

**Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School**

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, May 14, 2024, 6:30pm

**Location:** Zoom

**Present:**

**In-person: All virtual**

**By Zoom:** Kate Saccento, Emily Boddy, Matt Dube, Kathleen Szegda, Kathleen Hulton, Grace Mrowicki, Kelly Vogel, Tiffany Ross, Lily Newman, Rebecca Belcher-Timme, Kylan Mandile, Kate Ewall, Laura Davis, Ben Carlis, Stacey Giufre

**Regrets:** Tala Elia

**Guests:** 20-30 members of the Hilltown community were in attendance

**Facilitator:** Matt Dube

**Notetaker:** Emily

**List keeper:** Zoom raise hand function

**Timekeeper:** Kathleen S

**Mission statement read by:** Kathleen H

Topic	Discussion	Action (if necessary)
<p><b>Welcoming</b> (read mission statement) (Matt.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Announcements, appreciations, acknowledgements</li> <li>● Agenda Check: Appoint timekeeper, list keeper</li> </ul>	<p><b>Announcements, Appreciations, Acknowledgements:</b></p> <p>None</p> <p><b>Agenda Check:</b> Change of item - rather than domain reviews, will discuss next steps re: directors.</p>	
<p><b>Public Comment</b> (Matt)</p>	<p>Appreciation and gratitude for Laura and Kate for their service expressed in public comment.</p> <p>Question about Exit Interviews and how the community can support our leaders, echoed by other parents</p> <p>Parent identified work being done in the Purples around culture data, reviewed some of the statistics coming back. Asks that students be involved in the process of hiring in order to have a commitment and have trusting feelings towards the new hires. Asks</p>	

	<p>that we consider the role of youth in this process, and think ahead so it is legitimate and considered, approached with an equity lens.</p> <p>Teacher expresses the need to build job descriptions that are sustainable for the people in them. Would like consideration for both the leaders' qualities and sustainability of the roles. Would like more teacher leadership around arts-integration, to both ensure arts integration stays central and to relieve some of the tasks of these roles.</p> <p>Longtime parent identifies the original intent of Regio Emilia - the integration throughout the curriculum and across grades. Echoed by other parents.</p> <p>Parent would like to remain a low-tech school. Ensure teachers are supported by the way these roles are organized. Wants more mixed age opportunities - would like leaders to have background, experience, commitment/interest to that type of education. Would like the school to pause changes until leadership is selected so everyone is on the same page.</p> <p>Parent discusses students with special ed. services, keep it on the radar to ensure inclusivity, equity and compliance.</p> <p>Parent notes the challenges in the way reading was taught, hopes we are moving back to phonics, away from 'guessing'. Also notes over-involvement, too many rules about their play. Would like a leader who steps back and rethinks how we interact with kids.</p> <p>Public Comment completed.</p> <p><b>Lily offers part 2, opening space for the BoT to express concerns and questions.</b></p> <p>Lily thanked people for engagement and comments, echoes some sentiments put forth.</p> <p>Kathleen lets people know that the BoT and leadership meet with Laura and Kate regularly, aware of needs and concerns.</p>	
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	<p>Kelly explains that it has felt surprising, challenging since learning of the resignation. Has equally been impressed with the board and responsiveness of the school around the transition. Appreciates the leadership of the board, and knows Hilltown has incredible staff. Mixed feelings, but feels optimistic.</p> <p>Grace reports as a teacher member, the 'temperature' of the staff. She has had many conversations and feels that there is a lot of hope around what the roles can look like. Hopes that this can facilitate parts of the school to talk to each other. Main theme is about the differing needs between k-5, and 6-8, wanting to maintain the power of connection, consistency of the arts-integration. Seems the current model isn't able to stretch to meet that, partly due to the way things have changed over the last couple of years.</p>	
<p><b>Identify Needs for School Leadership, Matt (Discussion)</b></p>	<p>Matt read a piece from Carla (meant for Public Comment) regarding the way we shape the language around the job. Many suggestions about how to frame the work, have stipend roles for existing staff members; feels specific person hired will determine how roles are divided.</p> <p>Emily would like someone who holds strong discipline, value around clear boundaries and consequences so everyone can learn.</p> <p>Grace read qualities teachers/staff have expressed wanting to see in leadership.</p> <p>Kathleen H wants a leader who builds strong relationships with others.</p> <p>Kathleen S wants someone who can work with the many shareholders; wants clear discipline, boundaries, expectations - balance with methods like restorative justice whilst being clear and holding kids accountable.</p>	

	<p>Kelly notes that whomever is hired must understand what it takes to have a truly have an arts focused school, eg planning, time, communication.</p> <p><b>Lily invites community to speak again.</b></p> <p>Parent cites that she wants to be careful around vetting, referenced the concerns she had around hiring the initial community coordinator, and wants a robust look at the person beyond just what they say. Wants to ensure what safeguards there are so not to repeat something like that, like reviewing social media presence.</p> <p>Parent also stresses how important the Community Engagement Coordinator is for the school.</p> <p>Staff member wants that we really think broadly, and not stay attached to any outcomes. Consider what we have and how even small shifts may meet our needs.</p> <p>Stacey would like to hire someone with Charisma, diplomatic, good at bringing people, perspectives together. This may be more important than specific qualifications, in order to bring out the best in our wonderful staff and in our parents/families.</p>	
<p><b>Establish Interim School Director Role(s),</b> Kathleen H. (Discussion + Decision)</p>	<p>Tala sent an email for consideration (in her absence)</p> <p>Lily gives an overview of what we post, how that isn't binding in the interview process. Flexibility remains as we meet candidates.</p> <p>Identifies the org charts, included in the packet.</p> <p>Notes that the descriptions are overbuilt intentionally, as there are many gray areas</p> <p>BoT Members discuss models, how to use the internal resources effectively</p> <p>Emily asks how we can look at the people we already have and how they might be involved in taking on tasks, stipended or how some of the tasks may be absorbed into existing roles.</p>	<p>Kathleen H motioned to move forward with the executive director/director of teaching and learning model for job postings; Kathleen S. seconded; the Board approved by consensus.</p>

	<p>Rebecca sees benefits and wisdom of the 1 director model. Historical lens - thinking about how collaboration will happen between admins and the next level down. When the model was 3 'coordinators' less of a hierarchy. Would want to think carefully about how this would impact how admins collaborate, how people coming in would view our leadership structure. Hopes that the person in the role would include facilitation of more collaboration. It's been harder and hopes this collab could be restored. Hopes that classrooms - what is happening in them - are centered in this conversation.</p> <p>Grace asked the Board Leadership to comment on the reasons they feel a 1 director model would be better. Lily and Kathleen responded.</p> <p>Andrea spoke to the way personality and leadership style can inform whether one director model would work well.</p> <p>Ben is primarily leaning towards the ED model, facing unique opportunity to try something out and experiment.</p> <p>Kylan revisits public comment about interim year, feels that it isn't necessarily a negative thing as it speaks to opportunity to come in and shape the school.</p> <p>Tiffany expresses that she likes the one director model, but considering what that means for access of staff to the ED. Would like careful consideration in thinking through how coordinator levels would be supported adequately.</p> <p><b>Opened to community</b></p> <p>Parent says she would like a one director model, asks about 'teams' where senior teachers are leaders; asks if we've considered a business manager to do a time/task inventory, look to other orgs for best practices.</p> <p>Parent suggests posting 'interim with potential for long-term employment'</p>	
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	<p>Parent wonders if Kate S has any opinions on these models.</p> <p>Kate S has been thinking about the need for exec director. Notes that if Hilltown goes forward with the model, the ExeC Director would be in charge of moving the pieces into place. Feels that the exec dir model would allow for flexibility to build smaller teams within the organization.</p> <p>Parent says she likes the exec director model, feels it would make sense to applicants. Asks if it makes sense to make this a permanent change, rather than interim.</p> <p>Lily notes that this process will not finalize the job description, just the roles under which those descriptions can be finessed.</p>	
<p><b>Emergency Hiring Process Proposal</b> Matt (Update/Discussion)</p>	<p>Included in the packet.</p> <p>Member raised the matter of having student voice represented.</p> <p>Member asked that the process and expectations be communicated to prospective members of the hiring committees so we have people who are available and able to commit to the time needed to do the process.</p>	<p>Lily motioned to pass the proposal; Tala seconded; the Board approved by consensus.</p>
<p><b>Meeting Wrap-up</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minutes Finalization</li> </ul>	<p>Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting: June 12, 2024 6:30pm (See May 8 minutes for details for the June meeting)</p>	
<p><b>Review Action Items</b></p>	<p>Reviewed action items.</p>	
<p><b>Adjournment</b></p>	<p>Meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm</p>	<p>Emily B motioned to adjourn; Lily seconded; the meeting was adjourned.</p>