

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

**Minutes of HCCS Board of Trustees Meeting – February 26, 2020**

In Attendance: Jay Breines, Cynthia Dennis, Leona Florek, Jenna Gable, Janine Kent, Lina Rivera,  
Jean Swinney  
Guests: Ryan Meek, Tom Paquin, Sonia Pope  
Not Present: N/A

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- I. Meeting called to order at 5:06 p.m. by Jenna Gable. Public comments/none
- II. Approval of Minutes  
**Leona Florek moved to approve the minutes of the January 22 regular meeting. Seconded by Cynthia Dennis. The motion passed unanimously.**
- III. Board Reports

**Board Mail**

None

**Finance**

Cynthia Dennis reviewed the financial reports and found no concerns/areas of issue. Cynthia noted that the only anomaly was the lunch claim where Maria Rodriguez had reported in last month's meeting that there was an issue with the DESE software for submission.

**Cynthia Dennis moved to approve the financials. Seconded by Janine Kent. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Facilities**

Tom Paquin reported that the potholes in the parking lot are being repaired in preparation for the St. Patrick's Day parade, as the parade committee uses the parking lot with the Board's permission.

**Membership**

Janine Kent submitted her nomination for position as Secretary. **Cynthia Dennis moved to vote for the appointment of Janine Kent as Secretary. Seconded by Leona Florek. The board voted unanimously to appoint Janine Kent as Secretary.**

IV. **Old Business**

The board discussed the financing of the Gymnasium Project. Cynthia Dennis reported that she and Ryan Meek consulted with Mass Development and brought to the board options for financing. The board discussed financing through private lending, bond markets, and working with Mass Development to put out an RFP for a lending institution.

The board discussed potential for a charter school expansion amendment and the consequences that would have on future construction; building a gymnasium now and then an additional classroom addition if an expansion was granted by DESE in terms of grade level, region, or/or seat capacity. Cynthia mentioned that it would be important to make sure there is a clause in any financing agreement that there would be no penalty if the Board were to seek further financing in the future for a second addition.

Cynthia reported that DESE would need to approve any loan that would exceed the terms of the school's charter.

Ryan discussed funding with the board and the difference between current enrollment funding and increase enrollment in funding and return of revenue in terms of future financial health of the school and building a gymnasium. The board asked Ryan about SABIS' comfort level with free cash and asked him to elaborate on future projections. The board discussed the potential use of funds other than, or in addition to, building a gymnasium. The board discussed their request for SABIS to complete a compensation study on current teacher salaries and fixing the current building. They also discussed a potential increase in funding due to the new education bill passed in the state. Jenna Gable stated she would follow up with Amy Wesley from SABIS in regards to the compensation study.

The board discussed the educational benefits of physical health and the benefits that the gymnasium would bring to the school community in regards to recruitment and retention of students and staff and family engagement.

Jenna asked each board member if he/she supported moving forward with the gymnasium addition and building improvements. Each member present affirmed his/her positive support.

**Cynthia Dennis moved to vote for the gymnasium expansion and building improvements and working with Mass Development on financing for the project. Seconded by Jean Swinney. The motion passed unanimously. The board voted unanimously to approve the gymnasium expansion, building improvements, and work with Mass Development.**

**Lina Rivera moved to vote for design option 1A, as presented by Dan Pellotta and Kaestle Boos. Seconded by Leona Florek. The board voted unanimously to select option 1A.**

Jenna Gable asked Tom Paquin to get financial numbers from Dan Pellotta and then report to Cynthia Dennis and Ryan Meek, who will in turn give to Sonia Pope to bring for DESE approval.

The board discussed the need to obtain legal counsel in parallel with the steps voted upon at this meeting.

Sonia Pope reported to the board that DESE had granted the school a renewal for five more years to the charter. There was a finding in the governance category. The board needs to improve recording of approving SABIS evaluation and Directors evaluation. There should also be an edit made to the bylaws eliminating reference to subcommittees. Sonia is meeting with DESE around the process for submitting an amendment to the bylaws and will bring the information to the board at the March meeting.

Sonia reported that the renewal has one condition. The school's enrollment is below the 80% threshold for students from Holyoke. This will require that school apply for an amendment for charter school region. The board discussed adding Chicopee to the schools region and how transportation and school mission could be affected. Jenna Gable asked that this discussion be added to the March meeting agenda. The meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 24, 2020 at 5:00 pm.

V. **New Business**

Sonia pope presented a document to the board that requires board chair signature for the school nurse to administer over-the-counter medication. The board reviewed the document. Jenna Gable signed the document.

VI. **Director's Report**

Sonia Pope reported

- Enrollment is at 704; ongoing recruitment; lottery for 2020-2021 school year is on March 4

- Academic Updates: MCAS prep in terms of infrastructure, administration, and student; high school transitions; ACCESS test completed; parent teacher conferences (targeted) completed; National Spanish exam preparation; teacher observations
- Administrative Updates: SABIS support from Dr. Boozer (working with two new teachers and supporting them); PCs doing content observation
- Professional Development: Mentoring; MCAS Administration; MTSS Planning Institute (targeting more SPED, EL, Low Income, Latino, African American students – school will need to create evidence based targets/goals/assessment for targeted interventions – Director is creating a PLC using Title II money to create plan); Behavior/Mental health & Social/Emotional learning; Math MCAS training; MCAS Alt
- Student Life Organization: International Day is Saturday, March 7 from 11:00 am – 2:00 pm, Mayor Morse will be conducting the opening, John Velis will be a special guest; Sheriff’s Department presentation for the 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade students
  - Jenna asked if Sonia could bring something to the students regarding sexual assault, the board discussed ways to bring this type of training to parents and students.
- Student Management – suspensions reviewed
- Areas of improvement – chairs with book racks/basket under the seat to help better organize classrooms
- Upcoming events reviewed

**Cynthia Dennis moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Leona Florek. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.**

*As prepared by Elizabeth Pawlowski*

Respectfully submitted,

Janine Kent

Holyoke Community Charter School Board of Trustees

MEETING ATTACHMENTS

January 22, 2020 meeting notes

Financial Report