



# HCCS BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Regular Meeting – Wednesday, May 17 – 5:30 PM – Cafeteria

Public Zoom Link: <https://zoom.us/j/91820682227>

- I. **Call to Order & Roll Call - Called to order 5:33pm**
  - a. **Present: Sherry, Mary (departure at 6:35 after vote for reduction in board size), Bridgette, Dillon, Craig, Mouna, Matt, Laura**
  - b. **Absent: Woodrow**
  - c. **Admin in attendance: Kevin, Sue (6:20pm); Teacher Liaison: Mary**
- II. **Changes or Additions to the Agenda**
  - a. **New Zoom Link: <https://zoom.us/j/9662662117>**
  - b. **Vote to reduce the size of the board - Action item D**
- III. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**
  - a. **March 1st Meeting. Motion to approve, seconded. All present in favor.**
  - b. **April 19 - motion to approve, seconded. All present in favor.**
  - c. **April 26 - motion to approve, seconded.**
    - i. **Modification: add Katie and Deborah last names. All present in favor.**
- IV. **Public Comment**
  - a. **Statement from the teachers, as of today:**
    - i. **“We would like the Honey Creek Community to know that we stand behind Kevin and his leadership of our school. The vitriol coming from individuals in the community that has been swirling around his leadership is demoralizing and has made all of our jobs more difficult this year. Kevin is committed to us as a staff and to you as a community. These are our words, Mary Bassett, Chris Parin, Salli Kropp, Elka Francisco, Jo Brown, Tracey Marchyok, Amy Brooks, David Adler, Cheryl Quinn, Thaddeus Wilson, Joe Griffith, Marta England, Debi Bailey, Amy Johnston, Dierdre Piper, Alexa Korpall, Cindy Wauer, Jess Peters, Stephanie Yambrick, Archer Neal, Sue Hofbauer**
- V. **Board Correspondence: None**
- VI. **Presentations: None**
- VII. **Reports**
  - a. **Director’s Report: Thank you for the staff support for individuals on leave and for the entire staff for appreciation week.**
  - b. **President’s Report:**
    - i. **Second the appreciation that Kevin summarized.**
    - ii. **Completing the end of the year and board term. June 30th is the last day of this term. Transitions: 2 terms ending (Bridgette and Craig) and Mary is resigning -- thank you for the years of service.**
      1. **The next 6 weeks we have a lot of work to do before transitioning.**
      2. **Special Meeting on Jun 7, 2023 . Director Evaluation. Board Elections.**
  - c. **Teacher’s Report - moving out of testing season and thinking about graduation!**
  - d. **Parent-Teacher Organization Report**
    - i. **Community collection for staff - get well card. Raised \$900 with PTO adding \$100.**
    - ii. **Collecting old spiritwear for Pay what you Pay fundraiser on PE play day.**
    - iii. **PE Play day volunteers needed for Jun 2, 2023 .**
    - iv. **June 2nd will be the last meeting of the current board for the year.**

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e. Committee Reports as Applicable

i. Finance - defer to the discussion items

ii. Governance -

1. Board Elections: Start in parallel with director evaluation. Communications going on tomorrow. Election packet will be sent to the current board for review before sending out. Template is familiar to years past. 3 year term. Commitment is needed to maintain discretion, values and policies, attendance at board meetings and committee meetings. Current staff of HC and WISD and their spouses cannot serve. Must be a US citizen and resident of Washtenaw County. Adding optional questions to help the community learn more about the nominees. Equity team has submitted additional questions that they're requesting to be included. Review of roles and responsibilities as well as a link to our policy.
  - a. Bridgette: Tiny public school - wondering if in the communication to nominees will there be education on what the role of a board trustee is.
2. Director Evaluation: crucial for evaluating leadership and required by the state. Revamping from prior years using the MASB evaluation tool. June 7th special session will be held to conduct the evaluation. Trustees should familiarize themselves with the MASB tool. We will use student assessment data (50% NWEA, 50% MStep, focusing on student progress). Committees please prepare comments for your relevant section - look at the rubric and fill it out or prepare comments and explanations.
  - a. Additional sections beyond committee: Community relations, staff relations, etc. - served by surveys provided to the staff and parents in the community.
  - b. Hope to ID what we're doing well, what needs improvement, and steer our goals moving forward. The results will be summarized by the governance committee. Data is not provided to the full board. Results do not determine evaluation but contribute to the overall evaluation. Data is confidential.
  - c. Move to authorize the surveys to be sent to staff and community using email address provided by the director no later than 9AM Thursday May 18th 2023.
    - i. Moved. Seconded. All present in favor.
  - d. Bridgette: D4 in finance - we don't maintain the buildings - we need to have an approach that fits our school's size and approach in order to save time and avoid unnecessary work.

iii. Advancement

1. 3rd draft of a community relations survey that will go out before the June meeting.
2. Working on a board/staff gathering to celebrate the year.
3. Working on a compensation summary to mainstream information for everyone's eyes.

**VIII. Discussion Items**

- a. 2022-23 Final Budget Amendment - Summary table included in packet listed as 27.69% percentage of annual expenditures - this number will be adjusted. Hoping to have the final version from the accountant by the end of May so we have at least a week to review before the June meeting.
  - i. Questions can be addressed to Kevin or Bridgette.
  - ii. Bridgette: This is very common for Honey Creek to have these budget amendments - for those who are new.
  - iii. Kevin: We're required by state law to adjust every line item on the budget to ensure that we aren't spending more than we've budgeted.
  - iv. Matt: How would I make sure I'm prepared to look at these numbers in an educated way?

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1. **Sherry:** One of the agenda items in Governance is to work on an onboarding process which will include an overview of the financial statement and budget.
  2. **Bridgette:** Even with that onboarding it can be difficult. We have to trust the accountants and the finance committee as the reports come out. The board has it in our policies to have a certain level of fund balance. This can be a prediction/barometer of whether we're operating in the zone where we're supposed to. We tend to aim for a 10-11% fund balance. Some years have been tight - this year is robustly healthy. Comes from new state allowance, covid funds, staffing shortage. Dropping below 5% may trigger the state to watch us closely. There's also a cash flow concern. The school year starts with a lot of costs but the state doesn't reimburse in real time so we need to have a buffer to avoid taking a bridge loan to meet our expenses (like payroll).
  3. **Sherry:** We did convert over - Raymond is our accountant for the school - we have transitioned to a new director, with significant input into what the budget looks like, but also transitioned to New World software (financial reporting system) - we should have more specific and individualized reports soon. Lots of work to establish the relationship between ED and accountant and set up the software program. The purpose of the budget is to support our students in the classroom. We don't want to accumulate it in savings, we want to use it for the students now. The details the finance committee works out - we are required at the end of each board term to review fund balance and assess if there are sufficient funds available to support the step-up in compensation for the staff (per pay schedules) - that is a June meeting topic. This is separate from that review.
- b. Staffing Shortage Bonus
- i. Chronic staffing shortage has required extraordinary efforts on the part of every HC staff. The shortage has contributed to a significant increase in our fund balance. Kevin would recommend a one time bonus. \$2500 for every full time employee excluding substitutes and third-party contractors. Part time and mid-hires would be compensated proportionately. Total liability to the general fund would be ~\$84,800. This does not qualify for retirement contributions. Would pay out for the last payment cycle of this financial year.
    1. **Laura:** Fantastic idea.
    2. **Dillon:** Agreed
    3. **Mouna:** In favor.
    4. **Matt:** Proration clarifications.
      - a. **Bridgette:** Special Ed staffing shortage in the beginning with different staffing issues at the end. It's been felt throughout the year.
      - b. **Sherry:** Number of open positions posted - ebbed and flowed through the year - but we still have many.

## IX. Action Items

- a. 2023-24 Chromebook Acquisition
  - i. Jess has been concerned about the age of our chrome books. This is replacing 40 machines that are 5+ years old. We will need to replace more in the future but it's a good start.
  - ii. Discussed in the finance committee.
  - iii. Moved, seconded. All present in favor.
- b. Pandemic Response (No Changes)
  - i. Gratifying that we haven't had any more cases reported recently since the last small outbreak.
- c. Hiring Recommendations

- i. Jo Brown - full time social worker - in the building earlier than anticipated. Our first full time certified social worker this year. Stealth camp counselor over the summer - will help build relationships.
  - 1. Motion to approve, seconded. All present in favor.
- d. Motion to reduce the size of the board of trustees to 7 members (from 9) for the 2023-2024 year.
  - i. Discussion in governance. Looking at term cycles, reducing the board will allow fewer trustees to transition simultaneously in 3 years. This should help maintain the knowledge of the board and create more continuity.
    - 1. **Matt:** Why not reduce the next few terms to 1-2 years?
      - a. **Sherry:** We would have to change board policy. Board election packet: specific requests for more community members contributing to committees to spread the work. Last year MASB was shocked that we had such a large board and expected a 3-5 person board.
      - b. **Bridgette:** There are costs to onboarding. Our board size is out-sized to our school size. Considers this right-sizing the board. The community asks a lot of parent volunteers and often it's the same volunteers trying to do the same things. Ideally a 5 person board would make the most sense - and you'd get nominees who have spent several years on committees and come with the knowledge. We do committee work at the board level and would like to bring it back to the committees.
    - 2. **Matt:** This is not a change I'm familiar with even being on the governance committee.
      - a. **Sherry:** We have discussed it a few times. We never settled on a number. There isn't a right answer. For quorum we need an odd number of trustees - with a reduced board we would need fewer board members to make meetings - attendance issues this year. Empowering to make more voices heard by having strong committees.
    - 3. **Matt:** Concern about the number of voices being invited to the discussion. There are other ways of adjusting the staggering of terms.
      - a. **Laura:** Too much change too quickly is really jarring - finds the reduction of size for term staggering a compelling reason.
    - 4. **Mouna:** It sounds efficient.
    - 5. Matt abstains. All others present in favor.

## X. Organizational Items for 2023-2024

- a. **Move to accept all but academic calendars. Motioned. Seconded. All present in favor (Mary and Woodrow absent).**
  - i. Deposit Accounts & Signatories
  - ii. Contract Negotiations
  - iii. Chief Financial Officer
  - iv. Civil Right Coordinator
  - v. Freedom of Information Act Coordinator
  - vi. Legal Counsel
  - vii. External Auditor
  - viii. Academic Calendar
    - 1. **Kevin:** great deal of consensus in the survey - current year was liked and would like it to be replicated. Staff members convened to abide by the washtenaw co consortium calendar agreement.
      - a. January 8th - Staff PD day, extends break and reduces the number of Mondays that are disrupted.

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- b. Half day on MLK and focused on service learning. This way it counts as a day and reduces the summer load but also makes it a day of action and not just a day off.
  - c. Half day on May 29th - to accommodate the High Point graduation in the cafeteria.
  - d. School starts a day earlier than usual - a half day on Tuesday Sept 5
    - i. We don't qualify for pre-labor day start exemption
  - e. Wednesday before Thanksgiving we didn't make attendance threshold so we have made it a full day off.
  - f. Laura to Sue: Will half days still have aftercare? Sue: For most of them yes, for the newer ones TBD.
2. Moved, seconded. All present in favor (Mary, Woodrow absent)
- ix. Board Meeting Calendar - No official July Trustee meeting.
  - x. Board Meeting – Method of Public Posting

## **XI. Acknowledgements & Thank You's**

- a. **Sherry: Thank you everyone for all the work that is underway to meet a successful school year.**
- b. **Kevin: Praise and Thanks for our Amanda, our long term music teacher. A testament to her professionalism and teaching skills.**
- c. **Bridgette: Thank you to Jeff, who I haven't met or seen, but who my children rave about at dinner every night. Kudos to Jeff Hamilton.**
- d. **Dillon: Thank you so much to Laura for her excellent work on the evaluation work.**
- e. **Bridgette: Thank you to Kevin and Schranda - for running the back of the house exquisitely - so that teachers feel supported. We are a small public school and a huge battle every day is keeping the doors open. Thank you to everyone who is stepping into that - and to those who are stepping into the space of Schranda's physical absence.**
- f. **Sherry: Thank you to all the people we haven't thanked yet. We've struggled with this section of the board meetings because it's impossible to thank everyone. It takes so many people - staff and volunteers. If you have ideas on how to capture and express that appreciation please let us know.**

## **XII. Public Comment**

- a. **Abby Adams:** First thank the trustees - attended many meetings this year - impressed with collective work and the work of the administration - Kevin and Sue - this year.
  - i. Mary had to leave early but as the PTO we wanted to highlight we're going to be running our year end collection for staff gifts. We appreciate the staff support fundraising and we'd love to continue on so all the staff can equitably receive a gift. We need volunteers for the concert tomorrow! We're excited and impressed with Amanda. Sign up if you can. Also the PTO will continue with the tradition of buying every student's yearbook as a part of the equity initiative (as well as many staff).
  - ii. Parent Hat: The idea to give a bonus to staff is a fantastic way to use a surplus of the fund balance. Thank you for recognizing the folks who help our kids everyday. Appreciate the calendar - it makes sense! Personally, reducing the size of the school board makes a lot of sense - as someone who hasn't been a trustee but is very involved in the school, I'd be more inclined to participate in a committee along with talented individuals in the community!

## **XIII. Adjournment - 6:59pm adjourned by Sherry.**

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