

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

Minutes of HCCS Board of Trustees Meeting – August 7, 2020

**In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30A, Sections 18-25 and Governor Baker’s Emergency Order in response to COVID-19 allowing remote meetings of public bodies. (<https://www.mass.gov/doc/order-suspending-certain-provision-of-open-meeting-law/download>), this meeting was held via Zoom video conference.*

In Attendance: Jay Breines, Cynthia Dennis, Leona Florek, Jenna Gable, Janine Kent, Lina Rivera, Jean Swinney

Guests: Kyle Callender, Tom Paquin, Sonia Pope, Maria Rodriguez, Christi Seiple-Cole. Benjamin Torres, Amy Wesley

Not Present: N/A

I. **Meeting called to order** at 5:03 p.m. by Jenna Gable.

Roll call of all attendees; each attendee spoke his/her name.

Public comments/none.

IV. **HCCS District Reopening Plan Presentation to Board**

Dr. Sonia Correa Pope presented the board with the school’s reopening plan options. The presentation included the following:

- Virus spread in Mass, Hampden County, Holyoke, and surrounding towns
- Technology and connectivity for parents/students
- Transportation constraints
- School Calendar adjustment – 1st day of school September 14 to allow for extended trainings to prepare for opening the building – Dr. Pope presented the updated calendar to the board
- Options for two plans:
 - Blended hybrid/remote model
 - Fully remote
- Teacher and Parent survey results
- Training schedule and topics for Pillars, administrators, clerical staff, teachers and support staff, students and families and training to happen in late August/early September
- Deadline for submitting the final reopening plan to DESE has been moved to August 14

- Overview of what surrounding districts have decided for fall reopening (Springfield, Chicopee, Amherst, South Hadley, Holyoke)
- Attorney recommendations for employer liability and HR issues (medical leave, illness, ADA, childcare, symptoms, etc.)
- Protocols, Procedures, and Logistics

The board discussed the logistics of both the hybrid and fully remote learning models including: meal delivery and nutrition; social/emotional impact on students; educating in the time of an infectious disease; quality assurance around instruction and teaching; providing parent supports and resources; high expectations of SABIS curriculum; transportation; extended teacher training; reacting to any positive cases/symptoms of COVID-19 in students and/or staff.

Jenna Gable asked if the board to vote for the adjustment in the school calendar, moving the first day of school to September 14. **Jay Breines motioned to approve the adjusted 2020-2021 Academic Calendar. Dr. Jean Swinney seconded. Each member voted by roll call. Florek – Aye, Dennis – Aye, Rivera – Aye, Jenna – Aye, Breines – Aye, Swinney – Aye, Kent abstained. The motion passed.**

Jenna Gable asked each board member for their input/feelings on the hybrid and the remote model. Cynthia Dennis discussed using a phased-in model where students would begin the year remotely and then bring students back in to the building slowly with set dates to a hybrid model. She also expressed the importance of trying to bring Special Education students back to the building as soon as possible. Jenna stated that would like to see plans to bring students back into the building at some point in the year, starting with the high-risk students. Leona Florek expressed concerns around teacher sentiment and willingness to teach in an in-person model. Dr. Jean Swinney discussed dealing with an infectious disease that is new, making it dangerous to bring students back to the building from a health perspective. She also stated that teacher sentiment around the decision would be important. Lina Rivera expressed the challenges that parents may face with schooling from home. Jay Breines discussed the importance of educating the youngest students in the building and mitigating the health risks to maximize educational learning. Janine Kent encouraged the school administration team to consider the feasibility of bringing K-2 students to the building as soon as safely possible.

Cynthia Dennis motioned for the board to vote for the school to create a plan that phases in hybrid learning, prioritizing the Special Education and high-risk students, and the built-in flexibility to go remote at any time that the COVID risk determines. Jay Breines seconded. Each member voted by roll call. Dennis – Aye, Breines – Aye, Rivera – Nay, Swinney – Nay, Florek – Nay, Kent – Aye, Gable – Aye. The motion passed.

Jay Breines requested that once the education plan is completed, Dr. Pope present the board with a social/emotional plan for supporting students and families.

Jenna Gable requested that Dr. Pope create and present a reopening plan to the board that uses phases to begin bringing students into the building. The board agreed that the phased plan could begin remotely. Jay Breines also requested that the plan address preparing students and parents for remote learning. The board will meet on August 13, 2020 at 5:00 pm to review and vote on the plan.

Leona Florek motioned to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Cynthia Dennis. Each member voted by roll call. Florek – Aye, Dennis – Aye, Gable – Aye, Breines – Aye, Swinney – Aye, Rivera – Aye, Kent – Aye. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:42 pm.

As prepared by Elizabeth Pawlowski

Respectfully submitted,

Janine Kent

Holyoke Community Charter School Board of Trustees

MEETING ATTACHMENTS

Adjusted 2020-2021 Academic Calendar