



Honey Creek Community School Board of Trustees

Regular Meeting* – Wed, October 2 2024 – 5:30 PM – Room #144

The public Zoom link will be posted on honeycreekschool.org/school-board.

School Policy and Principles: [Board Policy](#), [Belief Statements](#) and [Statement on Social Justice](#)

1. Call to Order & Roll Call - 5:32pm
 - a. Mouna, Sherry, Dillon, Laura, Daniel, Karen (trustee elect) - Absent: Vincent
 - b. Admin/Staff: Olivia Fink, Sue Hofbauer
2. Changes or Additions to the Agenda - None
3. Consent Agenda - Motion to approve: Daniel, Second: Laura - All present in favor
 - a. Meeting Minutes: Aug 21 2024 (*Regular Meeting*)
 - b. Financials: Aug 2024
4. Public Comment - Limited to 3 minutes, must be recognized by the board present, state name for the record
 - a. Active board members are not eligible to submit public comment. There are best practices for others, such as staff, for submitting comment through the staff liaison. Additional guidelines coming from the governance committee.
 - b. No public comment at this time.
5. Board Correspondence - None
6. Presentation - None
7. Reports
 - a. President - Sherry
 - i. We want to acknowledge and wish our Jewish friends a happy Rosh Hashanah!
 - ii. We're reaching out through our board newsletter to capture significant cultural and religious events for acknowledgement. As a board we recognize federal holidays for scheduling.
 - iii. Start of the new administration - we want to recognize and appreciate the patience of everyone in our community during this transition. There is change and that takes time. Please share our appreciate with Sue, Joe, and all staff who are starting the year with such energy.
 - b. Executive Director - Sue
 - i.
 - c. Staff Liaison - Olivia
 - i. Staff met before this board meeting to prepare - more detailed report coming next meeting
 - d. Advisory Board
 - i. Equity - Aubrey
 1. We are looking to recruit folks - we have an application to fill out - this is intended as a strategic group rather than an affinity group. Previous experience is required.
 2. To support Sue & Joe's commitment to equity we have a lot we want to do! We're meeting regularly with Admin and Board leadership to prioritize those goals. We're discussing bringing on a consultant to help. We appreciate the immediate efforts to integrate the equity into the upcoming PD for staff.
 - ii. Sex Education - Dillon
 1. Update
 - e. Committee
 - i. Governance - Daniel
 - ii. Finance - Laura
 1. Working through compensation policy - tweaking payroll.
 2. Getting ready for our audit findings at the next work session.
 3. Gearing up for the Nov budget amendment

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- a. Collect questions and priorities to consider
- 4. Grants and fundings sources to fill gaps for mentorship, PD and Sped, covering teachers who are enrolled in programs.
- iii. Curriculum & Classroom Supports - Mouna
 - 1. Mentorship - met with Admin to discuss current needs and structures - still in development. Reaching out to Staff liaisons about need. We recognize that there are teachers who are very new and so we're focused on meeting requirements for their first 3 years of mentorship.
 - 2. Joe: Started making a program according to state standards - ran into Cherie from WISD - where they are working on a program now and willing to share their work and structure - will need some adjustments. Asked staff to do a needs assessment to flush out priorities. Establishing a log/documentation for the mentor meetings.
- 8. Discussion
 - a. Board Ethics (BP 0140, Membership) - Sherry
 - i. Governance has been discussing - highlighting Board Policy (approved by this and past boards)
 - ii. BP 0140 - Membership of the board of trustees - action will come out of governance when we're ready if any changes are being proposed - considering updates to the Conflict of Interest form.
 - 1. Outlines that we follow our bylaws - public expression of board members - individual board members do not speak on behalf of the board - the board president is authorized to speak on behalf of the board - trustees are allowed differing opinions but speak for themselves only.
 - 2. We are sworn in and affirm a public oath, acknowledging that our personal communications can have influence, recognizing that we are volunteers and are not compensated for our work - there have been perceptions of our authority and we would like this as clarity.
 - 3. We want to focus on board ethics because of perceived and/or real potential conflicts that could happen with our positions of authority in the school. 4 different highlights to emphasize:
 - a. We acknowledge how important it is that all decisions we make are based on fact and eliminating bias.
 - b. It is our job per policy to communicate to other trustees and admin, public reaction as we are aware of it in the community - there is a structure for providing that feedback through the executive committee.
 - c. Continue to educate ourselves in board policy - policy must be known for us to be compliant.
 - d. Avoid conflict of interest and refrain using our board positions for personal or partisan gain.
 - e. Per policy there is a lot of emphasis on financial conflict of interest - having a child in the academy doesn't alone constitute a conflict of interest though there is a perception that it is. We want to ensure that every trustee knows that if we do have students in this school that we want and expect to be treated as every other family in the school. We want this very clear so that we and the admin can hold us accountable to this policy.
 - f. Discriminatory Harassment - it is our obligation to provide an environment that provides an environment that fosters respect and dignity of each person. To this end, the Board is committed to the maintenance of an environment free of harassment and intimidation. See policy 5517.



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- g. Olivia: Where will this final policy be housed? Sherry: Board Docs! On our website, there's a Board Policy toggle that will take you to the Board Docs website which houses all of our policies. (Red Button)
- h. Laura: It would be helpful to know a definition of special interest groups, outline what a parental conflict of interest might look like, more detail on what the school is obligated to do for our students and our culture in the face of harassment, what qualifies as harassment, helpful for board members and all community members to familiarize themselves with the family handbook to outline the process of actions after harassment.
 - i. Perhaps the board could get additional training on the Eliot Larson anti-bullying act, and the Michigan Specific anti-bullying regulations.
 - ii. Like for us as a board to be truthful in our state reporting on bullying - in the past we have reported zero bullying and I believe that to not be true.
 - 1. Sherry: The definition of what is mandated to be reported to state has been brought up in equity discussions - the categories and the process to report - making sure families are aware of the different types of reporting that can be done - formal reports must be reported to the state. Families should never be influenced to not file a formal report.
 - 2. Dillon: What is the board role vs. admin in reporting bullying? Sherry: Admin will have the majority of responsibility - but the board ensure there is a system for defining, capturing and reporting - and ensuring that it is reported at a Board meeting. Daniel: Policy 5517 will provide guidance for students.
 - 3. Mouna: How well aligned are these policies with the handbook? Sherry: there are gaps and we're working on closing them. Mouna: Can we ensure onboarding includes these policies? Sherry: Yes - we're working on a board handbook.
 - 4. Olivia: How do we reconcile that in real time as events happen? Sherry: What is consistent through the board materials is that the student code of conduct is critical - starting there is our top priority. The process flow is under review. Board policy needs to be adhered to - our goal is to support students, focus on growth mindset and restorative justice - as such due process is absolutely necessary at all levels. Students have the right to a transparent process and need to know that.
 - a. Laura: The staff and student handbooks delineate a lot of processes. Sherry: That's our current practice but not policy - Admin is working diligently to reconcile. Previous Admin had drafted handbooks but never submitted them for board review and approval. Current admin is seeking input on current handbook.
 - iii. Any feedback needs to come to the board and governance committee.
- b. Anti-Harassment Policy and Process (BP 1662 Administration, BP 3363 Staff, BP 5517 Students)

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- i. See above discussion points
 - c. School Accreditation Status (Cognia, School Accreditation Engagement Review 2022) - Sherry
 - i. We are currently accredited - lastly done in 2022 by AI before his retirement. It's held for 6 year cycles. If we choose to remain accreditation it will need to be done in 2028.
 - 1. It affects our budget: \$1200 annually to maintain membership in Cognia. Less than \$4K to remain accredited in 2028.
 - 2. Can be used for marketing purposes - could add gold medal status to our website. Allows a different perspective view of our operation. There are some state and federal funding grants that are only available to accredited academies - finance will look into learning more.
 - 3. It's not required though MDE encourages it. Sherry spoke to our Cognia representative - engagement review in 2027-2028 academic year to avoid lapse.
 - 4. Daniel: Does it have an affect on our students' ability to have courses to count as credit in HS (say mathematics)? Sherry: It is one of the requirements.
 - ii. We should include accreditation in our annual organizational meeting so that we don't lose track of it. We have updated the contact and contract information to reflect the new Admin.
 - d. Audit of Special Education Files - Sherry
 - i. Internal Audit with WISD, Marquita is doing her own as she's onboarding
 - ii. Vincent is our contact - he's absent - will come back on the agenda for next meeting.
9. Action Items
- a. Appointment of New Trustee (Karen Bailey, term ending June 30, 2027) - Move to appoint: Laura, Second: Mouna. All present in favor.
 - i. Thank you for being here and for sharing your time as a trustee! WISD documents have been updated, removing Jordan Green after her resignation and Karen Bailey has been added.
 - ii. Daniel: We put out a call for nominations - Karen was our only nominee, she wrote a beautiful response to our questions. As she was the only nominee we decided a full election was not necessary.
 - iii. Sherry: Karen will complete Jordan's term and extend into her own term ending in 2027 along with Sherry MacKay.
 - b. Organizational Items - Move to approve the actions below: Daniel, Seconded: Laura - All present in favor.
 - i. Deposit, Accounts, Spending Authority & Signatories
 - ii. Contract Negotiations
 - c. Compensation Policy - 2nd Reading and Approval - Move to approve as drafted: Daniel, Seconded: Dillon - All present in favor.
 - i. Laura: Last year we approved a step increase for all staff and a COLA increase of 2%. Bonus was approved to retained staff.
 - 1. We adjusted some pay scales - admin was simplified to reflect the collaborative model.
 - 2. Two coordinator pay scales - ASP & Special Education Coordinators - adjusted to reflect reality and to make us competitive.
 - 3. Adjusted IA/ASP counselor payscale with increase.
 - 4. Stipend list is reflective of our current needs - wanted to tighten it up so that stipends have deliverables attached to them and are pre-approved by the board. We've had tremendous collaboration with folks who are receiving stipends.



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5. More work is being done to clarify operationally the PTO (paid time off) policy. There is a max of 24 days. More work is being done to clarify when folks are eligible for benefits, salaried vs hourly. Administrative guidelines will provide more information.
 - a. Clarification on role of office pros who are working for ASP needed.
 6. Thank you to Sherry & Vincent for really diving into these details. We're trying to ensure transparency.
 7. These changes were implemented into the 10/1 payroll.
 8. Thank you from Dillon: As someone who was deeply involved in hiring over the summer it was a great benefit to have such a clear and transparent compensation policy - I used it often.
 - d. Hiring Recommendations - Moved: Laura, Seconded: Dillon. All present in favor.
 - i. Considered a compensation recommendation as these folks have already been hired. These positions were opened and approved by the finance committee. After interviews, admin or interim hiring coordinator provides hiring recommendations, the executive committee determines the compensation step.
 - ii. Daniel: This is great - kudos and thank you for all the work that went into preparing this document and process flow. It's just a single page but it represents so many hours of work.
10. Public Comment - None
11. Acknowledgements & Thank You's
- a. Daniel: Thank you to everyone who was behind all of those hires! That's a lot of work especially with the state of hiring these days.
 - b. Mouna: Thank you Karen for stepping up to join the board! It takes so much heart and courage and caring to serve the school.
 - c. Laura: Thank you to Sue and Joe for taking us up on asking for help - it's a sign - and the way that you presented your report - it's the information we need - it's collaborative - the shift in what communication looks like and with such honesty has been appreciated and we will continue to grow.
 - d. Sherry: Thank you to everyone - this is a transitional year for HC - we have a lot of pieces we're putting in place. We appreciate the staff liaisons, the admin, the energy of the PTO, the new leadership of the foundation as we enter our 30th year! We are a unique school by being a public charter academy that is self-governed. We are a community.
12. Adjournment - 7:30pm!

*Rescheduled regular meeting from Sep 18 2024.