

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

Minutes of HCCS Board of Trustees Meeting – July 22, 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 (arrived at 5:35 pm), Cynthia Dennis, Leona Florek, Jenna Gable, Lina Rivera, Jean Swinney
Guests: Ryan Meek, Tom Paquin, Sonia Pope, Maria Rodriguez, Amy Wesley
Not Present: Janine Kent

I. Meeting called to order at 5:07 p.m. by Jenna Gable.

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

Public comments/none.

II. Approval of Minutes

Cynthia Dennis moved to approve the minutes of the June 24 regular meeting. Seconded by Leona Florek. Each member voted by roll call. Dennis – Aye, Florek – Aye, Gable – Aye, Rivera – Aye, Swinney – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

III. Board Reports

Board Mail

None

Finance

Cynthia Dennis reviewed the financial reports. Cynthia asked Maria Rodriguez about a \$5,000 team sports expense. Maria responded that it was the stipend for coaches during the 2019-2020 year.

Cynthia Dennis moved to approve the financials. Seconded by Lina Rivera. Each member voted by roll call. Dennis – Aye, Florek – Aye, Rivera – Aye, Gable – Aye, Swinney – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

Facilities

Tom Paquin reported that a new meal provider was chosen after the RFP. The new contract with Preferred Meals began in July. They installed a freezer and have been providing food for the summer food program. The food comes in a five-day meal box

that includes breakfast and lunch. Parents have been picking up the boxes from the school in a drive-thru style.

Tom Paquin reported that the two new rooftop units (#1, and #2) have arrived and a crane will install them on August 4, with prep work beginning on July 27. One of these units will be servicing the "COVID-19 isolation room", so he is looking into installing HEPA filters on this unit. Tom described the isolation room as a DESE reopening requirement, where students who show symptoms during the school day, would be quarantined until a parent arrived to pick them up. Jenna Gable inquired as to what PPE would be required to operate this room. Tom reported that the school has purchased disposable gowns, 12,000 masks, gloves, goggles, and 5' plastic shields for the nurse's/staff protection. Dr. Pope reported that the nurse has been taking the temperature of all individuals entering the building during the summer program.

Tom reported that the building inspection for certificate of occupancy is scheduled for July 23 and the facilities crew has prepared the building for the inspection.

Tom reported that the school needed to purchase a six-yard rolling recycling container. The container will be emptied once per week by the same company that handles the dumpster.

The board asked Dr. Pope to update them on the plan for reopening the school in the fall. Dr. Pope reported that she held a full week Pillar's retreat from July 15-21 to do a full feasibility study and develop three reopening plan models (full in-person, hybrid, remote), as directed by the Commissioner of Education. A preliminary plan must be submitted to DESE on July 31. HCCS' feasibility study revealed the following:

- the in-person learning at 3' distance proved to lead to an overcrowded building and unsafe conditions
- hybrid model at 6' apart allows 13-15 students per classroom
- remote learning is the safest

DESE is requiring schools to submit their full plan on August 10. This is to be a local decision by Board of Trustees/School Committee who must vote on the final plan before submission. The board agreed to meet on August 7 at 5:00 pm to review and vote on the final reopening plan.

Dr. Pope and the board discussed:

- staffing
- student supports for in-person and remote learning
- supporting Special Education and vulnerable students
- access to technology
- transportation
- upcoming decisions that would need to be made due to the pandemic
- parent choice regardless of model

Dr. Pope reported that the Commissioner has decided that schools should use the first 5 days of school for teacher training and have 175 total learning days, instead of the usual 180. She noted this would mean August 31 would no longer be the first day of school, as planned, and the students first day would be after Labor Day.

Amy Wesley noted that SABIS was working on matching pacing and schedules. She also reported that SABIS Massachusetts schools have come together at a meeting on Monday, July 20. She reported that the HCCS plan that she has reviewed so far shows that the team at HCCS has incorporated guidelines comprehensively. She also stated that with the hybrid model, the lessons will be live-streamed to those students at home, ensuring they receive the same instruction as students who are on-site. This will allow us to continue with as high-quality education as possible, but confidentiality and privacy are also a main consideration.

Membership

None

IV. Old Business

Cynthia Dennis reported on the loan application for the gymnasium project. She stated that P3 and Kaestle Boos will need to write up an RFP plan and present to the board with a budget that supports the additional projects of the three classrooms, skylights, brick pointing, build-out of student services office, and Garden Room windows. The Board can then go the bank for loan approval and to DESE at the same time for loan beyond charter term approval. Jay Breines asked about the liability due to COVID-19 and suggested adding a "COVID-19 clause". The board discussed mitigating risks during the pandemic. Ryan Meek suggested consulting a list of lawyers held by the Massachusetts Charter Public School Association.

V. New Business

Jenna Gable announced that the SABIS Self-Evaluation will be pushed to the regular August board meeting to allow for more full review and collection of board member comments.

The board reviewed the final draft of the school's 2019-2020 Annual Report for the Board's approval. **Jay Breines moved to approve the 2019-2020 Annual Report. Seconded by Cynthia Dennis. Each member voted by roll call. Breines – Aye, Dennis – Aye, Florek – Aye, Gable – Aye, Rivera – Aye, Swinney – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.**

The board reviewed the final draft of the Charter School Regional Amendment Application. **Leona Florek motioned to approve the application and submit to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Seconded by Lina Rivera. Each member voted by roll call. Florek – Aye, Rivera – Aye, Breines – Aye, Dennis – Aye, Gable – Aye, Swinney – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.**

Amy Wesley presented the board with a teacher starting salary comparison from surrounding districts, as requested. The board discussed the figures and discussed the growth of salary in other districts. Jay Breines requested a comparison of salary after

ten years. Dr. Pope and Amy Wesley discussed with the board how salary increases were allocated at HCCS and other districts.

VI. **Administrative Reports/School Director**

Dr. Sonia Pope reported:

- Enrollment – HCCS has been receiving many applications from interested parents; 709 enrollment for first day of school; kindergarten screenings will be taking place with PPE and safety protocols
- Academics – last day of summer school is July 23; Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Speech Therapy in-person services are taking place in the building during summer school with PPE and safety protocols; report cards were mailed home and all students were promoted as per DESE guidance
- Administrative update - SABIS Corporate support ongoing; SABIS IT Director worked with School Director to conduct IT coordinator interviews, a candidate was identified and accepted
- Professional Development is ongoing
- Facilities – Tom reported that thermometers are not recommended as per new DESE guidance

Leona Florek moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Cynthia Dennis. Each member voted by roll call. Florek – Aye, Dennis – Aye, Gable – Aye, Rivera – Aye, Swinney – Aye, Breines – Aye. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:44 p.m.

As prepared by Elizabeth Pawlowski

Respectfully submitted,
Janine Kent
Holyoke Community Charter School Board of Trustees

MEETING ATTACHMENTS

June 24, 2020 Meeting Minutes
Financial Report
2019-2020 Annual Report
Charter School Regional Amendment Application