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

Minutes of HCCS Board of Trustees Meeting – August 26, 2026

In Attendance:	Lina Rivera, Elizabeth Pawlowski, Leona Florek, Jean Swinney, Rafael Rodriguez
Guests:	Mahdi Kansou, Sonia Correa Pope, Maria Rodriguez, Ryan Meek, Vanessa Pileggi
Not In Attendance:	Joshua Famiglietti

I. Meeting called to order at 5:36 p.m. by Leona Florek

II. **Approval of Minutes**

Lina Rivera motioned to approve the minutes of the July 22, 2026, Finance Committee Meeting. Seconded by Elizabeth Pawlowski. Each member voted by roll call. Florek – Aye, Swinney – Aye, Rivera – Aye, Pawlowski – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

Leona Florek motioned to approve the minutes of the July 22, 2026, Regular Board Meeting. Seconded by Jean Swinney. Each member voted by roll call. Pawlowski – Aye, Swinney – Aye, Rivera – Aye, Florek – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

III. **Board Reports**

Board Mail/ Folder
None

Public comments/none

IV. **Subcommittee**

Finance/ Facilities

Lina shared that the committee met and that Maria delivered a presentation on the schools United States Department of Agriculture USDA program. Elizabeth had a question regarding the schools' book line item on the financial report, and why it was lower than previous years. Maria responded that the school has not received the bills yet and the invoice will be coming in soon.

Lina Rivera motioned to approve this months financial report. Seconded by Elizabeth Pawlowski. Each member voted by roll call. Leona Florek – Aye, Jean Swinney – Aye, Rivera – Aye, Pawlowski – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

Gale Associates Contract Revision Request

Maria received a request from Gale Associates who are the contractors working with the school on the multi – use turf field, the request is to make a revision to their contract. The requested revision amount is to increase Gale's contract by $9,175 to cover the additional work completed as a result of amendments requested and approved by the school's Board throughout the project. Elizabeth asked if this revision would keep the project cost under budget, and Maria responded that this would still allow it to remain under budget.

Elizabeth Pawlowski motioned to approve the revision of the school's contract for an additional $9,175 dollars. Seconded by Lina Rivera. Florek – Aye, Swinney – Aye, Rivera – Aye, Pawlowski – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

USDA Program Presentation

Maria shared an overview of the school's USDA program and what it entails in relation to the school. This presentation was also given to the Finance Committee just before this meeting. The presentation included; HCCS school food program offerings, USDA reimbursement rates vs. cost of prepared meals, participation rates, and a profit and loss statement for the school meal program. Mahdi, Jean, and Elizabeth had a few questions that were answered by Maria.

Rafael Rodriguez entered at 6:06 p.m.

Lighting Change Order Request

Maria presented a request to add electricity to the miller building on the field. Members asked how much this change order would cost, and Maria responded that it would be $16,000 dollars. This request was presented to the finance committee and sent to tonight's board meeting for approval. Mahdi inquired about the potential of adding solar or LED lights,

Maria responded that if the school would like to use that building for concessions it would need to have outlets etc.

Lina Rivera motioned to approve the change order request. Seconded by Leona Florek. Each member voted by roll call. Swinney – Aye, Rodriguez – Aye, Pawlowski – Aye, Rivera – Aye, Florek – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. **New Business**

Bereavement Policy Update

Sonia discussed with the board that she spoke to the school's lawyer regarding adding relatives into the school's bereavement policy. Lina asked what was currently in the policy and Sonia read the current policy to the board.

Jean Swinney motioned to approve the updated language added to the school's bereavement policy. Seconded by Lina Rivera. Each member voted by roll call. Florek – Aye, Rodriguez – Aye, Pawlowski – Aye, Rivera – Aye, Swinney – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

Tattoo Policy Update

Sonia and Maria presented the school's current tattoo policy. As of right now employees have been asked to cover up their tattoos. Sonia reached out to the lawyer to see if this policy can be updated with language that would allow employees to not cover their tattoos with guidelines pertaining to what the tattoos were since it is a school environment. The lawyer shared that there is language that would work for that. Jean shared that she thinks the current policy sounds outdated and should be updated. The board spoke about alternative language that could be used to allow staff to show their tattoos within reason. The request is to reach out to have the lawyer draft an updated policy and have it approved by the board.

Jean Swinney motioned to accept Sonia reaching out to a lawyer and having it approved by the board. Seconded by Lina Rivera. Each member voted by roll call. Florek – Aye, Pawlowski – Aye, Rodriguez – Aye, Rivera – Aye, Swinney – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. **Director Report**

Sonia presented this month's report which included and overview of enrollment, as well as the schools' outcomes from summer school. Summer school outcomes included; the total amount of students retained that did not qualify for summer school, the total students invited to summer school, the total of students that did not attend summer school, the total students who passed summer school, and the total students who did not pass summer school. Her presentation also included this month's professional development sessions, as well as student life activities, and upcoming school events.

Jean Swinney motioned to approve this months director report. Seconded by Lina Rivera. Each member voted by roll call. Florek – Aye, Rodriguez – Aye, Pawlowski – Aye, Swinney – Aye, Rivera – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

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

Meeting adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

As prepared by Haley Saltares
Respectfully submitted,
Jean Swinney
Holyoke Community Charter School Board of Trustees

Meeting Attachments
July 22, 2026, Meeting Minutes
July 22, 2026, Finance Committee Meeting Minutes