

**Holyoke Community Charter School
2200 Northampton Street
Holyoke, MA 01040
Board of Trustees**

Minutes of HCCS Board of Trustees Meeting – March 27, 2024

In Attendance: Leona Florek, Lina Rivera, Janine Kent, Rafael Rodriguez (exited at 5:50)

Guests: Kyle Callender, Ryan Meek, Elizabeth Pawlowski, Sonia Correa Pope,
Vanessa Pileggi, Maria Rodriguez, Rob Todisco (exited at 6:07)

Not Present: Li-Jun Ma (leave of absence), Jean Swinney (entered at 6:57)

Meeting called to order at 5: 39p.m. by Leona Florek

I. **Approval of Minutes**

Lina Rivera motioned to approve the minutes of the February 29, 2024, regular meeting. Seconded by Leona Florek. Each member voted by roll call. Rodriguez – Aye, Kent – Aye, Rivera – Aye, Florek – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

II. **Board Reports**

Board Mail/ Folder

None

Public comments/none

III. **P3 Open Request Project Closeout Proposal**

Rob Todisco said that the last time he met with the board two topics were talked about, one being the open issue with the architect related to the duct work. There is currently still no resolution. In December 2023 a meeting was held at the school with Maria Rodriguez, Kyle Callender, P3, and Kaestle Boos. The result was that they acknowledged the fact that it was a design error, but that Kaestle Boos believes that they are not liable to compensate or reimburse the school. The other topic that was spoken about was the open change orders from the contractor against the school.

Rob presented the contractors request items to the board. He stated that there are seven open claims from the contractor. He said that the biggest one is the extension of time for \$90,000, the contractor

believes that they are owed three additional months at their rate to keep the job running due to a number of reasons. He then said that there are six other change requests that were previously rejected by the architects that were brought back up at the end of the project. P3 wrote brief narratives to the seven points and offered their recommendations on what they think is a real claim. He stated that the architects, despite some of the recommendations, rejected some of the change orders. P3 recommends that the school settle with the contractor for 43,807 dollars to close out the project since P3 believes that some of the claims are legit.

Maria asked if they had heard back about the bleacher storage, Rob stated that they had reached out for more information about the storage and they said that it is a combination of things. They had to hold them offsite which cost them \$4,000 because the site was not yet ready to receive the bleachers. This was due to the job being slowed down in part due to the duct work redesign and flooring design.

Janine asked if there was an agreement between the contractor and Kaestle Boos. If the board compensates the contractor to close out the project will that hinder the boards' ability to go after Kaestle Boos? Rob stated that they are independent of each other and that if they approve or reject anything that it does not affect their decision making on KBA.

Ryan asked a question, if the money is paid to Annulli for the items, they are paying more that related to the design error than asking KBA to pay us the change order plus the extra that the board paid to Annulli. Ryan said that the board is continuing to pay for the design error, Rob agreed to the statement.

Maria then asked if the board agreed, would it close the whole project of just Annulli? Rob said that it would just close Annulli. Ryan wondered what would happen if KBA said that some of the design errors were due to Annulli, since there has been nothing in writing. Rob responded and said that they have provided written responses to Annulli asking why the changes were rejected.

Janine thanked Rob on behalf of the school.

Maria asked a question regarding the designer evaluation, and how the board is involved in that process. Rob stated that P3 draft it and make recommended scores and the board can make changes as needed.

Rob stated that in his response to the next steps their recommendation would be to either file a suit, or potentially file a request with the American Arbitration Association and go through a mediation process.

Rob Todisco exited at 6:07 p.m.

Leona recommended that when there is a finance committee meeting to add the outcomes of the committee to the agenda.

IV. Finance

Maria stated that the committee reviewed the financial statements and there were no questions. She shared that the tablets have been received and the expenditure will be shown in the next report. She said that the projections for reimbursement are good based on the enrollment. Janine asked if the reserve is calculated every month, or if it is only in the audited financial statements? Maria responded that they are only in the audited financial statements.

V. Finance Committee

The finance committee during their meeting voted to bring the idea of legal counsel to move the motion to the board. The committee made a motion to send the contracts to a legal counsel to advise the board on how to move forward without exceeding 20% of the damages the board is seeking to recoup.

Janine motioned to reach out for legal counsel advice without exceeding 20%. Seconded by Lina Rivera. Each member voted by roll call. Seconded by Lina Rivera. Each member voted by roll call. Florek – aye, Rivera – Aye, Kent – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Facilities

Kyle Callender presented facility updates. He stated that the school had over 40 teams playing over the past weekend. He said that the roof of the gym started leaking and one of the games had to be cancelled due to the leak. He stated that he reached out to the contractor, and they said that the leak was due to flashing blowing off due to the wind. He asked for documentation since there is no way to measure the success of the fix. There is a lot of interest coming in regarding the use of the gym, Kyle believes that the gym is a great way to market the school and that he receives calls about the gym almost every day.

Ryan asked what materials the leak was going through. Kyle responded that there are foam panels on the outside, and that the inside is a solid metal structure, so he believes that there isn't a worry for mold. There are small water leak marks on the duct work, but that seems to be the only damage that was done.

He told the board that the school is in compliance with every benchmark, and that the fire extinguisher inspection is tomorrow the 28th. Regarding fire safety the permit has been modified, he said that the permit is no longer needed for the school since the fire department needs to be present for every fire drill that we do.

Janine asked a question regarding the leak, she asked who the school is waiting for the documentation from, Kyle said that they are waiting for Annulli or the company who did the roof to get back to him. She also stated that it would be a good idea for the school to speak with the school's insurance provider to ensure coverage if the gym is being sublet. Maria stated that there is a bond that has limitations on what the school can do while they still have the loan. Kyle said that there haven't been any external rentals of

the gym, but he hopes to learn what the limitations are around renting. Ryan said that what they do with their schools is make sure that the renter has an insurance policy of their own and that the school is listed as an additional on their policy.

VI. Directors Report

Sonia Correa Pope presented this month's directors report.

- Enrollment is down from the February mark, the school is now at 692, she said that 3 students moved out of the state and that 2 others left due to academics. She stated that recruitment is being slowed down since MCAS is around the corner.
- She presented academic progress based on the academic dashboard graphs. She is paying close attention to grade 3 to 8. She stated that 3 has been getting better, and there has been a minor increase in grades 6, 7, and 8. She said that the school is expected to have a larger summer school this year to continue to close the academic gaps. This past week there was an assembly regarding the importance of MCAS, and how the impact of their performance affects their careers etc.
- Professional developments are ongoing including the science of reading, MCAS preparation, IXL as a tier 2 intervention, etc.
- The student life portion of the report showed that the international day was a success and that over 470 people were in attendance during the event. A solar eclipse event is being held on April 8th where students will be able to watch the eclipse and will be given safety glasses to view the event. A student talent show is being planned. Academic progress clubs are being held for students that are falling behind. An April Math Academy will be taking place during April break where students will be able to tap into concepts that have been difficult for them. MCAS assemblies were held for grades 3-8 which.
- After school and Saturday detentions are continuing to be used as a way to prevent and be proactive in maintaining the goal of zero suspensions. These programs allow students to reflect on what they are doing.
- Presented events that are upcoming, the board retreat, PAC meetings, MCAS, etc. Sonia once more reminded the board of the topics that will be presented during the retreat, Succession Plan, Strategic Plan, and the Renewal Process.

Janine had a question regarding the academic scores, she stated that she was drawn to the science averages between grades 4 and 8. She asked if there was anything being done to address those grades. Sonia in response stated that there had only been one exam since term 2 that there should be an increase in the coming reports. Janine then asked a question regarding the detentions; she asked that since the detentions are held after school and on the weekend if there are 100% eyes on the students at all times? Sonia responded that there is a staff member that works with them in a classroom style setting that is always overseen by a staff member to ensure productivity during the time. Leona asked what the response is when a student leaves regarding academics, Sonias response stated that families think the curriculum is hard, and that there are too many tests, along with those students that come in with big learning gaps are faced with an advance curriculum that they can't obtain.

Leona asked a question about the repeat offenders in the school detentions. She wondered if there was a check-in with the students to see what is going on. Kyle stated that there is a mandatory reentry meeting for all repeat offenders along with their parents, where they learn what is causing the behavior and if there is something going on in their home life that has impacted their behavior. Elizabeth congratulated Sonia Pope and Kyle Callender on reducing suspensions.

Janine had a question regarding the matter that happened in the community recently and the response. Sonia stated that there are frequent meetings that are held with the security team and that all doors of the building are secured by strategic staff members. Janine asked if there is a good secure communication tree, and Sonia responded that our school is commendable in their communication. Kyle Callender stated that there is a reunification drill that happens on an annual basis, which teaches the school how to reunite the kids with their parents in case of an emergency.

Jean Swinney entered at 6:57 p.m. and apologized for her absence.

Janine motioned to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Lina Rivera. Each member voted by roll call. Florek – Aye, Kent – Aye, Rivera – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.