

**HCCPS Board of Trustees  
Meeting Agenda**

**March 12, 2025 6:30pm**

HCCPS, 1 Industrial Pkwy, Easthampton, MA 01027

Also: Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83679293502?pwd=bjZya3FvVTFmd216WikvZDVPLzhjZz09>

Meeting ID: 836 7929 3502

Passcode: 7dvsWu

The Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School was founded in 1995 as a Massachusetts Public Charter School. Our mission is:

- To engage students in a school that uses experiential, hands-on activities, the arts, and interdisciplinary studies to foster critical thinking skills and a joy of learning.
- To sustain a cooperative, intimate community of students, staff, families and local community members, which guides and supports the school and its educational program.
- To cultivate children’s individual voices and a shared respect for each other, our community, and the world around us.

**Facilitator: Kathleen Hulton**

| <b>Topic<br/>(estimated time)</b>  | <b>Who</b>  | <b>Action</b> | <b>Estimated Time</b> |
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| <b>Welcoming (read mission statement): (5 min)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Announcements, appreciations, acknowledgements</li> <li>● Agenda Check: Appoint timekeeper, list keeper</li> <li>● BOT Visibility this month</li> <li>● Approve minutes from previous BOT meeting</li> </ul> | Kathleen H. | Decision      | 6:30                  |
| <b>Public Comment (5 min)</b>  | Kathleen H. |               | 6:35                  |
| <b>Teaching and Learning Updates (10 min)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Staffing Updates</li> <li>● General Teaching and Learning Updates</li> </ul>  | Rebecca     | Update        | 6:40                  |
| <b>Head of School Updates (10 min)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Family and Community Engagement</li> <li>● General School Updates</li> </ul>   | Chris       | Update        | 6:50                  |

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| <b>Friends of Hilltown (5 min)</b><br><b>Artspark Sponsorship</b>   | Emily              | Update                | 7:00 |
| <b>Political Climate and Hilltown (15 min)</b>  | Kathleen           | Discussion            | 7:05 |
| <b>Update to HCCPS Civil Rights Policies (10 min)</b>   | Chris              | Update and Decision   | 7:20 |
| <b>Board Self Evaluation (5 min)</b>  | Lily and Kathleen  | Update                | 7:30 |
| <b>HoS Evaluation (10 min)</b>  | Kathleen and Chris | Update and Discussion | 7:35 |
| <b>Wednesday Dismissal Time (15 min)</b>  | Chris and Rebecca  | Update and Discussion | 7:45 |
| <b>New member approval and Annual Meeting Slate approval (10 min)</b>   | Emily              | Decision<br>Decision  | 8:00 |
| <b>Annual Meeting (10 min)</b>  | Emily              | Update                | 8:10 |
| <b>Committee Report questions (5 min)</b>   | Kathleen H.        |                       | 8:20 |
| <b>Meeting Wrap-up (5 min)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Minutes Finalization</li> <li>● Snacks + Drinks for next meeting</li> <li>● Newsletter Blurb</li> <li>● New business for next Board meeting</li> <li>● Review action items</li> </ul> | Kathleen H.        |                       | 8:25 |
| <b>Adjournment</b>  |                    |                       | 8:30 |

**Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School**

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes **DRAFT**– Thursday February 6, 2025, 6:30pm

**Location:** Zoom Only (School was called for a snow day)

**Present:**

**By Zoom:** Chris Kusek, Emily Boddy, Kathleen Hulton, Grace Mrowicki, Rebecca Belcher-Timme, Neal Teague, Kelly Vogel, Kathleen Szegda, Kylan Mandile, Kate Aleo,, Steve Sell, Andrea Hermans, Ben Carlis

**Regrets:** Lily Newman, Tala Elia

**Guests:** **By Zoom:** Rani Gould, Ali Urbano

**Facilitator:** Kathleen Hulton

**Notetaker:** Emily Boddy

**List keeper:** Grace

**Timekeeper:** Kate

**Mission statement read by:** Kylan

| Topic   | Discussion   | Action (if necessary)  |
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| <p><b>Welcoming (read mission statement) (Kathleen H.)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Announcements, appreciations, acknowledgements</li> <li>● Agenda Check: Appoint timekeeper, list keeper</li> <li>● BOT Visibility this month</li> </ul> | <p><b>Announcements, Appreciations, Acknowledgements:</b></p> <p>Appreciation to KATHleen for ensuring we aligned with OML in shifting to online only.</p> <p><b>Agenda Check -</b><br/>Facilities proposal will be presented by Kelly, not Kathleen.</p> <p><b>Board Visibility:</b></p> <p>Coffee Hour, hosted by the BoT on February 12. Kathleen will email as a follow up regarding logistics.</p> <p>MCPSA Advocacy week, Tiff has been emailing opportunities all week.</p> |  |
| <p><b>Approve minutes from previous BOT meeting, 1/16/25</b></p>  | <p>None.</p>   | <p>Kylan motioned to approve 1/16 meeting minutes; Kate seconded; the Board approved meeting minutes by consensus.</p> |

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| <p><b>Public Comment</b><br/>(Kathleen)</p>   | <p>None.</p>   |  |
| <p><b>Teaching and Learning Updates (Rebecca)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● General Updates</li> </ul> | <p>Staffing Update:</p> <p>Nicole on mat leave shortly. Steve Hoyt as a building sub has been very helpful. Brenda, helping with Special Ed, is training to take over some morning office duties. Also, new technology system will help facilitate subs.</p> <p>Rebecca speaking with teachers about grade realignment, and will speak at greater length in the agenda item about grade realignment. This has been a collaborative process to create a system that maximizes art program, meeting and collaboration time and other issues.</p> <p>TMI PD was excellent, and has enabled conversations since. Hoping this PD will help lay groundwork for PD around school culture, community, climate.</p> <p>PD coming up soon where Jess will do training on systemizing the way behavior is logged, adding a tiered system of consequences.</p> <p>Student council is active:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Student JEDI community wants to implement education for upper grade students around harmful language. Considering using a modified student climate survey to use as a baseline, and inform the experience of students around hearing harmful language. Emilie Woodward is their advisor. There is collaboration with the Board JEDI committee as well.</li> <li>- Dance committee starting collaborating well to plan an end of February dance.</li> </ul> <p>Safe Passage Say Something Youth programming for 8th graders will launch after Feb break.</p> <p>Power Up program for 7th graders is still underway.</p> |  |

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| <p><b>Head of School Updates (Chris)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Family and Community Engagement</li> <li>● General School Updates</li> </ul> | <p>Details included in the Domain Director Report.</p> <p>Facilities - sprinkler system is expensive to fix, and there will be ongoing costs with an aging system. The cost to replace is prohibitive. Discussed hiring an engineering firm to conduct property condition assessment of the school.</p> <p>Leaders are tracking the impacts on schools based on the new Administration.</p> <p>Expresses gratitude for those who came to the TMI evening screening. And to the partners, with whom we plan to partner moving forward. The PD day that followed was powerful, and plan to capture that and bring it forward.</p> <p>Recent PD training on Multi-tiered system of support system, as mandated by PCRS. More to come on this.</p> <p><b>Community and Family Engagement Updates:</b></p> <p>MLK Jr Celebration was a success, with good parent feedback.</p> <p>Bingo night - 58 people attended. Steph Mattrey hosted the event and was really grateful to see all three domain leaders present.</p> <p>Main goal of Advocacy week is to increase the Facilities payment Charter schools receive.</p> <p>Prisms Dance.</p> <p>Prisms thinking about a Parents Night Out.</p> <p>Coffee Hours Feb 12; Feb 28</p> <p>Art Spark April 11.</p> <p>Admissions - Zoom info session went well, mainly Kindergarten, some upper school families.</p> <p>More advertising for the in-person sessions: Hilltown Families (Hilltown Alum family); Facebook; Flyers around the Community</p> <p>Working with the Charter School's marketing group, and will have some coverage of our Pedal Powered smoothie maker.</p> |  |
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| <p><b>Board Goals, Lily</b><br/>(Update)</p>   | <p>Lily not present. Kathleen gave an update on her behalf, that we will come back to this next meeting.</p>   |   |
| <p><b>Spring Board Retreat with Julia Bown, Kathleen.</b><br/>(Update and Discussion)</p>    | <p>Julia Bowen knows our school well, and will host a retreat for us through the MCPSA.</p> <p>Kathleen and Julia have developed a rough plan for: what should and could be the board's role in overseeing/working with school leadership on Academic Performance?</p>   |   |
| <p><b>FY25 Q2 Financial Review/ Budget Review, Chris and Kylan</b> (Update and Decision)</p> | <p>Chris summarizes the documents included in the board packet pertaining to this matter.</p> <p>We are in good financial shape, which is great news. We are on or better than on target.</p> <p>A budget adjustment with tuition payments based on factors in the formula, which means more revenue than we expected. We have drawn down as many grants as we can based on advice due to new Administration.</p> <p>The Finance committee opted to adjust some budget items.</p> <p>Adjusted stipends, as may need more than expected due to Realignment</p> <p>Added increase to our budget for health insurance.</p> <p>Added to our Data Management service, so we can switch from Reddiker to Infinite Campus. Recurring cost is similar to current, but there is a big up front cost to train staff and move data over.</p> <p>Increased PD line.</p> <p>Increased Landscaping Costs</p> <p>Increased Educational Supplies</p> <p>Increased funds towards minor repairs and furnishings, get ahead by July 1 to meet needs of new class set ups.</p> | <p>Kylan motioned to approve FY25 Q2 financials; Kate seconded; The Board approved by consensus.</p> <p>Kate motioned to approve the FY25 Budget Revisions; Kathleen seconded. The Board Approved by consensus.</p> |

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|   | <p>Budget would cover the Engineering Assessment, as Chris mentioned in his updates.</p> <p>Surplus: Previously, BoT voted to draw down from the reserve for the playground projects. Due to local union helping with demolition work, playground coming in under budget at \$171k. Finance Committee seeks to put \$50k back into the reserve for a lesser impact on the Reserve.</p> <p>Kylan remarks that Chris and Carla did a great job realigning the budget.</p>  |   |
| <p><b>HoS Evaluatin, Kathleen (Update)</b></p>  | <p>Leaders are doing a more informal check in with Chris as a mid year eval. The Board will check in on several points. One data points will be a survey to the board. Surveys will be analyzed and presented at the next board Meeting.<br/>(Surveys to stakeholders will be part of the end of year assessment.)</p>   | <p>Board members will receive a HoS survey to complete ahead of the next board meeting.</p> |
| <p><b>Grade Realignment Implementation, Chris and Rebecca (Update and Discussion)</b></p> | <p>Kathleen prefaces with, we will not be making decisions tonight. Notes that, looking ahead in this item, we will be looking at Wednesday release times as it is connected to Grade Realignment - 5th/6th now merged. This is also in the LRP.</p> <p>Chris summarizes that Grade Realignment will be implemented for Sept 2025 start. Adding a TK would be explored starting in March for earliest Sept 2026 implementation.</p> <p>Process:<br/>Rebecca and Chris have met in small groups, individually, full faculty meetings to get feedback about implementation timeline, and the how. Recognizing there will be many iterations/'drafts', with feedback, as we move towards full implementation.<br/>Rebecca echoes that it has been a process of listening - balance between what is best for the</p> |   |

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|  | <p>school, and what individual needs and perspectives are. It has been a good process.</p> <p>Member asks what staff are sharing are the bigger challenges:<br/>Rebecca responds that teachers have had a lot of autonomy, and a challenge has been that it makes it hard to share resources like special ed teachers and specials' teachers. Trying to think through fitting what teachers want to do into a uniform schedule. Chris responds that the amount of programming at Hilltown (eg Arts), is both excellent and challenging with scheduling. Wanting to strike a balance that is equitable for staff and benefits kids.</p> <p>Member asks if there are thoughts about how grade realignment might affect testing - MCAS, fastbridge. Important to keep site of goals during tumultuous process.<br/>Rebecca responds that some of the realignment was about maximizing the benefit and preparation for testing, eg grades 2nd/3rd together due to mismatched MCAS needs.<br/>Chris adds that academic performance as a proxy is top of mind is organizing schedule, implementation, restructuring. It is allowing us to allot budget to Math Specialist, for example. Considering how to support ELA standards in writing by having writing labs, for example.</p> <p>Member asks how leadership will communicate with kids about the way things will shift in the new structure.<br/>Rebecca shares that they will speak to kids about the details as they become clear and concrete.</p> <p>Member asks what the approach will be to supporting teachers working with new grade levels, content.<br/>Rebecca explains that Illustrative Math as a continuation across grades, highly rated, user</p> |  |
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|  | <p>friendly. There will be some shifts with content. There are some 'funky' things that will need to be ironed out, but some of the work done two weeks back around curriculum across grades will help. There will be stipend time for teachers to work this summer on collaboration. Leaders are also looking at new curricula particularly for 6-8. Chris adds that a commitment was made to all grade level teachers that for the rest of this year to pivot to focus PD and faculty meetings on this work for teachers to work in teams to figure this out.</p> <p>Member asks, if staff retention will be affected, will staff numbers shift?<br/>Chris shares that every iteration of the schedule brings up additional questions about schedule. How we utilize staff that are part time or have roles that are fluid shift. How those staff get utilized and when is enabling optimization of our staffing model.</p> <p>Member asks about the 2nd/3rd grade band - uniquely placed as shifting up together. Rebecca and Chris respond that 5th/6th in similar position and that teachers are reviewing this. Better to wait until concrete answers so that kids don't get attached to ideas that are thrown out.</p> <p>Wednesday Dismissal:<br/>Became clear to potentially shift dismissal times this year, due to creating a new schedule and also because 5th and 6th merging. This is an opportunity to align the k-8 schedule. The administration would like to adjust the dismissal time across grades and recommends that all dismiss at 2pm so that integration meetings can still happen. Our early Weds dismissal can be a deterrent to some families where this feels prohibitive, so this is an issue of equity.</p> |  |
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|  | <p>Member expresses appreciation for the consideration due to the reduced financial burden on families.</p> <p>Member asks if Kindergarten and possible TK will have different end times to ensure stamina of youngest learners.<br/>Leaders respond that there could be flexibility around the release times of our youngest students.</p> <p>Member asks about buses and how that works with new schedule.<br/>Leaders imagine this is flexible with Easthamton bus and PVTA.</p> <p>Member asks why we wouldn't have a 3pm release.<br/>Leaders respond that we still need time reserved for staff to meet in ways district schools can't for our integration meetings across all teachers.</p> <p>Member expresses support for early release to enable teachers to have the time they need.<br/>Appreciates uniformity across k-8. Supports an earlier, uniform release time. Suggests tapping into funding streams for families with concerns around paying for after care. Encourages consideration to keep earlier release time so teachers have the time they need. Suggests a DESE grant to support the subsidy for after care.</p> <p>Member recognizes the challenge that half days present AND in service to the mission, can we find ways to solve for concerns while maintaining this important commitment to arts integration.</p> <p>Community member asks whether there might be opportunities for more STEM in our school with the changes that are happening?<br/>This will be considered in the months to come.</p> |  |
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|  | <p>Chris adds that in addition to financial and equity, the school is prioritizing the potential addition of a drama program, so having extra time will enable for this type of programming. Recognizes the tension between staff time for integration and concerns that teachers have about not having enough student facing time to get through curriculum.</p> <p>Kathleen reiterates that we will come back to this topic, no decisions made now.</p>   |  |
| <p><b>Facilities Committee Proposal, Kelly (Discussion and Decision)</b></p> | <p>Proposal is in the packet.</p> <p>Kelly went through the proposal to remove facilities as a board committee. Full explanation in the board packet.</p> <p>Kathleen added some context: that it is unusual to have a facilities committee, as she learnt during the Charter Renewal process. And we are one of the only charter schools without an Academic Excellence committee, which is one of the main charges of charter school boards. We also have a larger issue in the LRP to look at the structure of the board and committees.</p> <p>Kelly adds that Hilltown also doesn't have facilities people in house.</p> <p>Chris expresses appreciation for the facilities committee work over the years. Parent volunteers will still be in a position to help with facilities issues, eg Fix It Fridays.</p> <p>Kathleen adds that she and Kylan discussed having a person doing the 'fix-it' work attend Finance meetings for continuity and communication. Kelly confirmed that they have a person who is willing to do that.</p> | <p>Emily motioned to approve the proposal as presented; Ben seconded; The Board approved by consensus.</p> |

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| <p><b>Annual Meeting, Emily (Update)</b></p>  | <p>Wednesday March 26 at 6:30pm<br/> GABS meeting is next week and we will finalize our discussion topic.<br/> Chorus, Harmonies and Rock Band have been invited to attend, to be confirmed.<br/> Please plan to be at the meeting early to help set up and to stay a little after to help clear up.<br/> Please spread the word in your discussions and chats with community, including at our upcoming coffee hour.</p>                    |   |
| <p><b>Committee Reports - Questions, Kathleen H.</b></p>  | <p>None.</p>   |   |
| <p><b>Meeting Wrap-up</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Minutes Finalization</li> <li>● Snacks + Drinks for next meeting</li> <li>● Newsletter Blurb</li> <li>● New business for next Board meeting</li> </ul> | <p>Next Meeting: <i>Wednesday, March 12 at 6:30pm</i></p> <p>Facilitator: Kathleen H<br/> Snacks: Kate<br/> Drinks: Grace<br/> Newsletter blurb: Emily</p> <p><b>New Business:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mid Year HoS Review Discussion</li> <li>- Board Goals (Lily)</li> <li>- Begin conversations regarding how new Administration policies and actions may affect our school</li> <li>- Annual Meeting</li> </ul> |   |
| <p><b>Review Action Items</b></p>   | <p>Reviewed action items.</p>  |   |
| <p><b>Adjournment</b></p>   | <p>Meeting adjourned at 8:29pm</p>   | <p>Kelly motioned to adjourn; Kate seconded; the meeting was adjourned.</p> |



## Proposal to the Board of Trustees

**Committee making Proposal:** Head of School

**Date:** 03/12/2025 (DRAFT)

**Name of Proposal:** Proposal to update HCCP Civil Rights policy

**Priority Level:** Medium

**Approximate time needed for discussion:** 10 minutes

**Proposal to be presented by:** Chris Kusek

**Committee members drafting proposal:** Chris Kusek, Rebecca Belcher-Timme

### **Text of proposal:**

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Office of Public School Monitoring (PSM) will conduct an Integrated Monitoring Review of **Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School** in **May 2025 with a focus on Civil Rights and Special Education practices**. Each school district, charter school, vocational school, and virtual school undergoes an Integrated Monitoring Review every three years.

The first part of this Integrated Monitoring Review required a comprehensive self-evaluation in policies and practices related to civil rights and educational access for all, regardless of identity, English language ability or ability. As part of this self assessment, HCCPS administration identified areas of need in updating and/or developing policies and practices that aligned with Civil Rights best practices as defined by the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)

### **Goals to be achieved by proposal:**

The goal of this proposal is to bring existing HCCPS policies and practices in line with the most current practices and standards for civil rights procedures as defined by DESE. This will not only support compliance with this year's Integrated Monitoring Review but will help ensure all students, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic, English language learner or disability status, receive equal access and opportunities at HCCPS in a consistent and sustainable way.

**Policies/procedures to be reviewed include:**

- 1. Discipline Data Collection and Review Systems Procedure**
- 2. Discipline Procedures and School-Wide Education Service Plan**
- 3. Emergency Removal Procedure**
- 4. Head of School Hearing Procedures**
- 5. In-School Suspension (ISS) Procedures**
- 6. Director Hearing for Long-Term Suspension Procedures**
- 7. Director Hearings for Short Term Suspension Procedures**
- 8. Educational Program Accessibility Procedures**
- 9. Ensuring equal access to Extracurricular Activities Procedures**
- 10. Procedures for Translation and Communication for English Learner (EL) Families**
- 11. Procedures for Translation and Interpretation**
- 12. Re-engagement model Description**
- 13. Restraint Prevention and Behavior Intervention Policy**
- 14. Teacher Review of Instructional and Educational Materials Process**
- 15. List of materials and publications that includes language regarding non-discrimination**

**Potential problems/dissenting views:**

Potential problems and/or dissenting views regarding any individual policy will be discussed and considered by the Board of Trustees as needed before adopting.

**Additional notes: n/a**



# HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

## HCCPS Discipline Data Collection and Review System

### I. Purpose

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School (HCCPS) maintains a structured discipline data collection and review system to ensure equitable disciplinary practices and compliance with M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H3/4. This system enables school administrators to monitor and evaluate discipline trends, disaggregate data by student populations, and modify disciplinary practices as necessary.

### II. Data Collection and Disaggregation

The Director of Teaching and Learning shall periodically review discipline data by selected student populations, including but not limited to race and ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, English language learner status, and student with a disability status. In reviewing the data, the Director of Teaching and Learning shall assess the extent of in-school suspensions, short- and long-term suspensions, expulsions, and emergency removals under 603 CMR 53.07, and the impact of such disciplinary action on selected student populations. The Director of Teaching and Learning shall further determine whether it is necessary or appropriate to modify disciplinary practices due to over-reliance on expulsion, or in-school or out of school suspension, or emergency removals, or the impact of such suspensions, removals, and expulsions on selected student populations compared with other students.

Hilltown shall also collect and annually report data to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education regarding in-school suspensions, short- and long-term suspensions, expulsions, emergency removals under 603 CMR 53.07, access to education services under 603 CMR 53.13, and such other information as may be required by the Department. Such data shall be reported in a manner and form directed by the Department.



# HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

## HCCPS Discipline Procedures and School-Wide Education Service Plan

### Purpose

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School is committed to fostering a safe, supportive, and equitable learning environment while ensuring that discipline policies are fair, transparent, and aligned with state and federal regulations. Our approach prioritizes re-engagement, restorative practices, and alternative remedies to suspension whenever possible.

### School-Wide Model for Reengaging Students in Learning

- Hilltown prioritizes restorative practices, mediation, and collaborative problem-solving to support students in learning from behavioral incidents while remaining engaged in their education.
- When suspension is necessary, students are provided with academic services to ensure continued progress.

### Procedures for Alternative Remedies

1. Mediation & Conflict Resolution: Students involved in conflicts may participate in facilitated discussions with a staff mediator to resolve issues collaboratively.
2. Collaborative Problem-Solving: Staff work with students to identify the root causes of behavioral challenges and develop proactive strategies.
3. Documentation of Alternative Remedies: The school maintains records of alternative interventions used, including their outcomes.
4. Justification for Not Using Alternative Remedies: If an alternative remedy is deemed unsuitable, documentation explaining the rationale is provided.

### Procedures for Suspension and Expulsion

#### 1. Notice of Suspension and Hearing

- Prior to suspension, the student and parent/guardian receive written notice, detailing the reason for the suspension, duration, and hearing rights.
- The student has an opportunity to respond before disciplinary action is imposed.



## HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

### 2. Emergency Removal

- In cases where a student poses an immediate threat to safety, school administration (Director of Teaching and Learning or Head of School) may remove the student temporarily, with a hearing scheduled within 48 hours.

### 3. Director Hearings

- Short-Term Suspension (10 Days or Fewer): The Director of Teaching and Learning holds an informal hearing where the student and caregiver may present their side before a decision is made.
- Long-Term Suspension (More than 10 Days): A formal hearing is held, where students have the right to legal representation, to present evidence, and to appeal the decision.

### 4. In-School Suspension

- Students may be assigned in-school suspension as an alternative to out-of-school suspension, allowing them to continue academic work under supervision.

### **School-Wide Education Service Plan (Academic Support During Suspension/Expulsion)**

Hilltown ensures that students who are suspended or expelled for more than 10 consecutive days have access to educational services to allow academic progress.

1. Academic Continuity:
  - Students receive assignments, instructional materials, and access to remote or in-person tutoring to ensure they stay on track.
  - Services align with Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks to maintain consistency with peers.
2. Notification of Educational Services:
  - The Director of Teaching and Learning or designee informs students and parents of available educational services at the time of suspension/expulsion.
  - Families receive written documentation of how to access these services.
3. Facilitating Enrollment in Services:
  - The school ensures that students are connected with appropriate academic services promptly.
  - Staff verify student participation and academic progress during the period of suspension or expulsion.



# HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

## Periodic Review of Discipline Data

- The school regularly reviews discipline data, disaggregated by race, gender, disability status, and other protected categories, to ensure fairness and equity in disciplinary actions.

## Alternatives to Suspension

- Hilltown prioritizes alternatives, including behavior contracts, family engagement meetings, and counseling interventions, to minimize exclusionary discipline while addressing behavioral concerns.

By implementing these procedures, Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School upholds its commitment to equity, student support, and compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.



# HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

## HCCPS Emergency Removal Procedure

### EMERGENCY REMOVAL

A student may be temporarily removed prior to written notice and hearing when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of HCCPS and, in the Director of Teaching and Learning's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days, following the day of the emergency removal.

The Director of Teaching and Learning may not remove a student from school on an emergency basis until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

During the emergency removal, the Director of Teaching and Learning shall make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and student's parent/guardian of the emergency removal and the reason for the emergency removal. The Director of Teaching and Learning shall also provide the due process requirements of written notice for suspensions and provide for a hearing which meets the due process requirements of a long-term suspension or short-term suspension, as applicable, within the two (2) school day time period, unless an extension of time for the hearing is otherwise agreed to by the Director of Teaching and Learning, student, and parent/guardian.

A decision shall be rendered orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day. The decision shall meet all of the due process requirements of a Director of Teaching and Learning's determination in a long-term suspension or short-term suspension, as applicable.

\* In limited situations where a student is charged with a violation of M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H, or is subject to suspension in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H1/2, and is determined by the Director of Teaching and Learning to present an immediate threat to persons, property, or the orderly educational environment of the school, the student may be suspended from school on an interim short term basis of ten (10) school days or less pending a formal hearing to consider the student's long-term suspension or expulsion. Prior to the imposition of any disciplinary sanction that might result in a student's interim suspension from school for ten (10) consecutive school days or less pending a long-term suspension/expulsion hearing, the student will be given oral notice of the offense with which he/she is charged and an opportunity to respond. In the event that the Director of Teaching and Learning determines that the student will be suspended from school on an interim, short-term basis pending a formal hearing to consider the student's possible long-term suspension or expulsion, the student and the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified by telephone and in writing. Such interim, short-term removals shall not be subject to appeal.



# HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

## HCCPS Head of School (Superintendent) Hearing Procedures

### I. Purpose

This procedure outlines the process for disciplinary hearings conducted by the Head of School (acting as Superintendent) in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H3/4. The hearing process ensures due process and fairness when reviewing appeals of long-term suspensions or expulsions.

### II. Hearing Notification and Scheduling

1. Right to Appeal
  - A student placed on a long-term suspension (more than 10 consecutive school days) has the right to appeal the Director of Teaching and Learning's decision to the Head of School within five (5) calendar days of the suspension determination.
  - A parent/guardian may request an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days for filing the appeal.
2. Hearing Schedule
  - The hearing must be held within three (3) school days of receiving the appeal request, unless an extension of up to seven additional calendar days is granted.
3. Notification Requirements
  - The school will provide written notice of the hearing, which must include:
    - Date, time, and location of the hearing
    - The right of the student and parent/guardian to present evidence and witnesses
    - The right to be represented by counsel or an advocate at their own expense
    - The right to review the student's record and documents relied upon by the school before the hearing
    - The right to an interpreter, if necessary.

### III. Conduct of the Hearing

1. Hearing Officer
  - The Head of School will act as the Hearing Officer and preside over the appeal.
2. Rights of the Student & Parent/Guardian
  - The student and parent/guardian shall have the same rights as they did in the initial hearing with the Director of Teaching and Learning, including:
    - The right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school
    - The right to present witnesses and evidence on their behalf
    - The right to have the hearing recorded (audio recording available upon request).



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### 3. Evidence and Deliberation

- The Head of School will review the case based on the preponderance of evidence and may consider mitigating circumstances, alternative disciplinary measures, and the student's academic record and behavior.

## IV. Decision & Notification

### 1. Written Determination

- Within five (5) calendar days of the hearing, the Head of School will issue a written decision, which must include:
  - The disciplinary offense and hearing details
  - A summary of key facts and findings
  - The length of the suspension and expected return date (if applicable)
  - Any alternative educational services available to the student during the suspension
  - A final determination of the consequences, which may uphold, reduce, or overturn the Director of Teaching and Learning's decision.

### 2. Finality of Decision

- The decision of the Head of School is final and not subject to further appeal within the school.

## V. Special Considerations

### 1. Emergency Removals

- In cases where a student is removed on an emergency basis, the Director of Teaching and Learning must conduct a formal hearing within two (2) school days unless an extension is agreed upon.
- The Head of School may review emergency removals through this appeal process if a long-term suspension or expulsion follows.

### 2. Educational Services During Suspension

- Students suspended for more than ten (10) days are entitled to access educational services as outlined in the school's Education Services Plan to continue making academic progress.

### 3. Students with Disabilities

- Additional procedural protections apply to students with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.
- If a student has an IEP or a 504 Plan, the school must hold a Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) before implementing a suspension that exceeds ten (10) cumulative school days



# HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

## HCCPS In-School Suspension (ISS) Procedures

### I. Purpose

This procedure outlines the use of *in-school suspension (ISS)* as an alternative to short-term out-of-school suspension for minor disciplinary infractions. The process ensures due process, maintains student engagement in academic work, and complies with *M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H3/4*.

### II. Use of In-School Suspension as an Alternative to Short-Term Suspension

- The *Director of Teaching and Learning* (acting as principal) may assign in-school suspension (ISS) as an alternative to short-term out-of-school suspension for infractions that do not warrant removal from the school environment.
- ISS allows students to remain in school while being removed from their regular classroom setting. Students will complete academic assignments under supervision.

### III. Student Notification and Opportunity to Dispute Charges

1. Notification of Charges
  - Before imposing an in-school suspension, the *Director of Teaching and Learning* must orally inform the student of:
    - The disciplinary offense,
    - The evidence supporting the charge, and
    - The potential consequences, including the length of the suspension.
2. Student's Opportunity to Respond
  - The student must be given an opportunity to present their side of the story, including disputing the charge or explaining any mitigating circumstances.
  - The *Director of Teaching and Learning* must consider the student's response before making a final decision.

### IV. Determination and Suspension Length Limits

1. Determination of Offense
  - If, after hearing the student's response, the *Director of Teaching and Learning* determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, ISS may be imposed.
2. Length of Suspension
  - The *Director of Teaching and Learning* must inform the student of the duration of ISS immediately.



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- The total number of in-school suspension days cannot exceed ten (10) days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.

### V. Parent Notification and Meeting Requirements

1. Oral Notification to Parent/Guardian
  - The *Director of Teaching and Learning* must immediately make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent/guardian orally (via phone call) to explain:
    - The disciplinary offense,
    - The reason for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and
    - The length of the in-school suspension.
2. Parent/Guardian Meeting
  - The *Director of Teaching and Learning* must invite the parent/guardian to a meeting to:
    - Discuss the student's behavior,
    - Explore strategies for academic engagement, and
    - Determine additional interventions or supports.
  - This meeting must be scheduled on the same day as the ISS or as soon as possible.
3. Documenting Attempts to Reach Parent/Guardian
  - If the *Director of Teaching and Learning* is unable to reach the parent, at least two documented attempts (phone calls, voicemails, or emails) must be made.

### VI. Written Notice to Student and Parent/Guardian

1. Same-Day Written Notification
  - The *Director of Teaching and Learning* must provide written notice of the in-school suspension to both the student and parent/guardian on the same day the suspension is issued.
  - If the parent meeting has not yet occurred, the notice must include an invitation to a meeting.
2. Content of Written Notice
  - The written notice must include:
    - The disciplinary offense and summary of findings,
    - The length of ISS,
    - The reason ISS was assigned instead of out-of-school suspension,
    - The parent's right to request a meeting, and
    - The availability of academic and behavioral support resources during the suspension.



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## VII. Academic Expectations During ISS

- The student must complete all assigned coursework while in ISS, with teacher support as needed.
- The student will be placed in a quiet, supervised environment for the duration of the ISS.
- If a student has an IEP or 504 Plan, accommodations must be provided to ensure access to learning.

## VIII. Special Considerations

1. Students with Disabilities
  - If a student with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan is assigned ISS for more than ten (10) days in a school year, a Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) must be conducted to assess whether the behavior is linked to the student's disability.
  - Additional procedural protections apply under *IDEA* and *Section 504*.
2. Emergency Situations
  - If an emergency removal is necessary due to an immediate safety risk, a formal ISS determination must follow within two (2) school days.

## IX. Compliance and Review

- These procedures will be reviewed annually by the Head of School and adjusted to align with state and federal law.
- Documentation of all in-school suspensions, including parent communication records, must be maintained in student files.



# HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

## HCCPS Procedures for Director Hearings for Long-Term Suspension

### Purpose

This procedure outlines the process for principal hearings regarding long-term suspensions (more than 10 consecutive school days), ensuring due process, fairness, and compliance with M.G.L. c. 71, section 37H3/4. Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School prioritizes restorative practices and alternative remedies whenever possible while ensuring disciplinary actions are applied equitably.

### Procedures for Director Hearing for Long-Term Suspension

#### 1. Notification of Hearing

- Before imposing a long-term suspension, the Director of Teaching and Learning (or designee) provides the student and parent/guardian with written notice of:
  - The disciplinary offense and the basis for the charge;
  - The date, time, and location of the hearing;
  - The student's right to:
    - Be represented by counsel or an advocate (at the student's/parent's expense);
    - Present evidence and call witnesses;
    - Confront and cross-examine witnesses;
    - Present mitigating circumstances;
  - The parent/guardian's right to attend and participate in the hearing;
  - The potential consequences, including length of suspension;
  - The right to appeal the decision to the Head of School.
- Notice is provided in a language the parent/guardian understands, as required by civil rights laws.

#### 2. Conducting the Hearing

- The hearing is conducted by the Director of Teaching and Learning (or designee) and includes the following elements:
  - A full discussion of the alleged disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any relevant information;
  - An opportunity for the student to respond and present information, including mitigating facts;
  - The opportunity for the parent/guardian, if present, to share perspectives and mitigating circumstances;
  - The right of the student to present witnesses and cross-examine any witnesses presented by the school;



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- Consideration of alternative remedies, such as restorative justice, mediation, or behavioral interventions, before determining consequences.

### 3. Determination and Decision

- After reviewing all available information, including any mitigating circumstances, the principal determines whether the student committed the disciplinary offense and, if so, decides on the appropriate consequence.
- The principal considers:
  - The student's prior disciplinary record;
  - The severity of the offense;
  - Any relevant mitigating factors;
  - The potential impact of the suspension on the student's education.
- The principal provides a written determination that includes:
  - The decision on whether the student committed the offense;
  - The reason for the decision;
  - If a suspension is imposed, the duration and start date of the suspension;
  - The student's right to academic services and an education plan to ensure academic progress during the suspension;
  - The student's right to appeal the decision to the Head of School.

### 4. Right to Appeal

- If a long-term suspension is imposed, the student and parent/guardian have the right to appeal the decision to the Head of School.
- The request for an appeal must be made in writing within five (5) calendar days of the principal's decision.
- The Head of School must hold the appeal hearing within three (3) school days of receiving the request.
- The student has the same due process rights at the appeal hearing as in the original principal hearing.
- The Head of School's decision is final.

### 5. Educational Services During Suspension

- The student will receive academic assignments and access to schoolwork to maintain progress.
- The school ensures alignment with Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks to keep the student on track.

By following these procedures, Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School ensures that long-term suspensions are handled in a fair, transparent, and legally compliant manner, while prioritizing student support and engagement.



# HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

## HCCPS Procedures for Director Hearings for Short-Term Suspension

### Purpose

This procedure outlines the process for principal hearings regarding short-term suspensions (10 days or fewer), ensuring due process, fairness, and compliance with M.G.L. c. 71, section 37H3/4. Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School prioritizes restorative approaches and alternative remedies whenever possible, while ensuring disciplinary processes remain transparent and equitable.

### Procedures for Director Hearing for Short-Term Suspension

#### 1. Notification of Hearing

- Before imposing a short-term suspension, the Director of Teaching and Learning (or designee) provides the student and parent/guardian with written notice of:
  - The disciplinary offense;
  - The basis for the charge;
  - The date, time, and location of the hearing;
  - The right of the student to present information, including mitigating circumstances;
  - The parent/guardian's right to attend and participate.
- Notice is provided in a language the parent/guardian understands, as required by civil rights laws.

#### 2. Conducting the Hearing

- The hearing is conducted by the principal (or designee) and includes the following elements:
  - A discussion of the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any relevant information;
  - An opportunity for the student to present their perspective, including any mitigating facts;
  - An opportunity for the parent/guardian, if present, to provide input on the student's conduct and present any mitigating circumstances;
  - Consideration of alternative remedies, such as restorative practices, mediation, or behavioral interventions, before determining consequences.



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### 3. Determination and Decision

- After reviewing all available information, including any mitigating circumstances, the principal determines whether the student committed the disciplinary offense and, if so, decides on the appropriate consequence.
- The DoTL considers:
  - The student's prior disciplinary record;
  - The severity of the offense;
  - Any relevant mitigating factors;
  - The potential impact of the suspension on the student's education.

### 4. Written Notification of Decision

- The principal provides the student and parent/guardian with a written notification of the determination, including:
  - The decision on whether the student committed the offense;
  - The reason for the decision;
  - If a suspension is imposed, the length and start date of the suspension;
  - The student's right to make up assignments and schoolwork to ensure academic progress during the suspension;
  - The appeal process, if applicable.

### 5. Notification for Students in Preschool through Grade 3

- If an out-of-school suspension is imposed on a student in preschool through grade 3, the principal must:
  - Provide written explanation to the Head of School, detailing the reason for the suspension;
  - Receive approval from the Head of School before the suspension takes effect.

By following these procedures, Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School ensures that short-term suspensions are handled in a fair, transparent, and legally compliant manner, while prioritizing student support and engagement.



# HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

## HCCPS Procedures for Educational Program Accessibility

At Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School, we are deeply committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, homelessness, or limited English proficiency, have full and equal access to our general education program and all opportunities available within our school community. Our approach is rooted in inclusivity, equity, and proactive support systems that remove barriers and ensure all students thrive.

### Inclusive Policies and Practices

- Hilltown's admissions and enrollment policies are designed to be open and equitable, ensuring that no student is denied access based on protected characteristics. Our non-discrimination policy is clearly outlined in school materials, and we actively reach out to diverse communities to ensure broad awareness of our programs.

### Ensuring Equal Access for English Learners (ELs)

- **Inclusive Learning Environment:** English Learners are fully integrated into the general education classroom and are not segregated from their English-speaking peers, except when necessary for English Language Education (ELE) services. When programmatic separation is required, it is designed to be minimal and structured to support ELs' rapid and effective English acquisition.
- **Access to the Full Range of Educational Programs:** ELs receive the same access to general education instruction, arts programming, outdoor education, and extracurricular activities as their non-EL peers.
- **Specialized Supports:** EL students who qualify for special education services, Section 504 Accommodation Plans, Title I services, or any other academic support outlined in the District's Curriculum Accommodation Plan receive these services in an integrated and equitable manner.

### Academic and Social-Emotional Support for All Students

- **Differentiated Instruction:** Teachers use universal design for learning (UDL) principles and differentiated instruction to meet the diverse needs of students in the general education setting.
- **Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS):** We provide targeted interventions to support students academically and emotionally, ensuring that students with disabilities, English learners (ELs), and students experiencing homelessness receive necessary resources without stigma.



## HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

- Special Education and 504 Plans: Students with disabilities are fully included in the general education setting whenever possible, with appropriate accommodations, modifications, and specialized instruction.

### Access to the Full Range of Programs and Activities

- Equitable access to Arts and Hands-on Learning: Hilltown's arts-integrated approach ensures that all students participate in visual arts, music, and movement as part of the core curriculum. These programs are designed to be inclusive and adaptive to meet the needs of all learners.
- Outdoor Education and Experiential Learning: We provide all students with access to outdoor education and community based experiences, ensuring accommodations are in place for students with disabilities or financial constraints.
- Extracurriculars and Leadership Opportunities: Our after-school programs, student government, and community service initiatives are open to all students. We actively remove financial barriers by providing fee subsidies as needed.

### Cultural Competency and Bias-Free Environment

- Professional Development: Staff participate in ongoing training focused on equity, anti-bias education, and culturally responsive teaching to ensure that all students feel seen, valued, and supported.
- Curriculum and Representation: We continually review our curriculum to ensure it reflects diverse perspectives and experiences, fostering an environment where all students see themselves represented.

### Family and Community Engagement

- Language Access: We provide translation and interpretation services for families with limited English proficiency to ensure meaningful participation in their children's education.
- Support for Families in Need: Our school works closely with local social service and counseling organizations to connect families experiencing housing insecurity or financial hardship with necessary resources.
- Through these intentional practices, Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School ensures that every student has equitable access to a high-quality education and the full range of opportunities our school provides.



# HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

## HCCPS Procedures for Ensuring Equal Access to Extracurricular Activities

### Purpose

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School is committed to providing all students with equitable access to extracurricular activities, ensuring that participation is inclusive and free from discrimination based on race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or homelessness. These procedures ensure compliance with state and federal non-discrimination laws and reinforce Hilltown's commitment to an inclusive and welcoming school environment.

### Equal Opportunity in Extracurricular Activities

#### 1. Intramural and Interscholastic Sports

- Hilltown provides equal opportunities for all students to participate in any intramural or interscholastic sports offered by the school.
- No student is excluded from participation based on protected characteristics, and accommodations are provided as needed to ensure full access for students with disabilities.
- Recruitment and team selection are conducted in a fair and non-discriminatory manner.
- If a student experiencing homelessness wishes to participate in a sport, the school will provide necessary support, including fee waivers, equipment assistance, or transportation accommodations when possible.

#### 2. School-Sponsored Clubs and Activities

- All extracurricular clubs and activities are open to all students without restrictions based on race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or homelessness.
- The school ensures that no club or activity imposes eligibility criteria that could exclude students based on protected characteristics.
- Advisors and club leaders receive guidance on fostering inclusive participation and ensuring that all students feel welcomed.
- Club promotional materials and recruitment efforts are designed to reach all students equitably.

### Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

- Students with disabilities are entitled to reasonable accommodations that enable them to fully participate in extracurricular activities.
- The school will collaborate with families to determine necessary modifications or supports to facilitate participation.



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- Any accessibility barriers will be addressed, and alternative participation options will be explored if needed.

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### **Outreach and Awareness**

- Information about extracurricular activities, including sports, clubs, and events, will be made available to all students in an accessible format.
- Families and students will be informed of their rights regarding participation in extracurricular activities.
- The school will actively encourage participation from students who may face barriers to engagement, including those experiencing homelessness or limited English proficiency.

### **Oversight and Compliance**

- The Head of School and designated staff will oversee compliance with these procedures and address any concerns regarding access or discrimination.
- Any reports of exclusion, bias, or discrimination in extracurricular activities will be promptly investigated and addressed.

By following these procedures, Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School ensures that all students have equal access to the full range of extracurricular opportunities, reinforcing our commitment to equity, inclusion, and student engagement.



# HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

## HCCPS Procedures for Translation and Communication for English Learner (EL) Families

### Purpose

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School is committed to ensuring that all students and families, including those with limited English proficiency (LEP), have full and equitable access to school-related information. While we do not currently serve EL students or families, we have established procedures to ensure that if the need arises, we can provide translated materials and accessible communication.

### Translation of Important Information and Documents

#### Key Documents to Be Translated

If Hilltown enrolls students or families who require communication in a language other than English, the following documents will be translated into the languages spoken by those families:

- Student and Family Handbook
- Code of Conduct
- Enrollment and registration materials
- Special education procedural safeguards and notices
- Health and safety information
- Report cards and progress reports
- School policies, including anti-bullying and nondiscrimination policies
- School notices regarding responsibilities, academic standards, and student expectations
- Information about extracurricular activities, school events, and family engagement opportunities

#### Languages for Translation

- Hilltown will determine necessary translation languages based on the Home Language Surveys completed by incoming families.
- Translations will be provided for any language spoken by a significant portion of the student population in need of language support.

#### Communication and Accessibility for EL Families

- If EL families enroll, all school-wide notices, announcements, and information about academic expectations will be provided in a language they understand.



## HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

- Translated notices will be distributed through the school website, email, and printed copies as needed.

### **Extracurricular Activities and School Events**

- Information about after-school programs, clubs, special events, and family engagement opportunities will be translated for EL families to ensure full participation.
- Interpretation services will be provided at school-wide events as needed.

### **Implementation and Review**

- Hilltown will review its procedures annually to ensure readiness to support EL families if they enroll.
- The school will establish relationships with local translation and interpretation services to be prepared to meet language-access needs promptly.

By maintaining these procedures, Hilltown ensures that all families, regardless of language background, will have equitable access to essential school information and opportunities.



# HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

## HCCPS Procedures for Translation and Interpretation

### Purpose

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School is committed to ensuring that all families, regardless of their primary language, have full access to important school information and can meaningfully engage in their child's education. To that end, we have established procedures for translating key documents and providing interpretation services for families with Limited English proficiency (LEP).

### Procedures for Translation of Written Materials

#### 1. Identification of Language Needs:

- Upon enrollment, families complete a Home Language Survey to determine their preferred language for communication.
- The school maintains an updated record of families requiring translated materials.

#### 2. Translation of Essential Documents:

- The following documents will be translated into the major languages spoken by our families with LEP:
  - Family and Student Handbook
  - Code of Conduct
  - Enrollment and registration materials
  - Special education procedural safeguards and notices
  - Health and safety information
  - Report cards and progress reports
  - School policies, including anti-bullying and nondiscrimination policies

#### 3. Distribution of Translated Materials:

- Translated documents will be made available in both digital and print formats.
- Families will receive translated materials through email, and printed copies upon request.

### Procedures for Oral Interpretation

#### 1. Availability of Interpretation Services:

- The school will provide interpretation for parent-teacher conferences, IEP meetings, and other critical school communications upon request.
- When possible, bilingual staff members may assist with interpretation.

#### 2. Low-Incidence Languages:



## HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

- For languages not commonly spoken within our school community, the school will attempt to secure interpretation services through external providers, community organizations, or translation hotlines as needed.
- If immediate interpretation is unavailable, the school will communicate in writing using translated materials and follow up with interpretation as soon as possible.

### **Procedures for Recruitment and Promotional Materials**

#### **1. Translation of Recruitment Materials:**

- Promotional materials, including enrollment flyers, will be translated into the major languages (e.g. Spanish) spoken by families in our community.

#### **2. Community Engagement:**

- The school will collaborate with local organizations serving multilingual communities to ensure recruitment materials reach diverse populations.

By implementing these procedures, Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School ensures that families with limited English proficiency can fully participate in their child's education and access all necessary school resources.



# HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

## HCCPS Re-Engagement Model Description

HCCPS employs Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and Trauma-Sensitive Learning to help students successfully reintegrate after absences, suspensions, or disengagement.

### Core Strategies for Re-engagement

- Restorative Practices: Students reflect on their actions, repair harm, and rebuild relationships.
- Predictable Routines & Supports: Clear behavioral expectations, structured interventions, and calming strategies help students transition back into learning.
- Tiered Support System: Individualized check-ins, academic support, and behavior plans ensure ongoing success.

### Reengagement Process

1. Reentry Meeting: Staff, caregivers, and the student discuss challenges, establish expectations, and create a support plan.
2. Academic & Behavioral Support: Students receive tailored interventions, including mentorship, tutoring, or structured behavior plans.
3. Restorative Conversations: If harm occurred, students participate in guided discussions and take actions to repair relationships (if all parties consent to a repair).
4. Ongoing Monitoring: Staff conduct follow-ups to ensure continued engagement and adjust support as needed.

HCCPS prioritizes equity, relationship-building, and student success, ensuring every learner has the tools to thrive in a safe and inclusive environment.



# HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

## HCCPS Restraint Prevention and Behavior Intervention Policy

HCCPS follows 603 CMR 46.00 regulations to ensure safe, appropriate responses to student behaviors requiring immediate attention. The policy prioritizes prevention, de-escalation, and positive behavioral interventions while strictly limiting the use of physical restraint to emergency situations.

### I. Methods for Preventing Student Violence, Self-Injurious Behavior, and Suicide

- Tiered Behavioral Supports:
  - Tier 1: Universal strategies, including classroom management, social-emotional learning, and restorative practices.
  - Tier 2: Targeted interventions, such as individualized behavior support plans.
  - Tier 3: Intensive interventions, including crisis response plans for students with significant emotional or behavioral needs.
- Crisis Prevention & Suicide Intervention:
  - Staff are trained in recognizing signs of emotional distress and assessing risk for self-harm or suicide.
  - The Response Team (including the Head of School, Director of Teaching and Learning, Behavior Support Coordinator, and Adjustment Counselor) intervenes immediately when student behavior poses a risk.
  - The school coordinates with mental health professionals and families for continued support.

### II. Parent Engagement in Restraint Prevention and Use

- Proactive Communication: Parents are informed about behavioral support strategies and invited to collaborate on intervention plans.
- Incident Notification: If restraint is used, parents receive oral notification on the same day and written documentation within 24 hours.
- Parent Meetings: A follow-up meeting is scheduled to discuss the incident, assess interventions, and prevent future occurrences.

### III. Alternatives to Physical Restraint & Emergency Use

HCCPS emphasizes de-escalation techniques and reserves physical restraint for situations where a student's behavior poses an immediate and serious risk of harm.

- Alternatives to Restraint:
  - Verbal de-escalation and active listening.
  - Allowing space and providing sensory breaks.



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- Engaging students in restorative problem-solving.
- Temporary removal to a quiet, supervised space.
- Physical Restraint Guidelines:
  - Used only when all other interventions have failed and a student's behavior presents an immediate risk.
  - Restraints are performed by trained staff and discontinued as soon as the student is safe.
  - Strictly prohibited: medication restraint, mechanical restraint, seclusion, and prone restraint (except in cases meeting 603 CMR 46.03(1)(b) requirements).

### IV. Training, Reporting, and Follow-Up Procedures

1. Staff Training:
  - Staff receive annual training on de-escalation techniques, trauma-informed care, and emergency safety interventions.
  - Designated staff complete in-depth crisis intervention training to ensure safe restraint use.
2. Incident Reporting & Documentation:
  - Same-day oral notification to parents.
  - Written report within 24 hours, including event details and actions taken.
  - The Head of School reviews each incident and submits required state reports on restraint use.
3. Investigation of Complaints:
  - Parents can file formal complaints regarding restraint use.
  - The Director of Teaching and Learning investigates, documents findings, and determines corrective actions.

### V. Use of Time-Out

HCCPS follows 603 CMR 46.02(5) guidelines for time-out procedures, ensuring they are:

- Used as a behavioral support strategy, not a form of discipline.
- Supervised by an adult, with continued monitoring.
- Limited in duration, with the goal of returning the student to the learning environment as soon as possible.



# HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

## HCCPS Teacher Review of Instructional and Educational Materials

At Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School (HCCPS), teachers are responsible for carefully reviewing instructional and educational materials to ensure they are free of simplistic and demeaning generalizations based on race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, and sexual orientation. The selection and use of instructional materials align with the school's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

### I. Teacher Review Process for Instructional Materials

Teachers review all materials—including books, articles, primary sources, films, and other media—based on the following principles:

1. Evaluating for Bias & Stereotypes
  - Teachers assess materials for simplistic and demeaning generalizations and ensure multiple perspectives are represented.
  - If a text includes historical biases or stereotypes, teachers plan explicit discussions to provide historical and cultural context.
2. Criteria for Material Selection
  - Materials must:
    - Promote diverse perspectives and critical thinking.
    - Reflect a variety of voices and lived experiences.
    - Avoid reinforcing harmful stereotypes or misrepresentations
3. Review Process for Controversial Materials
  - Teachers preview materials before assigning them to identify potentially sensitive content.
  - If concerns arise, the Director of Teaching and Learning may assist in the review process.

### II. Addressing Bias and Stereotypes in Classroom Instruction

If materials contain historical biases or limited perspectives, teachers contextualize them through:

- Guided classroom discussions exploring different viewpoints.
- Supplementary materials offering counter-narratives and diverse voices.
- Critical analysis activities where students examine authorship, intent, and historical impact.

Example strategies include:

- Using primary sources alongside historical critiques to highlight perspective and bias.
- Pairing historical texts with modern perspectives for comparative analysis.
- Facilitating student-led discussions on representation in literature, media, and history.

### III. Teacher Training on Identifying and Addressing Bias



## HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

HCCPS offers teachers receive ongoing professional development on:

- Recognizing and mitigating bias
- Facilitating difficult conversations about identity, privilege, and race
- Selecting diverse and inclusive materials that represent all student identities.



# HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

## HCCPS List of materials and publications (non-discrimination)

### 1. Family Handbook (2024-2025)

- The non-discrimination statement is prominently included in the handbook and referenced in multiple sections related to student rights, Title IX compliance, and grievance procedures.

### 2. School Website

- The official school website ([www.hilltowncharter.org](http://www.hilltowncharter.org)) includes the non-discrimination policy and Title IX Grievance Procedure, ensuring accessibility for all stakeholders.

### 3. Enrollment & Admissions Materials

- The admissions policy and lottery information reiterate that HCCPS does not discriminate in the enrollment process.

### 4. Employee Handbook & Job Postings

- The staff employment policy includes non-discrimination clauses regarding hiring, workplace conduct, and accommodations.

### 5. Student Discipline & Grievance Procedures

- Documents detailing disciplinary policies, civil rights grievance procedures, and Title IX compliance explicitly outline non-discrimination protections.

### 6. Appendix J – Prohibition of Discrimination and Harassment

- The Family Handbook Appendix J includes a detailed non-discrimination and harassment policy, outlining protections for students, parents, employees, and the general public.

## Accessibility & Compliance

- Alternative formats (large print, Braille, audiotape, etc.) are available upon request.
- The Title IX Coordinator and Civil Rights Coordinator are listed as points of contact for reporting concerns or requesting accommodations.
- The grievance procedure ensures the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints related to discrimination.

## **Progress Update on Professional Practice Goals – March 2025**

*Presented to the Board of Trustees by Chris Kusek, Head of School on Wednesday,*

*Mar 12, 2025*

### **Introduction**

At the beginning of this school year, I outlined four professional practice goals that aligned with Hilltown's Long-Range Plan and our ongoing commitment to fostering a thriving school community. These goals were established as a public commitment to accountability and progress, ensuring that Hilltown continues to align, evolve, and adapt to meet the needs of our students and families.

Through ongoing communication with faculty, families, and students, and with the support of the Board of Trustees, I have made meaningful progress in these areas while identifying next steps to deepen our impact in the coming months. Below is a summary of our progress to date and a look ahead.

### **Goal 1: Become known and trusted as the leader of the school by students, staff, and families.**

#### **Progress to Date:**

- I have prioritized visibility and accessibility by maintaining a strong and consistent presence in the halls, at recess, in classroom visits and during arrival and dismissal. These interactions have been invaluable in building relationships and understanding the pulse of the community.
- Regular participation in school-wide events, including the MLK Celebration, Winter Fair, Community coffee hours, and Prisms/Purples Dance, has provided additional opportunities for community connection.
- Collaboration with the leadership team has strengthened shared accountability and decision-making processes, ensuring that leadership structures support the school's mission effectively.
- Ongoing efforts to build rapport with faculty and staff have included faculty listening sessions and a focus on staff support as we prepare for changes such as grade-realignment in SY25-26.

#### **Next Steps:**

- Continue strengthening relationships by increasing classroom visits and individual/small-group student check-ins.
- Expand leadership team development efforts to enhance role clarity and effectiveness.
- Formalize feedback structures (e.g., Spring climate survey, grade alignment/dismissal time listening sessions) to ensure ongoing dialogue with staff and families.

**Goal 2: Foster a strong sense of community and trust through open and transparent communication with parents and faculty.**

**Progress to Date:**

- Regular email updates to families and faculty have provided consistent, transparent communication on key topics, including school culture, academic progress, and policy changes.
- Community listening sessions have provided space for open dialogue on topics such as the cell phone policy and school climate.
- Implementation of family and staff climate surveys has helped gather meaningful feedback, guiding our efforts to address areas of need and reinforce strengths.

**Next Steps:**

- Increase opportunities for two-way communication, such as family forums and faculty discussion groups, to ensure all voices are heard.
- Utilize climate survey results to inform targeted action plans, particularly regarding school culture and equity.
- Refine internal communication structures to ensure timely and efficient information-sharing among staff.

**Goal 3: Ensure that all students with disabilities have equitable access to and participation in all aspects of the school experience at HCCPS.**

**Progress to Date:**

- A comprehensive review of special education policies, procedures, and practices has been initiated, with early findings highlighting key areas for improvement in service delivery, documentation, and inclusive practices.
- Professional development for staff has focused on reviewing and refining our Multi-Tiered Systems of Support across academics, behavior, and social-emotional wellness/mental health, ensuring that all students receive the support they need.
- Increased engagement with families of students with disabilities, including outreach through SEPAC, has strengthened home-school collaboration.
- Ongoing discussions about curriculum and design have reinforced a commitment to equitable access to learning opportunities across grade bands.

**Next Steps:**

- Develop and implement an action plan based on the findings from the special education review.
- Expand professional development efforts with a focus on inclusive practices and a Universal design for Learning (UDL)

- Strengthen progress monitoring systems to ensure that all students, particularly those with disabilities, are supported in achieving their full potential through data driven decision making.

**Goal 4: Ensure that all decisions made by the leadership team are informed by a commitment to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI).**

**Progress to Date:**

- Ongoing observation, data collection, and reflection on JEDI practices have informed leadership decision-making.
- Staff training and discussions on equity and inclusion have been embedded into professional development opportunities.
- The leadership team has begun implementing a JEDI-focused decision-making framework, ensuring that policies and practices are examined through an equity lens.
- Community engagement on social justice issues, including dialogue around student experiences and school culture, has been prioritized.

**Next Steps:**

- Formalize the JEDI decision-making framework to integrate equity considerations into all school policies and initiatives.
- Expand student and family engagement opportunities to ensure diverse perspectives are represented in decision-making.
- Conduct an equity audit of curriculum to advance long-term JEDI priorities.

**Conclusion & Next Steps**

While significant progress has been made toward each of these goals, the work is ongoing. Over the next several months, my focus will be on deepening impact through structured action plans, refining communication and leadership strategies, and ensuring that our school continues to evolve in alignment with our mission and values.

I deeply appreciate the continued partnership of the Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, and families in this work. I welcome any feedback and look forward to ongoing collaboration as we strive to create the best possible environment for our students.

**In partnership,**

Chris Kusek  
Head of School, Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School



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Finance Committee Meeting Minutes- February 5, 2025  
8:30 am Zoom - Remote

**Present:** Chris Kusek, Carla Clark, Kylan Mandile, Grace Mrowicki, Andy Tilbe

**Regrets:** Lisa Plaza

| Topic             | Discussion   | Action   |
|-------------------|--|--|
| Approve Minutes   | Carla motioned to approve January minutes, Kylan seconded, minutes approved by consensus   | Kylan will submit Jan. minutes for Feb. BoT packet   |
| Playground Update | <p>Facilities Committee will be disbanded. It was originally a committee formed to move the school, then it was a "fix it" committee, and now it has been mostly focused on the playground project. Instead, there will be a facilities group to handle ad hoc projects. There were some redundancies between facilities and finance committees and the facilities committee could not move forward on projects without consideration of finances. Grace inquired if the Facilities Committee documents and knowledge will be preserved, and will someone from the finance committee join? Chris said that is a consideration and GABS is working on it.</p> <p>Equipment has been ordered for ~\$116,000. We have paid half as deposit and will pay the remainder prior to delivery. Demolition will be done for \$0 (except \$2,000 for hauling) because an internship program will do it. Four Seasons will build new retaining walls for \$19,000. Omasta contract for \$30,000. Wood chips will be ~\$2,000. Then there will be a contingency line item, bringing the total to approximately \$170,000.</p> | <p>Alex to be included on future Finance Committee communications as a potential new member that will join from the disbanded Facilities Committee</p> <p>Chris will continue to coordinate with vendors related to the playground</p> |



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|  | <p>A parent has offered to donate a gaga ball pit, which is anticipated to be installed by volunteers. Other enhancements are shade structures, seating areas, outdoor musical equipment,</p>   |   |
| <p>Discuss engaging consultant for property condition assessment report to identify capex needs</p>  | <p>Chris noted there have been attempts to do this by volunteers but we should have a professional do it. (e.g. we just got an \$8,000 bill from the sprinkler company).</p>  | <p>Chris to obtain quote from local engineering firms for PCA report.</p> |
| <p>Review Q2 financial statements</p>  | <p>Carla noted that the financial statements are as expected</p> <p>Chris makes a motion to approve, and Andy seconds, approved by consensus</p>  | <p>Kylan to send Q2 financials to Kate Aleo</p>                           |
| <p>Budget Discussion:<br/>-FY25 mid year revisions<br/>-Impact of costs from classroom realignment<br/>-New online classroom software implementation costs</p> | <p>Chris noted that tuition revenues are up over \$100k, interest income up \$10k, safe and supportive school grant of \$10k.</p> <p>Expenses are up slightly for additional stipends for grade realignment, long term sub for parental leave, upgrading the data management system (SIS) from Rediker to Infinite Campus (which will have an upfront cost, but the ongoing cost is similar to the current system), SPED contractor line is higher than anticipated, repair and maintenance (sprinkler repair), educational supplies, minor equipment/furniture for grade realignment,</p> <p>Carla noted that HRA (health reimbursement arrangement) is getting used a lot more and we are going to try to get a new HRA in FY2027. \$50,000 from the surplus is being</p> | <p>Kylan to send proposed budget revisions to the BoT</p>                 |



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|   | reallocated to reserves towards capital costs related to the playground.<br><br>Kylan motioned to approve the FY2025 proposed revisions to budget and send to the BoT, Grace seconds, approved by consensus |   |
| Discuss ideas to incorporate JEDI into Finance Committee activities and goals | Grace discussed how various line items within the budget are applicable to JEDI.  | Committee members to consider how JEDI principles relate to budget planning |
| New Business  | None  | None  |
| Review action items   | Done  |   |
| Next meeting time/date/location   | March 5, 2025 at 8:30 am via Zoom   |   |
| Adjournment   | 9:30am  |   |



**GABS Committee Meeting Minutes DRAFT – Tues January 7, 2025, 8:30 am FINAL**

**Meeting Location: HCCPS**

**Present:** Emily Boddy; Tiffany Ross; Sara Scheffelin; Lindsay Fogg-Willits; Kate Aleo

**Guests:**

**Regrets:**

**Notetaker:** Emily

| Topic   | Discussion  | Action<br>(if necessary) |
|---|---|--------------------------|
| <b>Check-in/<br/>Announcements</b>                                  | <p>Check-in</p> <p>Steve approved by board. Waiting on final confirmation from state. Has completed financial disclosure and working on other requirements. Will be oriented (Emily) prior to Jan board meeting.</p>  |                          |
| <b>JEDI</b>   | Woven into other discussions  |                          |
| <b>Approve Dec 2024 Minutes</b>                                     | Approved by consensus.  |                          |
| <b>Annual Meeting Date and Event plan - Discussion and Decision</b> | <p>March 26, 2025</p> <p>We will not have the art show portion.</p> <p>Performers will come again, TBD by Tiffany with music teachers.</p> <p>Ideas for community question: something about the grade realignment - will have happened, but will be questions about execution; refer to our mission - cooperative, parent involvement, barriers to involvement; fundraising, eg how do we create unique, high quality learning opportunities, - stations for ways to be involved eg fundraising, time, skills, community outreach/connections</p> |                          |



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| <p><b>Succession Planning + Recruitment,</b> Discussion</p> | <p>We want to implement an alum network, so we can publicize Art Spark and other fundraising initiatives, school news.</p> <p>Need to think through how we recruit, track, communicate with alums moving forward.</p> <p>Kate taking over board packet for Nicole.</p> <p>Leadership succession - need to check with Ben plans about succession.</p> <p>Finance/Treasurer - Brandee? JP Stracco?</p> <p>Connect with Mike Gove about support with recruitment.</p> | <p>Emily will create Form to capture alumni info.</p> <p>Tiff and Emily will review which lists and how to get information</p> <p>Emily will reconnect with Mike Gove about board membership</p> <p>Emily will connect with Ben and Kylan about intentions for future in board leadership roles.</p> |
| <p><b>Review Board Goals,</b> Discussion</p>                | <p>Table for next meeting.</p>   |  |
| <p><b>New Business</b></p>                                  | <p>Board Book Organizational Plan</p> <p>Review Board Goals</p> <p>Update on Succession Planning action steps</p> <p>Annual Meeting Planning</p> <p>Bylaw change for TK/K, possible committee change proposals</p>   |  |
| <p><b>Next Meeting Date/Time/Location</b></p>               | <p>Meeting dates for the year, 8:30am:<br/>Feb 4; Mar 4; April 1; May 6; June 3</p>  |  |
| <p><b>Adjournment</b></p>                                   | <p>10:05 am</p>  |  |

**Agenda items for next month:**

**GABS agenda items for next BOT meeting:** Annual Meeting.



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JEDI Committee Meeting Minutes- February 28th, 2025  
9:30 - 10:30 a.m.

**Present:** Kathleen Szegda, Garrett Washington, Seth Harwood, Rebecca-Belcher Timme, Chris Kusek

**Guests:** Grace Mrowicki, Emilie Woodward, Ben Spooner

**Regrets:**

| Topic                   | Discussion  | Action |
|-------------------------|---|--------|
| Approve January Minutes | Minutes approved  |        |
| Updates                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe Passage youth initiative launched on Tuesday; well-received; goes along with locker room talk, use some of the same language as TMI, lot of synergy; trying to design schedule next year including these types of partnerships; hearing from peers is particularly powerful</li> <li>• Surveys – two survey efforts going on               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Climate survey: finalized and working to get out next week</li> <li>○ Weekly Survey Project: students very interested in moving survey forward; students will focus on education; figuring out when to bring to a teacher meeting; teachers will discuss what a slur is with students next week in Advisory</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Applying for Civics grant for next year \$20k - relevant for JEDI work; developing cultural competence and hearing how speak to identities; split between continuing and deepening partnership with TMI, storytelling for social justice, telling your story and hearing other stories; other piece is to support reimagine humanities program at upper grades</li> <li>• Preparing for Civil Rights audit – every school</li> </ul> |        |



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|                                 | has to go through it every 5 years   |  |
| JEDI in Mission Statement       | Discussed possibility of updating mission statement to include JEDI. Tension between wanting to be clear externally of our values but not wanting to put our funding at risk.  |  |
| JEDI Committee Goals SY24-25    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Volunteers JEDI – all were invited to JEDI meeting; need internal systems to coordinate across activities and have common structures – once that is in place, far easier to connect to outside resources as needed</li><li>• JEDI plan – would be good to have Board reflection on how to infuse JEDI into work; need to deepen what it means to incorporate JEDI into committee work – feels like its happening more at surface level b/c not sure how to make it more integrated; e.g. in personnel, in any new job description, how is JEDI incorporated; new curriculum committee possibly – could definitely be JEDI lens there</li></ul> |  |
| Next Steps                      |  |  |
| Next meeting time/date/location | 3/28 from 9:30 – 10:30 a.m.  |  |
| Adjournment                     | The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.  |  |