



HCCS BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Regular Meeting – Thursday, January 27 – 5:30 PM – Room #144

Public Zoom Link: <https://zoom.us/j/96422657430>

- I. **Call to Order & Roll Call:** Present: Sherry, Mouna, Vincent, Daniel, Jordan, Dillon Absent: Laura (present via zoom); Kevin & Lindsey present, Thaddeus as teacher liaison
- II. **Changes or Additions to the Agenda** - None
- III. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes** - Approved by all present
- IV. **Public Comment** - None
- V. **Board Correspondence** - None
- VI. **Presentations:** Special Services; Lindsey Segrist, Cornelius Shields & Mariolga Briceno
 - A. **Kevin:** High Level strategic view: Mission of HC is deliberative to attract unique learners and is a part of why we're here tonight. Important to note - since charter legislation was launched charter schools typically have strong special services compared to conventional public schools. We're operating in an era with inherently heightened need. HC has not attained full special services staffing for the last 5 years or so until this year. Special services are exceptionally labor intensive - it is not an apples to apples comparison to a gen ed educator. As we recruit new enrollees we want to be very clear about the services we can and cannot provide in order to avoid unrealistic expectations and disappointment.
 - B. **Lindsey:** Day to day level - Staff we've brought on board is new - our most senior member, Abby the OT has been here for 19 months, for example. Some services are a heavier or lighter load (in regard to minutes needed) than others and therefore IEPs can vary significantly.
 1. Progress we've made: Last backlog request should be done within the week, providing support for general ed and special ed staff, fully staffed, MTSS process in place, progress is being made with currently hired psych.
 2. Challenges: Backlog from last year has been the biggest challenge as we're trying to keep up with incoming requests. Currently 1 shy of finishing backlog from last year. Incomplete testing, disorganized paperwork, lack of psychologist has been a big hindrance. We onboarded 3 psychologists (labor intensive) with 2 backing out at the last minute.
 3. IEP Process - Parents request an evaluation after conversations with classroom teacher. Parents are given procedural safeguard, a read meeting within 10 days, an evaluation is done and a follow up meeting is scheduled within 30 days of the request. Services must be started within 14 days of signing the IEP. Extensions can be filed (30 days).
 - C. **Cornelius:** Gratitude to Kevin and Lindsey.
 1. K-5 - 25 IEPs, 2 pending
 2. 6-8 - 11 IEPs, 1 pending
 - D. **Mariolga:** 19 - 504s, 55 total between IEPs and 504s.
 - E. **Sherry:** Acknowledgement and gratitude for the progress, the attention and the organization needed. Over 25% of our student population utilizing special services. That is a high number given our staffing model. This is a big task. We want to support every single student. Families should communicate with Lindsey for any services needed or concerns in the classroom.
 - F. **Vincent:** Questions:

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1. What are the trends in numbers for IEPs and 504s. (Kevin: 13 students eligible for IEPs who did not return this year. The numbers are lower this year than last year - attributed to the frankness during enrollment meetings. The archiving and record keeping has not been consistent in the past.)
2. How does this compare to AAPS? (Kevin statewide average is 22.3% and we are 22% this year.)
3. The process is lengthy - are there steps that can be identified to speed up the process? (Kevin: We have to be realistic - this team has been together for less than 10 days. We need to learn to crawl and then walk before we can run.)
4. Are external evaluations accepted in order to reduce load on our staff? (Lindsey: ADHD is an example of something we would use an external evaluation for, Dyslexia is another. Otherwise our own staff are doing evaluations).
5. Are we leveraging resources from High Point? (Kevin: No, HP is a separate legal entity with their own budget. The ISD can provide resources and is the appropriate place for us to go for assistance. Lindsey: Building relationship with the ISD and they've been great - to the best of their ability - to help provide resources.
6. To what extent can parent volunteering help out (in the classroom) with the challenges of the work load? We're a scrappy little school on a tight budget and in the past we've filled gaps with the community. Is that something we can get back to? (Sherry: From the board perspective, creating the positions for Mariolga and Cornelius sets the standard for consistency, something that's been lacking, the balance of using parents as a tool is that consistency can be lost. The more that we can focus on general education rather than special services - the better we would be to meet the needs. Kevin: We never want to say no to someone who wants to lean into a problem. Partially the reason HC fell into the issues it has is because it has relied on volunteer positions in the past. We've had lots of folks offer - bringing in a practitioner to provide services minutes is not possible).

G. Mouna:

1. How is the process for 504s different than IEPs? (Cornelius: 504 focuses on accommodations for disability, IEPs have written in goals for education. The process for recognition and evaluation is similar.)
2. Are there cases when a child has a 504 and an IEP? (Cornelius: It's either one or another).
3. The numbers for students with IEPs - there tend to be fewer in MS level - but 504s are roughly the same along grade divisions. Is that a trend you've expected? (Kevin: The pandemic likely plays a roll in the the higher numbers in lower elementary but we can't really tell).

VII. Reports

A. President's Report - Sherry

1. Presentations will continue during board meetings - monthly themes. Trainings are scheduled for the board to continue on education on board governance and finance. MI Department of Ed - daily or weekly emails regarding topics in education at the state level.

B. Director's Report - Kevin

1. State's annual estimating conferences has passed - an exercise where the state tries to guess how much revenue they'll have next year. They're expecting them to remain equal or greater than they've been. Hoping for increase in PP funding to offset the loss of covid dollars in the fall. Read by 3 law has been repealed - this is considered good news as it

hasn't been effective. We're about to launch the enrollment process for next year. We hope to have 100% reenrollment. On Feb 5th we'll open enrollment to new families.

C. Parent-Teacher Organization Report - Sherry

1. Talent Show March 9th! Deadline for registration and video submission due this coming Sunday.

D. Committee Reports as Applicable

1. Finance - Mouna: We're finalizing compensation policies and waiting for info from Kevin and the school accountant. Things are looking good.
2. Governance - Sherry: Gearing up for training but also for continued review of policy including the SEAB curriculum tonight. Kicking off board elections in the near future (April).
3. Strategic Planning - Sherry: Rolling out board presentations in the next few months, a community survey will go out soon. The committees are gathering information and we'd appreciate community feedback. Reach out to the board email and Dillon will direct you to the lead of the subcommittees.

VIII. Discussion Items

A. 6th, 7th & 8th Grade Sex Education Curricula - Presentation by Taryn Gal, Will Muerer & Sarah Hakala

1. Sherry: Curricula was taken to Governance - there is a memo of support from the governance committee for the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade sex ed curricula. State of MI standards have been met. Referenced materials are publicly available for general use; no curricula were purchased. There were some notes of descent - presented in the board memo - but committee voted to pass with a 3:1 majority.
2. Sarah: A Giant Thank you to Noah Hagen for his expertise and the immense amount of work he has provided.
3. Vincent: Thank you for the immense amount of work put into this curriculum.
4. Daniel: Echo Vincent comments. The students at MSU that he teaches attribute many of the issues they're dealing with to a lack of critical sex education in their youth. Suggestion to shift the last lesson in order to end on a less triggering topic. (Sarah: It's up to the school - but if it doesn't change - every lesson ends with a debriefing and open ended anonymous question session. There is extra time built in for resolution. Thaddeus: We can, and have, move things around according to what's going on in the classroom.
5. Dillon: I want to thank you for the immense amount of work. You've made this look easy and it's not; it's a huge deal. I'm very proud of what you've brought to the school and I'm excited for this to be a part of our curricula. Thank you.
6. Sarah: The recommendation for Taryn to take Noah's place as co-chair was done with thought. She was present with initial admin conversations and she works directly with this topic.

B. Pandemic Response Update - Kevin

1. No changes in the recommendation. The intention, absent a windfall of cases in the next several days, we'll drop our risk assessment to low starting Monday of next week.
2. Sherry: The date at the top of the pandemic response document is when board was last updated or given approval.

IX. Action Items

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A. SEAB Co-Chair Nomination - Noah Hagen stepping down - appointing Taryn Gal to complete the term ending in Sep 2024. Motion to discuss - approved.

1. Sherry - We would like to take another moment to acknowledge the work that Noah has done. He will be remaining on the SEAB but is stepping down as co-chair. Taryn is currently a member, has been instrumental in the development of the SEAB and is very experienced professionally. We identified that we don't have a process for appointing new co-chairs so that is something the governance committee is working on.
2. Approved by all present.

X. **Acknowledgements & Thank You's**

- A. Sherry: Thank you for the time of our presenters tonight. Lindsey, Cornelius, Mariolga, as well as the SEAB members. We can do a better job with more community input. Thank you for everything.
- B. The board: echos what Sherry said.

XI. **Public Comment:**

- A. **Aaron Towne:** HC parent and a member of the SEAB. Despite sitting on the board he's here again speaking against the curriculum. He did 100+ hours of research to ensure he was accurate. Was told by members of the board that his comments were harmful and would not be discussed. [Aaron was reading from a statement rather quickly. As secretary I asked him to email his statement to the board correspondence email in order to include an accurate representation of his comment. If he complies it will be added as an addendum.]
- B. **Will Meurer:** Also a member of the SEAB and was in the discussion Aaron has referenced. Not on the leadership structure - however, a lot of the requests - as far as he can interpret it - as a person who went to medical school - while sex and gender are different things - the requests were unproductive and not based in science. That's not how we use language these days in 2024 - saying that as a member of the public and not as a member of the SEAB or a member of the University of Michigan Medicine.
- C. Sherry: We appreciate public comment that is both general or specific. Being very specific on any type of item for comment is important. All correspondence is encouraged.

XII. **Adjournment - 7:16PM**