. Our new school facility provides a new set of safety features- single tenant occupancy, a brand new elevator, a direct connection to the fire department and new phone system with some safety features. And, finally, a building free of water damage and basement living. We have invested in special flooring materials and lighting to improve the indoor air quality as well,

Organizational Viability

Charter School Performance Criteria Relating to Organizational Viability

Criterion 8: Capacity

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School (HCCPS) has an unusual and successful leadership structure that reflects its commitment to collaboration and inclusiveness. The school is managed by three coordinators, each with their own domains- administrative, education and community. While there is certain overlap in purview there is also clear accountability and distinct supervisory responsibilities. Many decisions are made jointly, and if not, with feedback from other coordinators. The three coordinators have put in a combined 44 years with the school. Because we equally value each of the domains we remain a balanced and healthy organization. The longevity of our top administrators both

speaks to and contributes to the strength of our institution. Their leadership has provided continuity and consistency without stifling experimentation and creativity. Our administrative coordinator has served as a board member of the Mass Charter Public School Association for the past 7 years. This has enabled our Board of Trustees and administrative team to keep current with state wide issues and initiatives.

These three leaders are supervised by the Board of Trustees. This is accomplished through twice a month meetings called Domain Council that include the Board president and vice president. This group sets Board agendas, troubleshoots pending issues, triages when necessary and delegates when appropriate. The two Board members on Domain Council evaluate the Coordinators annually. They get informal feedback about the coordinators through annual surveys of the overall community, the committee members, the teachers/staff, and the full Board. The process involves goal setting and periodic check-ins.

This group also drafts the annual budget, ensuring program stability. The Finance Committee reviews for fiscal viability before it goes to the full Board for approval. The atmosphere in these meetings is collaborative and respectful, and the Board members are directive when necessary.

Our staff meeting schedule includes:

- Teams of same age cohort teachers meet weekly with art and music teachers for collaboration
- Teams of same age cohort teachers meet weekly with the special education staff/teachers
- Teaching staff meet with administrators/coordinators bi-weekly
- Teachers meet with Education Coordinator for professional development bi-weekly

In addition, staff attends off site trainings and conferences as appropriate and available. Our low staff turnover is another indication of the strength of our school community. (See Appendix D) For the most part employees feel supported by administration, valued for their efforts and respected for their creativity- overall a good work environment.

This past spring witnessed the strength of our community in a unique way. Fiscal frugality dictated that we would not hire professional movers to get us out of old facility and into the new one. As a result a multitude of parents, staff and some strong alumni, managed to pack up every last pencil and book by the end of June. It was truly a team effort that is ongoing and brings a high level of commitment to starting the second generation of Hilltown in our new home.

Criterion 9: Governance

Since the early years of our school's history Board meetings have evolved from five hour rambling, endurance tests replete with micro-management to finely moderated, documented and focused two hour meetings. Board turnover has diminished and clarity of roles has increased. Committee chairs are responsible for running meetings and ensuring minute taking. The Board is intentional regarding change in leadership, ensuring that the presidency rotates to the vice-president after 2-3 years. Consistency is maintained in this way. Attorneys on our Board ensure compliance with open meeting law and other regulatory matters.

Our Board committees are well stocked with skilled members. For instance, our Finance committee includes a CPA, commercial loan officer from our bank and the finance director of a local non-profit. Our Site committee has an architect, members experienced in community development projects and a builder. HCCPS has greatly benefited from a tremendous level of talented volunteers.

In 2012 the Board of Trustees established a new standing committee – the Governance and Board Sustainability Committee (GABS). This group is now responsible for ensuring adherence to and assessing any need for changes to the by-laws, maintaining adequate membership numbers on the Board and overseeing the implementation of the Long Range Plan. With this dedicated group in place, in conjunction with the other standing committees of Finance, Site and Personnel, the Board is well situated to execute its responsibilities and address any issues that arise.

One major task that the GABS committee undertook in 2013 is the creation of a succession plan for the three Coordinators. These positions are at the core of the school and have been held, for most of the school's history, by the same three individuals. Inevitably their performance in their jobs has shaped those roles. The Board of Trustees, in recognizing the importance of ensuring continuity and consistency in leadership, has begun creating a path by which their replacements will be hired in the event of an eventual retirement. This could also enable a temporary substitute to function should there be an emergency absence.

The project will be completed in 2015. An initial plan has been developed with the help of a consultant brought in for this purpose. The Coordinators have been interviewed individually about their jobs in order to detail their daily duties, their committee and external obligations and other big picture responsibilities. This data will also be used to assess whether additional administrative support is needed now or in the future.

Once we are settled in our new home input will be collected from colleagues who work most closely with the Coordinators about the impact of these management positions on their own work. Other stakeholders will be queried as necessary. Based on an analysis of the data GABS will recommend a series of steps for the Board of Trustees to pursue in preparation for coordinator succession. This in-depth process speaks volumes about this institution's maturity and its capacity for thorough and creative future planning.

Criterion 10: Finance

Over the past 15 years our school has debated the feasibility of moving to a new location. We have looked at countless sites, new and old. What has guided our decisions throughout is the grounding in our budgetary limitations. Within this charter cycle we have relied on a set of 10 year projections created by the Finance Committee. These numbers have been revised annually to reflect current finances and options. As a result we are finally able to afford our new home without sacrificing programs or quality.

Within this charter term we had one bad year, financially speaking. This resulted from lower than expected tuition reimbursement, increased health care costs and the need for a long term substitute for an employee out on an extended sick leave. Since then we have bounced back and have ended this year with an (unaudited) surplus.

We made some fiscal policy/protocol changes as part of the Long Range Plan. By policy The Board of Trustees must approve a zero balance budget with no transfer of Surplus fund to underwrite operating costs. We have decreased our Contingency Fund from 15% to 12 % . We are confident that a 12% level is sufficient for our emergency needs.

Accountability Plan

Accountability Plan Objectives and Measures

See Appendix A

Plans for the Next Five Years

Within this charter term we underwent our second long range planning process. We got a jump start by working with the same consultant, Gaelen Canning, who led us through our first strategic planning process in 2002. The committee, made up of parents, staff, Board members and administrators, then spent the better part of two years prioritizing the most important goals for our next decade.

Since we have been looking for a new site for 15 years it was clear that finding a site would be high on the priority list. This has been perhaps the single biggest challenge Hilltown has grappled with. During this charter term we looked at several possibilities, including an unsuccessful attempt to purchase the old factory building that has housed us for 19 years. And remarkably, during the long range planning process we found a new home.

The long range planning process also involved looking at the strengths and challenges of our 6-8th grade program. And it soon became clear that there was a strong connection between our need and desire for an improved facility and our desire to grow the teaching staff at the 6-8 level. This growth would allow for greater specialization by teachers and depth of learning by students. It would also provide for greater social environment for our oldest students. As it became clear that we needed to increase the size of the 6-8th grade student body, this increase and concomitant increase in tuition would allow us to pursue the new facility as well as hire new teachers. This resulted in the two amendments listed earlier.

We are excited about expanding our 6-8th grade teaching staff. Having more discipline specific colleagues will allow for deeper curriculum sharing and development, more critical thinking and peer support. Given our commitment to collaboration on all levels it will finally be possible for upper grade level teachers to share their practices and learn from each other.

The long range planning process involved input and feedback from staff meetings, focus groups, site visits, community meetings and much gnashing of teeth. While not everyone is 100% happy with the upcoming changes there is little doubt that our school will be stronger and our students better served as we move in these new directions.

As we grow the size of our 6-8th grade student group we anticipate an impact on our school culture. As the balance between younger and older students shifts over the next three years

we will consciously plan for whatever benefits and hurdles that change will bring. We will likely change the shape of some of our long standing traditions, with the older students in mind. It is central to our vision that we manage to maintain our sense of the whole community- kindergartners and 8th graders together-while at the same time respecting the different needs found in this age range.

During the 2013-14 year we revised our teacher evaluation system. Using many of the rubrics from Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation, we developed a set of teacher proficiencies. The basic framework follows the key four areas of teacher practice: Curriculum, Planning, and Assessment; Teaching All Students; Family and Community Engagement; and Professional Culture. We began using the proficiency standards in the evaluation process this past spring. In the coming years we will be working to fine-tune the system and ensure that it is a useful in helping teachers grow and develop.

Over the next three years we will be exploring formalizing a student teacher internship program. We spent time last year outlining our goals for such a program, and there are several schools of education we have contacted with the goal of determining the feasibility of year-long internships with graduate students. We think we have much to offer by way of guidance and mentoring, as evidenced by the number of student teachers we have previously hosted who have gone on to successful teaching careers.

Our new home in Easthampton provides multiple opportunities for community collaboration. Over the next five years we will continue to build on our new relationship with the Easthampton School District. Positive meetings with the Easthampton superintendent and mayor have started us off on a good footing. We will continue to invite Easthampton teachers to appropriate professional development opportunities.

We have already begun forming relationships with area non-profit organizations. Our school lunch for the fall will be provided by Riverside Industries, a revered community program for adults with development disabilities. We will continue to explore a host of community service projects involving pre-schools, senior centers, the local Audubon center and more. Easthampton has a burgeoning arts community and we are very excited to make connections there.

Appendix A

Accountability Plan Evidence

Faithfulness to Charter

Objective: HCCPS is faithful to the mission, vision and educational philosophy defined in the charter application and any subsequent approved amendment					
	Charter Term Performance (Met/Not Met)				
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Evidence
Measure: 90% of families who respond to the annual satisfaction survey will report that there exists a strong sense of community among students, staff, and families. At least 40% of families will complete the survey.	met	met	met	met	Over 90 % of respondents in each year have reported a strong sense of community; Over 50 % of families have completed the survey each year. Survey results are shared with the Board of Trustees, staff and parents.
Measure: The school, via its volunteers, will sponsor monthly events- social, cultural, and educational in nature	met	met	met	met	See school calendars, weekly newsletters
Measure: Community compacts will be signed by 100% of families annually	met	met	met	met	Signed community compacts
Objective: The HCCPS board of trustees implements the governance and leadership structure as defined in the charter application and any subsequent approved amendment(s):					

Measure: Board of Trustees decisions will be made using a consensus model of decision making at least 90% of the time. Majority votes will only be taken if consensus cannot be reached in a timely manner.	met	met	met	met	All decisions made by consensus. See Board of Trustees minutes.
Measure: Board committees will meet monthly.	met	met	met	met	See Board committee reports.
Objective: HCCPS establishes an academic program that includes the pedagogical approach, curriculum, assessment, and other unique elements defined in the charter application and any subsequent approved amendment(s).					
Measure: Each classroom will produce two documentation projects annually detailing the purpose, scope, and implementation of interdisciplinary projects. These documentations will be on display at school and digitally archived.	met	mixed	met	mixed	Interdisciplinary documentation projects completed each year. Full documentation of process partially met in 2 years.
Measure: Each Grade 8 student will design, develop, and present an independent culminating project which will demonstrate what s/he has gained from the HCCPS experience. 100% of these students will achieve a passing score on the Grade 8 culminating project rubric.	met	met	met	met	Student rubric marks; photos of culminating projects.

Academic Program Success

Objective: Students at the school demonstrate proficiency, or progress toward meeting proficiency targets on state standards, as measured by the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) exams in all subject areas and at all grade levels tested for accountability purposes.					
	Charter Term Performance (Met/Not Met)				
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Evidence
Measure: The school shows an annual increase in the CPI in ELA and mathematics in the aggregate and for all statistically significant subgroups.	not met	not met	partially met	met	2013: ELA 94.1; Math 84.7 2012: ELA 93.6; Math 83.0 2011: ELA 91.5; Math 85.3 2010: ELA 93.7; Math 86.7 2009: ELA 94.3; Math 86.8
Measure: The school shows an annual decrease in the percentage of students scoring Warning/Failing on standard MCAS tests in ELA and mathematics in the aggregate and for all statistically significant subgroups.	not met	not met	partially met	met	2013: ELA 1%; Math 5% 2012: ELA 1%; Math 11% 2011: ELA 2%; Math 6% 2010: ELA 1%; Math 6% 2009: ELA 0%; Math 1%
Objective: The school achieves and maintains a median student growth percentile (SGP) of 40 or higher in the aggregate and for all statistically significant sub-groups in all subject areas tested for accountability purposes.					

Measure: Each year, the median student growth percentile is 40 or higher in the aggregate and in all statistically significant sub-groups in all subject areas tested for accountability purposes.	met	met	met	met	2013: ELA 67 ; Math 63 2012: ELA 70 ; Math 60 2011: ELA 48; Math 63 2010: ELA 65 ; Math 67.5
Objective: The school makes Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in the aggregate and for all statistically significant sub-groups in English language arts and mathematics.[1]					
Measure: Each year, the school makes AYP in the aggregate and for all statistically significant sub-groups in English language arts and mathematics.	met	not met	n/a	n/a	2013: Level 2 2012: Level 1 2011: ELA Aggregate: No; ELA Subgroups: Yes; Math Aggregate and Subgroups: No 2010: ELA and Math, Aggregate and Subgroups: Yes
Objective: The school does not have a status for accountability purposes of Improvement, Corrective Action, or Restructuring.					
Measure: Each year, the school does not have a status for accountability purposes of Improvement, Corrective Action, or Restructuring.	met	met	met	met	See DESE Accountability Reports.
Objective: If externally-developed assessments other than the MCAS are administered, student performance is strong and demonstrates improvement over time on those assessments					

Measure: Each grade, 3-8, will score in the top quartile annually in the tested areas of reading, math, language, and Core Total on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills;	met	met	met	met	See ITBS Score reports from Annual Reports.
Measure: Each grade, 3-8, will score in the top quartile annually in the tested areas of reading, math, language, and Core Total on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills;	met	met	met	met	See ITBS Score reports from Annual Reports.
Measure: 90% of all 4 th graders will test at or above grade level in the area of reading on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills.	met	met	met	met	See ITBS Score reports from Annual Reports.
Objective: Student performance is strong and demonstrates improvement on internally-developed assessments of academic achievement.					
Measure: 80% of all students in grades K-3 will annually gain at least one previously defined level on the HCCPS reading, writing and math assessment	met	met	met	met	See annual reports for data.
Measure: 80% of all students in grades 4-8 will score in the pre-determined proficient level on the HCCPS writing and math.	Math met; Writing not met	Math met; Writing not met	Math met; Writing not met	Met-both	See annual reports for data.

Organizational Viability

	Charter Term Performance (Met/Not Met)				
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	
Objective: The school develops an annual budget that can be sustained by enrollment and is in support of student academic achievement.					
Measure: The school's annual budget is sustained by its enrollment.	met	not met	met	met	FY 12 ended with a deficit from which we have more than recovered. See CSEOFYR's.
Objective: The school demonstrates a history of positive net assets, adequate cash flow to sustain operations and support the academic program, and consistently operates within budget.					
Measure: Each year, the school demonstrates a history of positive net assets, adequate cash flow to sustain operations and support the academic program, and consistently operates within budget.	met	met	met	met	See annual balance sheets.
Objective: The school's annual independent audit is free of material or repeated findings.					
Measures: There is an absence of material or repeated audit findings in annual audits by qualified independent auditor.	met	met	met	met	See annual audits.
Objective: The HCCPS board of trustees and school leadership implement effective structures and systems to enable responsible fiscal oversight of the school.					

Measures: Quarterly fiscal balance sheets will show that the school maintains 15% of its total operating budget as cash reserves.	met	met	met	met	Annual balance sheets. NB: in FY 14 HCCPS changed its policy to require 12 % cash reserves, which it succeeded in doing.
Objective: The HCCPS board of trustees demonstrates long-term fiscal oversight through appropriate planning processes.					
Measure: HCCPS board of trustees will consider 10 year fiscal projections when making real estate and enrollment cap decisions	met	met	met	met	See minutes form Board of Trustees, Site and Finance Committees
Objective: The school implements the student recruitment, retention, and enrollment process intended in the charter to ensure sufficient enrollment.					
Measure: The ratio of student applications to available openings will average at least 3:1 annually.	met	met	met	met	Annually there are at least 3:1 applicants for all openings except in 8th grade.
Objective: HCCPS has realistic plans for program improvement, possible future expansion, and adequate facilities based on evaluation and analysis of data					
Measure: By fall 2012 the Board will adopt a new strategic plan to serve the school through 2020.	met	met	met	met	Board adopted the plan winter 2013 and monitors progress quarterly, as reported in Board minutes.
Measure: The Board will incorporate ideas and input from staff, parents, and community members via 2 focus groups, committee membership and 2 surveys.	met	met	met	met	Survey results, focus groups meeting reports, membership rosters

Objective: The school involves parents/guardians as partners in the education of their children.

Measure: 100% of families will be actively involved in the school through membership in its consensus based governing structures, participation in community meetings, and/or participation in the activities in its classrooms.

met

met

met

met

Sign in sheets for community meetings.

Measure: Class meetings and/or family conferences will be attended by 100% of school families.

met

met

met

met

Sign in Sheets for class meetings.

Appendix B

Statement of Assurances and Certifications

Statement of Assurances

This form must be signed by a duly authorized representative of the charter school. An application for renewal will be considered incomplete if it is not accompanied by the Statement of Assurances.

As the authorized representative of the charter school, I hereby certify under the penalties of perjury that the information submitted in this application for renewal of a public school charter for Hilltown Coop Charter Public School located at 1 Industrial Drive, Easthampton, MA, is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and further, I certify that the school:


1. Will not charge tuition, fees, or other mandatory payments for attendance at the charter school, for participation in required or elective courses, or for mandated services or programs (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71, § 89(m), and 603 CMR 1.03(3)).
2. Will not charge any public school for the use or replication of any part of their curriculum subject to the prescriptions of any contract between the charter school and any third party provider (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71, § 89(l)).
3. Will permit parents to enroll their children only voluntarily and not because they must send their children to this school (The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended, Title V, Part B, Subpart 1 — Public Charter Schools Section 5210(1)(h)).
4. Will enroll any eligible student who submits a timely and complete application, unless the school receives a greater number of applications than there are spaces for students. If the number of application exceeds the spaces available, the school will hold a lottery in accordance with Massachusetts charter laws and regulations (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71 § 89(n), and 603 CMR 1.06).
5. Will be open to all students, on a space available basis, and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or academic achievement (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71, § 89(m)).

6. Will be secular in its curriculum, programs, admissions, policies, governance, employment practices, and operation in accordance with the federal and state constitutions and any other relevant provisions of federal and state law.
7. Will comply with the federal Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.
8. Will adhere to all applicable provisions of federal and state law relating to students with disabilities including, but not limited to, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and chapter 71B of the Massachusetts General Laws.
9. Will adhere to all applicable provisions of federal and state law relating to students who are English language learners including, but not limited to, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974, and chapter 71A of the Massachusetts General Laws.
10. Will comply with all other applicable federal and state law including, but not limited to, the requirement to offer a school nutrition program (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 69, § 1 (c)).
11. Will meet the performance standards and assessment requirements set by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education for all students in public schools including, but not limited to, administering the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71, § 89(v), and 603 CMR 1.05(1)(i)).
12. Will submit an annual report to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education on or before the required deadline (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71 § 89(jj)).
13. Will submit an Accountability Plan no later than the end of the first year of the school's charter, establishing specific five year performance objectives as specified in the state regulations (603 CMR 1.05 (1)(j)) and guidelines.
14. Will submit an annual independent audit to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Office of the State Auditor no later than November 1st of every year, as required by the charter school statute (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71, § 89(jj), or at such other time as designated in 603 CMR 1.09 (3)).

15. Will submit required enrollment data each March to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education by the required deadline (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71, § 89(o), and 603 CMR 1.09(4)).
16. Will meet enrollment projections through demonstration of support for the charter school in the communities from which students would be likely to enroll (603 CMR 1.05(1)(c)).
17. Will operate in compliance with generally accepted government accounting principles (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71, § 89(jj)).
18. Will maintain financial records to meet the requirements of Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71, § 89 and 603 CMR 1.00.
19. Will participate in the Massachusetts State Teachers' Retirement System (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71, § 89(y)).
20. Will employ individuals who either hold an appropriate license to teach in a public school in Massachusetts or who will take and pass the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL) within their first year of employment and meet all applicable staff requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71 § 89(ii), and 603 CMR 1.07).
21. Will provide the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education with written assurance that a criminal background check has been performed, prior to their employment, on all employees of the school who will have unsupervised contact with children (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71, § 38R, and 603 CMR 1.05(3)(d)).
22. Will obtain and keep current all necessary permits, licenses, and certifications related to fire, health, and safety within the building(s) and on school property (603 CMR 1.05(1)(p), 1.05(3)(g), 1.05(3)(h), and 1.09(6)).
23. Will maintain uninterrupted necessary and appropriate insurance coverage (603 CMR 1.05(3)(j)).
24. Will submit to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education the names, home addresses, and employment and educational histories of proposed new members of the school's board of trustees for approval prior to their service (603 CMR 1.05(3)(a)).
25. Will ensure that all members of the school's board of trustees file with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the State Ethics Commission,

and the city or town clerk where the charter school is located completed financial disclosure forms for the preceding calendar year according to the schedule required by the charter school office (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71, § 89(u)). The disclosure is in addition to the requirements of said chapter 268A and a member of a board of trustees must also comply with the disclosure and other requirements of said chapter 268A.

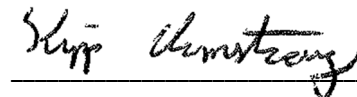
26. Will recognize, if applicable, an employee organization designated by the authorization cards of 50 percent of its employees in the appropriate bargaining unit as the exclusive representative of all the employees in such unit for the purpose of collective bargaining (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71, § 89(y)).
27. Will provide the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education with a federal taxpayer identification number issued solely to the charter school and all required information regarding a bank account held solely in the name of the charter school (603 CMR 1.05(4)).
28. Will, in the event the board of trustees intends to procure substantially all educational services for the charter school through a contract with another person or entity, submit such contract for approval by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to provide for any necessary revisions and approval prior to the beginning of the contract period (Mass. Gen. Laws c. 71, § 89(k)(5)).
29. Will notify the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education immediately in writing of any change in circumstances that may have a significant impact on the school's ability to fulfill its goals or missions as stated in its charter (603 CMR 1.09(7)).
30. Will submit in writing to the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education a request to amend its charter if the school plans to make a change to its operations as defined in 603 CMR 1.11.

Signature: 
Title: President, Board of Trustees
Date: July 26, 2014

Renewal Application Certification Statement

Name of School:	Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School
Location:	1 Industrial Drive, Easthampton, MA 01027

I hereby certify that the information submitted in this application for renewal of a public school charter is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; that this application has been approved by the school's Board of Trustees; and that, if awarded a renewed charter, the school shall continue to be open to all students on a space available basis, and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, or proficiency in the English language, and academic achievement. This is a true statement, made under the penalties of perjury.

 July 26, 2014

Signature: Chair of Board of Trustees (or designated signatory authority) Date

Print/Type Name:	Kipp Armstrong
Title (if designated):	President, Board of Trustees
Date of approval by board of trustees:	July 26, 2014

Appendix C

Documents

We are relocating to a new facility this summer. Renovations are ongoing and will not be completed prior to the submission of the renewal application. We will not be moving into the facility until early-mid August. As a result we will submit the compliance documentation in mid- August or as soon as a Certificate of Occupancy and other certificates/inspection reports are issued.

Appendix C must contain documentation of compliance with all building, health, safety, and insurance requirements as well as Department Guidance. Please attach the following as a part of Appendix C:

- ☐ Up-to-date Certificate of Occupancy
- ☐ Up-to-date Fire Inspection Certificate
- ☐ Up-to-date Building Safety Inspection
- ☐ Up-to-date Health Inspection
- ☐ Up-to-date Insurance Certificate(s)
- ☐ Asbestos Inspection and Management Plan (if applicable)
- ☐ Lead Paint Inspection (if applicable)



CERTIFICATE OF LIABILITY INSURANCE

DATE (MM/DD/YYYY)
07/24/2014

THIS CERTIFICATE IS ISSUED AS A MATTER OF INFORMATION ONLY AND CONFERS NO RIGHTS UPON THE CERTIFICATE HOLDER. THIS CERTIFICATE DOES NOT AFFIRMATIVELY OR NEGATIVELY AMEND, EXTEND OR ALTER THE COVERAGE AFFORDED BY THE POLICIES BELOW. THIS CERTIFICATE OF INSURANCE DOES NOT CONSTITUTE A CONTRACT BETWEEN THE ISSUING INSURER(S), AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE OR PRODUCER, AND THE CERTIFICATE HOLDER.

IMPORTANT: If the certificate holder is an ADDITIONAL INSURED, the policy(ies) must be endorsed. If SUBROGATION IS WAIVED, subject to the terms and conditions of the policy, certain policies may require an endorsement. A statement on this certificate does not confer rights to the certificate holder in lieu of such endorsement(s).

PRODUCER Fred C. Church, Inc. 41 Wellman Street Lowell, MA 01851 (800) 225-1865	CONTACT NAME: Jeanne Pitts, CIC, CISR	
	PHONE 978 3227262 A/C, No, Ext:	FAX (978) 454-1865 A/C, No:
INSURED Friends of Hill Town Inc.; Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School 1 Industrial Parkway Easthampton, MA 01027	E-MAIL ADDRESS: jpitts@fredchurch.com	
	INSURER(S) AFFORDING COVERAGE	
	INSURER A: Hanover Insurance Company	
	INSURER B: Massachusetts Bay Insurance	
	INSURER C: Independence Casualty Insurance Company	
	INSURER D:	
INSURER E:		
INSURER F:		

COVERAGES

CERTIFICATE NUMBER: 30653

REVISION NUMBER:

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE POLICIES OF INSURANCE LISTED BELOW HAVE BEEN ISSUED TO THE INSURED NAMED ABOVE FOR THE POLICY PERIOD INDICATED. NOTWITHSTANDING ANY REQUIREMENT, TERM OR CONDITION OF ANY CONTRACT OR OTHER DOCUMENT WITH RESPECT TO WHICH THIS CERTIFICATE MAY BE ISSUED OR MAY PERTAIN, THE INSURANCE AFFORDED BY THE POLICIES DESCRIBED HEREIN IS SUBJECT TO ALL THE TERMS, EXCLUSIONS AND CONDITIONS OF SUCH POLICIES. LIMITS SHOWN MAY HAVE BEEN REDUCED BY PAID CLAIMS.

INSR LTR	TYPE OF INSURANCE	ADDL INSR	SUBR WVD	POLICY NUMBER	POLICY EFF (MM/DD/YYYY)	POLICY EXP (MM/DD/YYYY)	LIMITS
B	GENERAL LIABILITY			ZDN8818232	7/1/2014	7/1/2015	EACH OCCURRENCE \$ 1,000,000
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL GENERAL LIABILITY						DAMAGE TO RENTED PREMISES (Ea occurrence) \$ 500,000
	<input type="checkbox"/> CLAIMS-MADE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUR						MED EXP (Any one person) \$ 15,000
	GEN'L AGGREGATE LIMIT APPLIES PER:						PERSONAL & ADV INJURY \$ 1,000,000
	<input type="checkbox"/> POLICY <input type="checkbox"/> PRO-JECT <input type="checkbox"/> LOC						GENERAL AGGREGATE \$ 3,000,000
							PRODUCTS - COMPI/OP AGG \$ Included
							\$
B	AUTOMOBILE LIABILITY			ZDN8818232	7/1/2014	7/1/2015	COMBINED SINGLE LIMIT (Ea accident) \$ 1,000,000
	<input type="checkbox"/> ANY AUTO						BODILY INJURY (Per person) \$
	<input type="checkbox"/> ALL OWNED AUTOS	<input type="checkbox"/> SCHEDULED AUTOS					BODILY INJURY (Per accident) \$
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> HIRED AUTOS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NON-OWNED AUTOS					PROPERTY DAMAGE (Per accident) \$
							\$
							\$
A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UMBRELLA LIAB		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUR	UHN8818254	7/1/2014	7/1/2015	EACH OCCURRENCE \$ 1,000,000
	<input type="checkbox"/> EXCESS LIAB		<input type="checkbox"/> CLAIMS-MADE				AGGREGATE \$ 1,000,000
	DED <input type="checkbox"/> RETENTION \$						\$
C	WORKERS COMPENSATION AND EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY			WC00092404	7/1/2014	7/1/2015	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WC STATUTORY LIMITS <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER
	ANY PROPRIETOR/PARTNER/EXECUTIVE OFFICER/MEMBER EXCLUDED? (Mandatory in NH)	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	N/A				E.L. EACH ACCIDENT \$ 1,000,000
	If yes, describe under DESCRIPTION OF OPERATIONS below						E.L. DISEASE - EA EMPLOYEE \$ 1,000,000
B	Property			ZDN8818232	7/1/2014	7/1/2015	Business Personal Property \$600,000; Building Improvements & Betterments \$350,000; \$1,000 Deductible, RC Special Form; Business Income \$500,000

DESCRIPTION OF OPERATIONS / LOCATIONS / VEHICLES (Attach ACORD 101, Additional Remarks Schedule, if more space is required)

CERTIFICATE HOLDER**CANCELLATION**Evidence of Insurance
Hilltown Cooperative Charter
1 Industrial Parkway
Easthampton, MA 01027

SHOULD ANY OF THE ABOVE DESCRIBED POLICIES BE CANCELLED BEFORE THE EXPIRATION DATE THEREOF, NOTICE WILL BE DELIVERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE POLICY PROVISIONS.

AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

Herman P. Latour

Client # 37911 Met # 30653

Cert Holder # 56459

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ACORD 25 (2010/05)

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Appendix D

Additional Information

Board of Trustees Turnover

School Year	Total Membership	Members Joining	Members Departing
2010-2011	10	0	3
2011-2012	10	3	0
2012-2013	11	3	2
2013-2014	10	1	2

*Add rows as necessary

Staffing and Staff Turnover

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Administrators				
Number and FTEs	3; 2.5 FTE	3; 2.5 FTE	3; 2.5 FTE	3; 2.5 FTE
Departures during school year	0	0	0	0
Departures at end of school year	0	0	0	0
Teachers				
Number and FTEs	17; 13.8 FTE	15; 13.8 FTE	15; 14 FTE	16; 14.25 FTE
Departures during school year	0	0	0	1
Departures at end	2	2	1	0

of school year				
Other Staff				
Number and FTEs	22; 12.5 FTE	25; 13 FTE	23; 12.75 FTE	25; 13.25 FTE
Departures during school year	1	1	1	3
Departures at end of school year	0	2	2	4

Explanation of Staff Turnover
<p>Three teachers retired after more than 30 years of service each. Two teachers moved to positions closer to their homes. Our Spanish teacher left for a fulltime position.</p> <p>Several paraprofessionals left to either return to graduate school or change fields. Our development associate left for a full time position.</p> <p>A nurse left for health reasons and a bookkeeper left to pursue silversmithing.</p> <p>We have had no administrator turnover, in upper management.</p>

Appendix E

Application Content Checklist

The completed Application should present the required information in the following order:

- ☐ Cover page labeled “Application for Renewal of a Public School Charter” that lists the following information:
 - ☐ School name
 - ☐ School address
 - ☐ School contact information: name, title, telephone, and email address
 - ☐ Date of Application approval by the school’s board of trustees
 - ☐ Application submission date
- ☐ Cover letter (optional)
- ☐ Table of contents listing all major sections and appendices
- ☐ Performance and plans section (not to exceed 25 pages)
 - ☐ Faithfulness to Charter
 - ☐ Charter School Performance Criteria – Faithfulness to Charter
 - ☐ Academic Program Success
 - ☐ Charter School Performance Criteria – Academic Program Success
 - ☐ Organizational Viability
 - ☐ Charter School Performance Criteria – Organizational Viability
 - ☐ Plans for the Next Five Years
- ☐ Appendices
 - ☐ A. Accountability Plan Performance
 - ☐ B. Statement of Assurances and Certifications
 - ☐ Statement of Assurances

- ☐ Renewal Application Certification Statement (required of Commonwealth and Horace Mann charters)
- ☐ Horace Mann Renewal Application Certification Statement (required of Horace Mann charters)
- ☐ C. Documentation of compliance with all building, health, safety, and insurance requirements:
 - ☐ Up-to-date Certificate of Occupancy
 - ☐ Up-to-date Fire Inspection Certificate
 - ☐ Up-to-date Building Safety Inspection
 - ☐ Up-to-date Flammable compounds and Liquids Certificate (if applicable)
 - ☐ Up-to-date Health Inspection
 - ☐ Up-to-date Insurance Certificate(s)
 - ☐ Asbestos Inspection and Management Plan (if applicable)
 - ☐ Lead Paint Inspection (if applicable)
- ☐ D. Additional Information, as required in these *Guidelines*
 - ☐ External assessments (attach data as needed)
 - ☐ Board of trustees turnover
 - ☐ Staffing and staff turnover

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School Community Code of Cooperation

1. Treat others how you want to be treated
2. Include everyone
3. Use your eyes and ears to be careful and safe
4. Talk one at a time and listen to each other
5. Respect materials

The Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School

Community Compact of Understanding

At the Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School we believe that education works best as a cooperative process among teachers, staff, parents, students and the community at large. Parents' involvement in their children's education contributes greatly toward their success and this school relies on its cooperative structure to create the innovative and alternative educational environment that is at the core of its mission. This compact of understanding is a way of clearly stating our common commitment to collaboration in creating a learning community that nourishes and supports all of its members. If a situation ever arises in which the spirit or words of the compact is consistently not being met, all involved parties gather for a Compact Meeting to discuss and plan solutions. It is through this level of commitment and cooperation that we are able to successfully fulfill the school's mission.

The Student pledges to:

- do my best to learn while in classes and when doing the home-study I am assigned.
- show respect, through my words and my actions, for myself, my school, my teachers, other people, and materials.
- be inclusive of others and resolve conflicts in a positive, non-violent manner.
- take responsibility for my actions and my safety.
- believe that I am a person who can learn in many different ways.

I, _____, Student, will do my best to keep this agreement. **Date:** _____

The Parents pledge to:

- read the school handbook and abide by the policies and guidelines set out in it.
- to the very best of my ability, give 4 hours of volunteer service per month, or 40 hours per year, that will benefit the school and help my child and others learn.
- ensure that my child arrives at school on time (8:15 am), rested and ready to learn.
- ensure that my child comes to school dressed appropriately for the weather and with a nutritious lunch and snack.
- help my child take responsibility for completing home-study assignments in a timely manner.
- keep myself informed and up to date about events and issues at school by reading the notices in my mailbox, newsletters, e-mails and posted announcements.
- attend at least two individual parent/teacher conferences and one classroom meeting per year.
- help strengthen the school community by participating in events and discussions whenever possible.
- show respect and support, through my words and actions, for my child, other students, the staff and the school.

I, _____ (and _____),
Parent(s)/ guardian(s), agree to do my best to follow through with the responsibilities listed above. **Date:** _____

The Administration and Staff of the Hilltown Cooperative Charter School pledge to:

- provide a safe, cooperative and respectful environment for learning.
- believe that all students can succeed and learn.
- nurture each child's innate creativity and encourage his/her self-expression using many modalities.
- communicate and work with each family to support their child's learning.
- have challenging expectations for students and staff.
- seek out and value parent participation and input in all areas of the school community.
- respect and honor the cultural differences of students and their families.
- seek to improve our program through an ongoing cycle of planning, evaluation and refinement.

We, _____, Teachers
and _____, Coordinator

Pledge the school staff's commitment to the above stated responsibilities and ideals. **Date:** _____

What the Compact means for students:

The Student pledges to:

- **do my best to learn while in classes and when doing the home-study I am assigned.**

This means:

No disruptive behavior in class: Interrupting, side conversations or physically distracting others
No refusing assignments in or out of class

- **show respect, through my words and my actions, for myself, my school, my teachers, other people, and materials.**

To show respect for:

The authority of adults – respond to adult direction
Each other– no teasing or put-downs
Equipment – no stealing, throwing or damaging objects
Our community – no vulgar language

- **be inclusive of others and resolve conflicts in a positive, non-violent manner.**

This means:

No threats or intimidation
No hurting others – hitting, kicking, biting
No exclusion

- **take responsibility for my actions and my safety.**

This means:

No lying
No running indoors
No leaving supervised areas
No wrestling or inappropriate rough play

- **believe that I am a person who can learn in many different ways.**

We want everyone to try – just give it a shot, even if it's new.

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School Long Range Plan 2013-2023

The publication of this Long Range Plan for Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School (HCCPS) comes in the 18th year since the school first opened in 1995. It is only the second such plan which has been produced. Our first plan, 10 years ago, was a statement of hopes and aspirations—the dreams of a young institution and its community. HCCPS is now a matured idea; a tested, stable institution; and a proven structure for excellence in education. We continue to have big dreams and directions—but central to this plan has been a recognition that blueprints for the future must include specifics that strengthen and stabilize what we have already built. *This plan prioritizes the broad goals and objectives for the coming 10 years. It does not attempt to describe the many details of implementation; that is left to those carrying out the daily operations of the school.* New ideas are understood as a cautious modification to a well-orchestrated and functional whole.

Early in the long range planning process, our committee identified a number of core strengths of HCCPS which should be maintained over the next ten years. The areas we identified were as follows:

- A strong intimate community.
- A distinct, arts integrated, interdisciplinary curriculum.
- A program that fosters the development of strong critical thinking skills
- A program that fosters the development of individual student voices.
- Cross age experiences.
- A wide variety of intentional celebrations, traditions and community events.
- Collaborative administrative structure and *inclusive decision making process*.
- An open and welcoming community for parents.

At the same time, we found areas where specific attention over the next 10 years would improve an already solid program. New proposals must pass the test of fiscal viability as our financial resources do not allow us to continue as we have. The discussion and research that went into this plan make it clear that the school's vibrancy, institutional durability, and continual refinement of existing programs require a dynamic process.

The initial focus of the Long Range Planning (LRP) Committee was to consider "the big picture", namely those factors essential to the long term financial stability and larger programmatic needs of HCCPS. Specifically, we discussed several broad considerations: 1) The school's established plan to find and move to an improved site; 2) The question of appropriate school size and; 3) Limits to revenue generation and limits to growth. The LRP Committee spent a great deal of time reviewing these questions in conjunction with the Board of Trustees (BOT), the Site Committee, the Finance Committee and with the school community at large at a Cooperative meeting in January 2011. The LRP Committee reached several conclusions as a result of this work:

- To afford an improved site, and to maintain and expand current programs, the school needs to improve total revenue and the ratio of revenue to expenses.
- The most secure mechanisms for improving revenues are to increase school size and modestly increase the student-teacher ratio. Improved fundraising and additional grants may further improve the picture, but their contribution will be minor.
- HCCPS has been and must continue to be a close community offering highly interactive, personalized instruction—total size should not exceed 220 students and class size should not exceed 22 pupils. It was felt that the school's character and mission can continue to thrive within this framework. These numbers are also sufficient to allow for a significantly improved site and to develop an enhanced curriculum.
- While there are various ways in which the school can take on new students, we are most enthused by a plan to add the majority of these students in grades 6-8, thus expanding the Middle School program. Particular advantages in taking this route include providing an expanded and more diverse group of peers at an age where many HCCPS students are eager for new faces and new horizons, while maintaining a more intimate setting for the younger grades.

The expansion of the school is an overarching goal that framed many of the more detailed proposals in this plan. Growth brings new opportunities and new needs, which we have addressed with proposals to modify the age distribution and instructional supports—a larger and more substantial 6th – 8th grade program is introduced.

As the school moves into its third decade, we need to continuously invigorate the involvement of families and the broader school community. We seek mechanisms to insure that, whatever the school's size, the sense of individuality, of belonging, and of ownership are critical to the student experience. In a similar vein, we recognize that staff and faculty also need a sense of ownership and recognition. One such approach we have suggested is to formalize the school as a site for *placing teachers in training*—a model for innovative education.

In the Sustainability section, plans are presented with the purpose of better insuring budgetary stability and to further expedite decision making around the establishment of a permanent home for the school—in both cases, the ideas largely come from ongoing discussions at meetings of the Board of Trustees. Lastly, the school needs to develop a structured process that prepares for changes in school leadership in the coming years. The insights, shared vision, and experience of coordinators who have led the school since its early years are great assets upon which we want to build. We offer plans for the challenging process of succession and better defining the qualities and abilities essential for our future administration.

This plan is the outcome of almost 2 years of meetings, discussions and research by the LRP Committee (LRP). Tasked by the Board of Trustees with generating a new long-range plan, the Committee, made up of the 3 administrators, 2 teachers, 2 board members and 2 parents, has charted a path reflecting, to the extent possible, the combined desires and ideas of this community—the students, faculty, parents, administrators, and supporters of HCCPS. During the past 2 years, we have met monthly, joined briefly by outside consultant Gaelen Canning, who helped develop a process for generating the plan. The LRP Committee also hosted a Cooperative meeting to discuss the ramifications of an increased school size, resulting in a recommendation to the BOT to increase the school size. As we started developing the plan, we broke into sub-committees to focus on specific areas of interest (educational program, site, community, finance, staffing). The resulting plan is the culmination of this work.

Our plan is divided into 4 sections: Program Quality, Community Building, Sustainability and Administrative Capacity and Succession Planning. Please recognize that many topics fall into more than one category and choice of section name should not be taken as emphasizing or de-emphasizing particular aspects. Also, in considering and interpreting this plan, the point made above deserves restating: We are trying to make improvements and innovations to a great school with a great community, a very full daily and yearly schedule, a stretched budget, and a busy faculty. New plans must substitute for or modify current operations—there is no room for a wholesale addition! We offer these plans as, essentially, a “rebalancing”; changes designed to secure the character, finances, educational quality, and dynamism of the school for the next ten years.

(Approved by the BOT 6/2013)

PROGRAM QUALITY

Since its inception, HCCPS academic and co-curricular programming has evolved to address student needs, build upon faculty strengths, be responsive to parents, and take advantage of relationships with local community organizations. The school offers strong academic and social emotional skill building in a culture that promotes community connections. As we look toward the future, it will be important to assess and prioritize program offerings and develop resources and organizational relationships to ensure that student needs are addressed through effective and sustainable programs.

Goal 1: Grades 6-8 Program Reorganization

Purpose: To better serve the academic and social needs of students in grades 6-8

Rationale/Context: Over the past twelve years, the school added seventh and eighth grades. With the expanded school size, the maturing of our program, and the programmatic and social needs of middle school aged students, it is necessary to restructure grades 6-8. This recommendation is consistent with a conclusion that was reached in the *Report on Configuration of Multi-Age Classrooms: Spring, 2009*.

Accountability: Education Coordinator

Activities/Steps:

- a. Formulate recommendations to restructure the educational program for grades 6-8 to accommodate 30 students in each grade. Recommendations should address teaching responsibilities, advising, and class configuration for different disciplines (FY 2014)
- b. Implement new structures gradually, 2014-2017.
- c. Consideration should be given to the academic needs of students transitioning into the HCCPS program and how they will be addressed.
- d. Evaluate middle school program and use findings to revise. Full scale evaluation in 2020.

(Note: see also Community-Building goals 2 and 4 that outline plans to support and integrate an expanded 6-8 grade population.)

Fiscal implications: This will have implications on staffing, facility and materials. At a minimum, there will be 2 additional full time teachers, *an expansion of the special education department* and several part-time positions. Additional space and associated costs will be based on broader site considerations.

Progress Monitoring: The Education Coordinator will be responsible for the implementation of program adjustments and for a formal review after three years of full implementation. Minor and urgent programs changes can be made as needed during the gradual and then full-scale implementation.

Goal 2: K-8 Curriculum Review

Purpose: To maintain and strengthen core academic programs

Rationale/Context: The school has a long standing strong record of academic performance by students and many strengths identified by teachers and parents. Maintaining and improving our program necessitates regular, systematic review. In reflecting on particular areas of strengths and weaknesses, we found that areas in the humanities and social sciences have historically been strong, while areas in math and science are weaker in comparison. The math curriculum is currently under review and many changes are being implemented. It is critical to apply similar reviews to science and all academic areas.

Accountability: The Educational Coordinator

Activities/Steps:

- a. Implement a system of regular review of the following major curricular areas: English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Physical Education, Health, Foreign Language, Art, Music and Technology. Begin with areas where alignment with the Common Core is required (Math, ELA) followed by Science, Physical Education, and Social Studies. Initial reviews will begin in 2013 and be completed no later than June 2020. Each review should be no longer than one year and some may occur concurrently.
 1. *Each review should include ways the curriculum addresses the needs of the full range of learners in the school.*
 2. *Each review should include ways to ensure that multiple perspectives are represented within the curriculum area.*
- b. Following each review, a set of concrete recommendations, *including professional development*, will be *identified and implemented* by the Education Domain.
- c. Establish a schedule and structure for subsequent reviews.

Fiscal Implications: Reviews may indicate the need for new curriculum and/or training for staff, **resources for special education** and/or additional staff. Depending on the recommendations, some areas may require funding outside of the current budget framework. Other areas may require reallocation of resources within the budget.

Progress Monitoring: The Educational Coordinator will create a schedule for reviews and report annually to the BOT.

Goal 3: Scope of Program

Purpose: To achieve a balance between high-quality program options and effective use of staff time and resources, maintain fiscal and programmatic viability, provide students with meaningful interactions in community settings, and ensure programs are supporting the school's educational and community-building goals

Rationale/Context: The school culture and student growth is supported through curricular and co-curricular activities, as well as through projects with local community organizations. Given that the school and school community have limited resources to address the school's primary mission, it is important to periodically and systematically review which school activities warrant continued, increased or decreased resources. The growth of the school over the past two decades raises questions regarding which programs beyond the core curricular areas are essential to the school. We have added a number of excellent activities, but we need to reflect on which ones are sustainable given budget and human resource limitations.

Accountability: The Educational Coordinator in cooperation with the Community Coordinator and other stakeholders (staff, parents, and students)

Activities/Steps:

- a. Evaluate school programs beyond core curricular areas for the purpose of establishing key priorities. The evaluation will include service learning, mini-courses, instrumental lessons, student council, recess, buddy classes, after-school, cross-age lunch rooms, and All School. This list is not exhaustive. The initial evaluation will begin in 2014-2015 school year and be conducted through the 2016-2017, after which there will be reviews every three years.
- b. Determine clear time and resource allocations for ancillary programs -- Foreign Language, Physical Education, and Technology instruction.
- c. Assess relationships with local community organizations (e.g., SCA and Overlook), and make recommendations to build upon these partnerships, discontinue partnerships and/or establish others to address identified priorities.
- d. Establish a regular review cycle for these and other potential partnerships.
- e. Develop recommendations for priorities to support and modify as needed to accommodate the needs of an expanding student population (with input from staff, parents, and students).
- f. Identify programs and, as appropriate, suggest possible funding sources for activities such as afterschool clubs, arts and athletic programs, conferences, festivals and tournaments that serve to expand HCCPS students' connections beyond our school community.
- g. Evaluate current length of school day and school year, and make recommendations as needed.

Fiscal implications: To be determined by recommendations. Generally speaking, unless self-funded, new programs will require deletion of existing programs, or other budget modifications.

Progress Monitoring: The Educational Coordinator in collaboration with the Community Coordinator. Annual report on funding for "co-curricular activities" will be provided to the Board of Trustees.

Goal 4: Formal Academic Affiliation and Teaching Interns

Purpose: Ensure that HCCPS teachers utilize and disseminate best practices and maintain two adults in most classrooms in a financially viable manner

Rationale/Context: A goal for every charter school is to share best practices with the wider educational community. It is both important to promote and improve our approach through ongoing professional collaboration, outreach, and exchange. Over the coming years, the school should develop a formal academic affiliation with an area college or university. This affiliation could serve both the need for more dissemination by the school, and help address the financial issues we encounter with our current staffing pattern of placing two adults in most classrooms by using **graduate** interns **as the second adult** in some of these classrooms. In addition, staff will pursue other opportunities for HCCPS teachers to share effective practices and exchange information with professionals from other schools and institutions. *The process will begin in 2013 and be completed no later than 2020.*

Accountability: The Educational Coordinator

Activities/Steps:

- a. Assess the viability of developing a formal academic affiliation with one or more area colleges or universities for the purposes of supporting and growing our academic program. The affiliation should include placing year-long teaching interns in the school, and professional development opportunities for HCCPS teachers. *If an affiliation is formed, then proceed to step b. If it is not possible to partner with another institution, the Board of Trustees should decide to either continue pursuing options or discontinue this goal.*
- b. Establish and implement a pilot program in *1-4 classrooms over 2 years and place interns as the second adult* in classrooms where teachers are interested and able to be effective teacher trainers.

- c. Assess the pilot program. *Evaluation should include but is not limited to classroom effectiveness of interns, ability to meet other school needs (i.e. lunch, recess, after school), ability to meet the needs of the interns and affiliated institutions, and a fiscal analysis of expenses and savings. Based on this evaluation determine whether to continue or expand the pilot program. Evaluate expansion and or changes using similar criteria.*
- d. Identify other opportunities and develop relationships with organizations to increase access to professional development for HCCPS teachers and to allow HCCPS teachers to disseminate best practices.

Fiscal Implications: *Potential costs associated with implementing and sustaining an internship program.* The use of interns in the classroom could free some existing funds *currently used for teaching assistants* and ease budget constraints depending on how widespread the implementation is. Potential savings range from quite small if the program has limited viability, to more significant amounts. There are also potential savings in professional development expenses.

Progress Monitoring: The Educational Coordinator will submit an annual report to the Board of Trustees on the progress of the affiliation with input from the Finance Committee on budget implications.

BUILDING COMMUNITY

An identified strength of HCCPS is the strong sense of community that the school fosters. As the school continues to come of age and grows in size, we must consider how to continue to develop this community among students, families, and the broader community.

Goal 1: Community Team

Purpose: Create a sustainable and effective structure that brings together students, parents, and staff to support school culture, family participation and connections, integration across constituencies, and achievement of the community-building goals outlined in this plan

Rationale/Context: Building community requires multiple perspectives, and involvement from all stakeholders in the school. The Management Team, before it was discontinued, was an effective mechanism to bring together parents and staff to address school community issues, but its charge was not as clear as the one to this new group. Currently this communication happens indirectly through the coordinators.

Accountability: Community Coordinator with support from the Community Team

Activities/Steps:

- a. Starting in 2013, assemble a Community Team that includes the Community Coordinator, teacher, student, and parent representatives.
- b. Regularly solicit input from Student Council.
- c. Develop methods to connect class parents, Friends of Hilltown, staff, and students.
- d. Build structures and communication tools that enhance access to volunteer opportunities.
- e. Develop strategies to better share the HCCPS experience with parents who are unable to be physically present during the day (e.g., enhance website with videos, photos, on-line collections of art or written work, etc.; evaluate social media as means of communication).

Fiscal Implications: Possible technology costs and additional administrative and technical staffing support.

Progress Monitoring: Community Coordinator will report annually to the Board of Trustees on family-networking and community building priorities and challenges.

Goal 2: New Student/Family Integration

Purpose: Build strong parent investment and involvement for parents of students in all grades

Rationale/Context: HCCPS has a strong community, rich with school traditions. As the school grows in size and as the older class sizes increase, we need to ensure that incoming students and families are made to feel a part of the culture of the school and are full participants in the cooperative.

Accountability: Community Coordinator in collaboration with Education Coordinator.

Activities/Steps:

- a. Evaluate and improve beginning of the year and summer community building activities to help build connections among existing families and integrate all new families, particularly those with students in grades 6-8.
- b. Develop and implement an orientation program (employing significant student assistance) for incoming older students and their families.
- c. Assess and develop recommendations for opportunities throughout the year to enhance parent connection to the school community.

Timeline: Activities will start in 2013. Implementation continues in alignment with the growth in the 6th-8th grades. The efforts will be reviewed beginning in 2016-2017.

Fiscal Implications: increased administrative time either by increasing Community Coordinator's hours and/or adding additional administrative support staff.

Progress Monitoring: Annual parent surveys developed and implemented by the Community Coordinator will allow monitoring of parent engagement and satisfaction.

Goal 3: Traditions supporting school culture

Purpose: Continual development of strong sense of school culture and community among students in all grades

Rationale/Context: Increasing the size of the middle school will meet the needs of many students to be part of a larger social group. This change will also require new approaches to support the transition to middle school and the maintenance of a whole K-8 experience.

Accountability: Community Coordinator in collaboration with Community Team

Activities/Steps:

- a. Build structures, activities, or processes that maintain a sense of unity within the school and implement beginning in 2013, and continuing as the new middle school model is implemented.
- b. Starting in 2013, work with stakeholders to develop and put in place structures and activities that build strong connections and sense of identity among students in grades K-5 and 6-8.
- c. Develop an appropriate transitional ritual for moving from grade 5 to 6 once full second 6th grade is added.

Fiscal Implications: Increased administrative time either by increasing Community Coordinator's hours and/or adding additional administrative support staff.

Progress Monitoring: Community Coordinator (Community Team)

Goal 4: Student Leadership Training

Purpose: Older students recognize and are acknowledged for their role in building school community

Rationale/Context: With the proposed increase in the middle school population, there is a risk of a social separation between the older and younger classes. Older students at HCCPS have traditionally taken on leadership roles that continue to connect them to students in the lower grades and that establish a vision for student responsibility and growth as they progress through the grades. It's important to develop and formalize some of these structures.

Accountability: Education Coordinator in collaboration with Middle School Teachers and Community Team

Activities/Steps:

- a. Beginning in 2015, establish concrete and visible leadership roles for **7/8th grade** students.
- b. Beginning in 2015, assess student participation and effectiveness in creating meaningful linkages between older and younger students

(Note: connection between these activities and the Scope of Program review)

Fiscal Implications: Potential curriculum materials and/or consultants.

Progress Monitoring: Education Coordinator will consult annually with members of the Education Domain and Community Coordinator.

SUSTAINABILITY

HCCPS's sustainability, for the past 18 years, has been supported by sufficient waiting lists and enrollment, conservative budgeting and cautious facility expansion and maintenance. We have had flush times and lean times, usually a function of both the state's fiscal health and the specific economies of scale of a given year's enrollment. Good business practice has guided us to date. The goals in this section provide needed guidance to ensure that HCCPS has the essential infrastructure to support the future growth of the institution.

GOAL 1: Site

Purpose: Ensure that HCCPS has a financially viable home suitable to the expanded enrollment and program that meets current and future needs over the next 20 years and that is educationally, environmentally, and financially sustainable.

Rationale/Context: For the past 13 years the Board of Trustees, and its committees, have attempted, unsuccessfully, to find an affordable and suitable alternative to our current facility. Through extensive research, consultation and budget calculations, we have determined that new school construction is beyond our fiscal means. Suitable buildings for renovation are scarce and, those that have been explored have also proved too costly. We need to make a decision about the nature of our long term tenure at the Brassworks and only consider alternative sites if the Brassworks proves non-feasible.

Accountability: Administrative Coordinator, in conjunction with the Site and Finance Committees, will lead and monitor progress of these activities. The Board of Trustees is ultimately responsible for lease/purchase decisions.

Activities/Steps:

- a. Fully explore the feasibility of purchasing the Brassworks as a permanent home. Decision regarding lease vs. purchase will be made in 2013.
 - (1) Negotiate to purchase the Brassworks if it has been deemed an advantageous purchase.
 - (2) Develop a capital improvements plan, as owners, and budget accordingly.
- b. (1) Renegotiate a long term lease at the Brassworks if purchase is disadvantageous or unsuccessful.

(2) Develop a prioritized and modified capital improvements plan for leasehold improvements, upon lease renewal of the building.

(3) Determine (by the middle year of the lease) whether to pursue a longer lease renewal or resume search for another location.

c. Site assessment and improvement plans should include environmental and economic sustainability planning.

Fiscal Implications: to be determined, by Site and Finance, once purchase vs. lease decision has been resolved.

Purchase will entail financing long term loans and debt service, within the limits of our budget. The guiding principle will be to maintain the current ratio of occupancy expenses to total expenditures.

Progress Monitoring: Administrative Coordinator, in conjunction with the Site and Finance Committees, will monitor progress of these activities. The Board of Trustees is ultimately responsible for lease/purchase decisions. Several of these activities will include more detailed timelines that will support progress monitoring.

Goal 2: School Finance

Purpose: Establish policies that ensure long term fiscal stability, allowing for both growth and savings

Rationale/context: For most of our early history HCCPS generated a budget surplus. This has been increasingly difficult in the past five years. Budget creation and financial management have been carried out in the absence of an overarching philosophy or strategy. In order to provide fiscal sustainability in the long term we must develop a strategy to ensure that we live within our financial means and maintain an emergency cushion.

Accountability: Board of Trustees with input from the Finance Committee and the Administrative Coordinator

Activities/Steps:

- a. Adopt a policy that requires maintenance of a contingency fund of 12% of operating budget at the start of every fiscal year. Clearly define this fund for emergency purposes only, e.g., drop in PPE rates, physical site emergency. Implemented with the FY 14 budget cycle and ongoing. (Responsibility: BOT decision in concert with Finance Committee and Administrative Coordinator)
- b. Commit to approval of zero-balanced annual operating budgets, including an account designated for unanticipated, non-negotiable, and necessary expenses. Implemented with the FY 14 budget cycle and ongoing. (Responsibility: Board of Trustees after recommendation of Domain Council, Finance Committee)
- c. Annually designate a capital expenditures fund for building improvements and equipment, that fall outside the scope of an annual operating budget- i.e., one-time expenditures that will benefit the school for the long term. Funds for this purpose will be redirected from the undesignated fund balance at the start of each fiscal year. Implemented with the FY 14 budget cycle and ongoing. (Responsibility: BOT decision based on input from Finance and Site Committees and Administrative Coordinator)
- d. Assess sustainability of current employee compensation methodology. If necessary, research and implement alternate approaches in order to assure fiscal sustainability for the next decade.
(Responsibility: BOT decision based on input from Finance and Personnel Committees, and Education and Administrative Coordinators)
- e. Support the efforts of FOH to make an annual, undesignated donation to HCCPS operating budget, with a desired 5% annual increase in the size of their donation. (Responsibility: Community Coordinator and Development Associate)

Fiscal Implications: While these steps should result in long term fiscal stability there is the potential for budget cuts in any given year. This could impact staffing or benefits.

Progress Monitoring: Ongoing, quarterly and annually by the BOT based on input from the Finance Committee.

ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY AND SUCCESSION PLANNING

The abilities of our current coordinators do “what needs doing” to make the school work and to step in and make things happen when other resources have been lacking or inflexible has been a tremendous asset to the school. It has also led to a gradual expansion of their responsibilities and roles. At this time, as the school increases in size and complexity, demands on administrative resources insist on a re-evaluation of current administrative responsibilities, a reorganization of administrative support to maximize effectiveness, and a general clarification of duties. The intent is to make those duties more doable in the present and, in the long run, to establish a process to insure a smooth transition of leadership at such time as the current administrators may elect to retire.

Goal 1: Maximize Administrative Effectiveness

Purpose: To better define and support the roles and functions of the current three coordinators for the purpose of enhancing and augmenting their ability to dedicate themselves to administering a larger and increasingly complex institution.

Rationale: Since the school’s beginnings the roles of the coordinators have been defined by evolution as well as design. With the school’s expansion, it is time that an objective review of the current workload, demands, distractions, and frustrations impacting the coordinators’ jobs be undertaken for the purpose of improving the effectiveness and workability of these positions.

Accountability: BOT or committee thereof

Activities/ Steps:

- a. Review current job descriptions and duties of the coordinators. The review process should base its findings on interviews with the current coordinators, with faculty/staff, and with select community members and evaluate these findings in light of relevant practices and standards at similar institutions. (Initial review, 2013-2014, continuing through school expansion)
- b. In light of above findings and in conjunction with board and community wishes, revise current coordinator responsibilities.
- c. In light of above plans, adjust administrative support for the purpose of relieving the coordinators of some portion of these duties. Consider recruiting and training several staff to serve in leadership roles for the purposes of: 1. Assisting in eventual transition and 2. Minimizing the disruptiveness of an unfilled vacancy or long-term unplanned absence 3. Serve as School Leaders when coordinators are absent.

(Note: The question of a wholesale review of the structure of the school administration was entertained by the LRP, but we found no compelling reason to do so—and we advise against it.)

Fiscal Implications: cost of hiring of consultant review of administrative structure; cost additional administrative support staff, leadership stipends.

Goal 2: Plan for Administrative Succession

Purpose: To develop a plan for the smooth transition and incorporation of new leadership at such time as the current coordinators may elect to retire.

Rationale: Our current three coordinators have unique and often unrecorded knowledge about the institution and their roles. As the time approaches when they may be considering retirement, their duties, plans, schedules, contacts, etc. need to be captured in a form which is suitable for hand-off to a successor. The institution needs to better define what qualities it seeks in their successors. And the school as a whole needs a general plan for appropriately integrating a new administrator into the life of the school.

Accountability: BOT or committee thereof
Current coordinators

Activities/Steps:

- In conjunction with the findings discussed in Goal 1 above for revision of coordinator duties, develop a (simple) manual outlining each of the coordinators' duties, schedule, etc.
- If no staff members have been appointed as a result of Goal 1c above, recruit and train several staff to serve in leadership roles for the purposes of: 1. Assisting in eventual transition and 2. Minimizing the disruptiveness of an unfilled vacancy or long-term unplanned absence.
- Develop with current coordinators a satisfactory transition plan anticipating their role in recruitment and training of a successful candidate.

Fiscal implications: Costs associated with added staff/roles, stipends for staff in leadership roles

Goal / Activity	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Program Quality											
Goal 1: Grades 6-8 Reorganization											
Develop recommendations / implementation plan											
Implement new model gradually											
Full-scale implementation											
Comprehensive evaluation of model implementation											
Goal 2: Curriculum Review											
Develop system											
Establish schedule											
Conduct reviews, beginning with Math & ELA											
Goal 3: Scope of Program											
Conduct initial evaluation and implement initial recommendations											
Regular reviews											
Goal 4: Academic Affiliation and Teaching Interns											
Building Community											
Goal 1: Community Team											
Goal 2: New Student/Family Integration											

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