

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

**Minutes of HCCS Board of Trustees Meeting – October 27, 2021: RETREAT Meeting**

In Attendance: Jay Breines, Cynthia Dennis, Leona Florek, Janine Kent; Rafael Rodriguez

Guests: Kyle Callender, Ryan Meek, Tom Paquin, Vanessa Pileggi, Sonia Pope, Maria Rodriguez, Tony Tannous, Benjamin Torres, Amy Wesley, Aaron Yosky

Not Present: Li-Jun Ma, Jean Swinney

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I. Meeting called to order at 6:26 p.m. by Leona Florek.

II. **HCCS Academic Presentation**

Presented by Sonia Pope and Benjamin Torres on behalf of SABIS and the HCCS team.

Benjamin presented on Next Generation MCAS performance data and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Accountability System. HCCS achieved an MCAS participation rate of 100% (in-person concurrent with remote administration). Next Generation MCAS Achievement was reviewed by each grade and subject. Proficiency levels were compared internally over a four-year period and externally to the Holyoke Public Schools district and state-wide. Benjamin reviewed the FAQs from DESE on assessment and accountability: HCCS continues to be classified as making “substantial progress toward targets” and “not requiring assistance or intervention”.

The board and administrators discussed COVID-19 effects on learning , academic gaps, and learning loss.

The HCCS team presented the board with strategies being implemented to address students who are consistently underperforming and close gaps for all students. These initiatives include:

- Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Growth Assessments
- What I Need (WIN) intervention blocks (evidence based program)
- Weekly collaboration with Lebanon Team
- SL/SM Academic Initiatives
- Remote Learning on Demand

III. **COVID-19 Update**

Dr. Sonia Pope presented the board with an overview of the COVID-19 situation at the school. She discussed the closing of four classroom sections due to high positivity rates; DESE will count these as remote learning due to technology in place at HCCS. Sonia reported that a mobile testing unit was on-site during the vigil held for the loss of the school community member; a vaccine clinic was held at the school on October 28.

Sonia reported that following a meeting with Local department of public health, the State Department of Public Health, and DESE on October 27, DESE Commissioner has granted Dr. Pope the ability to close the school for quarantine from October 20 – November 8; students will be sent home early on October 28; all school community members must get a PCR test on November 2 and have a negative test result to return to the building on November 8; meals will be served during the school closure in the same they were served last year during the shut-down. Sonia reported that during the proposed quarantine, students would bring Chromebooks home and teachers will teach remotely from the building.

**Cynthia Dennis motioned to approve closure of the school for 8 days in an effort to re-set and thoroughly disinfect due to COVID-19. Seconded by Janine Kent. Breines – Aye, Dennis – Aye, Florek – Aye, Kent – Aye, Rodriguez – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.**

Sonia reported to the board members that the DESE Commissioner gave her the authority to give special consideration for remote learning for students with severe and qualifying medical cases as documented by a physician. She then reported on the efforts being made at the school to slow the spread of the virus, including:

- Plexi-glass on individual student desks, teacher desks
- Mask mandate; constant reminders
- Bus monitors
- Daily sanitation (bathrooms 3x/day; additional cafeteria staff)
- Drop-off/pick-up procedures altered
- Cancelled events
- Chromebooks for each student
- Ability to transition to remote classes immediately
- In-school Rapid testing
- Meetings with dept of health & DESE

The board will discuss the remaining items on the agenda at the next retreat meeting.

**Jay Breines motioned to adjourn the meeting. Cynthia Dennis seconded. Each member voted by roll call. Breines – Aye, Dennis – Aye, Florek – Aye, Kent – Aye, Rodriguez – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.**

**The meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.**

*As prepared by Elizabeth Pawlowski*

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Swinney

Holyoke Community Charter School Board of Trustees

MEETING ATTACHMENTS

Academic Presentation