

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

Minutes of HCCS Board of Trustees Meeting – May 24, 2023

In Attendance: Leona Florek, Janine Kent (entered at 5:35 pm), Rafael Rodriguez, Jean Swinney

Guests: Kyle Callender, Sonia Correa Pope, Mahdi Kansou, Ryan Meek, Tom Paquin, Vanessa Pillegi, Maria Rodriguez, Benjamin Torres

Not Present: Li-Jun Ma, Lina Rivera

I. Meeting called to order at 5:12 p.m. by Leona Florek.

II. **Board Reports**

Board Mail/Folder

None

Public comments/none.

III. The board decided to begin with the Director’s Report, while waiting for the arrival of Janine Kent.

Director’s Report

- Enrollment is at 698; four students are currently in the enrollment process.
- Academics – Academic team working closely to close the academic year completing EOY revisions, creating study guides, providing after-school tutoring and support for students who are at risk for failing; Academic Award Ceremony next week; Professional Learning Community (PLC) for Dyslexia screening requirement is on-going; MCAS administration is completed with 90% participation secured
- Professional Development is ongoing; Business Manager and Compliance/Data Clerk attended Open Meeting Law Webinar; School Director completed a mandatory DESE school diversity workshop
- Student Life: Parent survey conducted during International Day – results will be reported at next meeting; Prefects worked on School Spirit Week to fundraise for trip to Boston; Sports award ceremony conducted last week (Basketball, Soccer, Cheerleading) – increased numbers by 250 due to soccer, 300 family members attended
- Student Management - suspensions reviewed; Jean Swinney asked about implementing some program for drug resistance education - Kyle Callender noted we held 2 sessions for students and one for parents with sheriff's department; Jean asked if we could involve mental health – Pope noted that SABIS has plans to bring back the advising period which covers these topics.
-

- Recent & Upcoming events reviewed: Staff appreciation by Parent Connection; Bingo for Books; Academic Awards Ceremony; SPED PAC Meeting; Honoring our Families June 2 @ 5pm; 8th grade ceremony June 17

IV. Facilities

Tom Paquin reported on the overview of the gym construction. He stated that the project is in the fine-tuning stages: all bathrooms, flooring, etc are done; maple floor installation has begun; basketball hoops and trophy case are installed; grass planted on outside. Grounds are being prepared for 8th grade graduation.

Sonia Pope mentioned that it may be a good time to start planning for the 20th year anniversary celebration.

V. Old Business

Sonia Pope reported on the change of school hours proposal. She stated that the amendment request was sent to DESE yesterday and the informal conversation with DESE representative was that the number of school hours in the proposed change met requirements of instructional learning time.

The board discussed the details of the change with SABIS representatives and school administrators at the meeting. There was discussion about teacher/admin schedule vs hourly, non-exempt staff schedule. Sonia and Maria reported that non-exempt will be paid based on hours worked and exempt staff would be paid based on salary with penalties for under performing at performance review.

Madhi Kansou reported that the proposed schedule at HCCS is less than Holyoke Public Schools (HPS) in terms of school schedule and teacher/staff working day. He stated that SABIS wants to go on record it is not in support of proposed schedule change and that the school schedule should remain at 7.5 hours, as a point of the charter school is to expect more from students.

Benjamin Torres reported that HCCS is currently operating at 7.5 hours of instructional time and the proposed schedule change is 6 hours 15 min. Of the 40 minutes reduced, only 15 minutes came from instructional time, with the remaining minutes coming from rest, snack, and Student Life time. Sonia Pope stated that HCCS' proposed schedule change is not in violation of any DESE requirement and not in violation of any Massachusetts labor laws.

The board discussed the change in terms of recruitment of teachers/staff and a need to be competitive with schools in the area. Board members felt the school should go ahead with proposed change of hours as long as it is able to maintain school outcomes and continue to improve. The board would like to use metrics to monitor success of change in hours and remain flexible.

Jean Swinney moved to approve the proposed change in school schedule received on May 24, 2023. Seconded by Rafael Rodriguez. Each member voted by roll call. Florek - Aye, Kent - Aye, Rodriguez - Aye, Swinney - Aye, . The motion passed unanimously.

VI. **Approval of Minutes**

Rafael Rodriguez moved to approve the minutes of the April 26, 2023 regular meeting. Seconded by Janine Kent. Each member voted by roll call. Florek – Aye, Kent - Aye, Rodriguez - Aye, Swinney - Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. **Finances**

Board members reviewed the financial reports for April and found no concerns. **Janine Kent motioned to approve the financial report for April. Seconded by Rafael Rodriguez. Each member voted by roll call. Florek – Aye, Kent - Aye, Rodriguez - Aye, Swinney - Aye. The motion passed unanimously.**

VIII. **Facilities (continued)**

Facilities discussion continued with Tom Paquin reporting. He stated that due to the rise in shootings the school is looking at to increase security by installing window film on inside and outside of entrance of school and main office. He reported that the cost would be \$9,600 for installation of film and caulking for bullet-resistant window treatment. The board discussed safety procedures in the new addition. Kyle Callender reported that the school started a safety committee to bring up school security issues around the building (regular maintenance, possible weaknesses, new addition, etc.)

Janine Kent moved to approve the cost for installation of security window film to main office, main entrance doors, Parent Pick up doors, and gymnasium doors. Seconded by Jean Swinney. Each member voted by roll call. Florek – Aye, Kent - Aye, Rodriguez - Aye, Swinney - Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

IX. **Finances (continued)**

Janine Kent led the discussion of cash reserves in terms of intent/long term goals. The board discussed the importance of creating a strategic plan that addresses long term planning of cash reserves, paying off debt sooner, facilities assessment of maintaining older structure, and investment. Maria Rodriguez mentioned the increasing cost of Special Education and funding a new bus route. The board will include this as a yearly agenda item for every November, with a request for a report from SABIS/Ryan Meek.

X. **Old Business (continued)**

- **Education Service Provider Evaluation:**
Leona Florek presented the Board with the Education Service Provider Evaluation presented at the last meeting and provided to members prior to the meeting for review. She mentioned that additional data was provided on the updated document. The board discussed possibly making revisions to the evaluation rubric for future years.

Rafael Rodriguez moved to approve the 2021-2022 Education Service Provider Evaluation. Seconded by Jean Swinney. Each member voted by roll call. Florek – Aye, Kent - Aye, Rodriguez - Aye, Swinney - Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

- School Director's Evaluation:
Leona Florek presented the Board with the School Director's Evaluation presented at the last meeting and provided to members prior to the meeting for review.

Jean Swinney moved to approve the 2021-2022 School Director's Evaluation and a salary increase of 3%. Seconded by Janine Kent. Each member voted by roll call. Florek – Aye, Kent - Aye, Rodriguez - Aye, Swinney - Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

Janine Kent motioned to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Jean Swinney. Each member voted by roll call. Florek – Aye, Kent - Aye, Rodriguez - Aye, Swinney - Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

As prepared by Elizabeth Pawlowski
Respectfully submitted,
Jean Swinney
Holyoke Community Charter School Board of Trustees

MEETING ATTACHMENTS

April 26, 2023 Meeting Minutes
Monthly Financial Report
Education Service Providers Evaluation
School Director's Evaluation
School Director's Education Providers Report