

# Howard Gardner MI Charter School Public Board Meeting October 18th, 2016

The Howard Gardner MI Charter School (“HGMICS”) held a Public Board of Directors meeting on Tuesday October 18th, 2016. Dr. Susan Trussler called the public meeting to order at 7:25 P.M and then subsequently presided over the meeting. The HGMICS facility, located at 1615 E. Elm Street, Scranton, PA was the location for the public work session. The following directors attended: John Ezbiansky, Laila Kane, Clarence Lamanna, John Ruddy, Susan Trussler and Stephanie Westington. Also in attendance was Maria Rozaieski, school principal. Susan Trussler led those assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance and then took roll call for board members and administrators.

Dr. Trussler, President	<u>X</u>
Mr. Ezbiansky	<u>X</u>
Ms. Kane,	<u>X</u>
Dr. Kenton	<u>Absent</u>
Dr. Lamanna	<u>X</u>
Dr. Langan	<u>Absent</u>
Mr. Ruddy	<u>X</u>
Mr. Nivert	<u>Absent</u>
Ms. Westington	<u>X</u>

#### Administration:

Maria Rozaieski, Principal (non-voting)	<u>X</u>
Renee Dougherty, HR Mgr (non-voting)	<u>X</u>
Brent Pennington, Business/Tech Mgr. (non-voting)	<u>Absent</u>

Kimberly Kost Scanlon of Oliver, Price and Rhodes was also in attendance.

The Board members had already approved the September 20<sup>th</sup> HGMICS Board meeting minutes via electronic (email) vote. Thus, the September 2106 meeting minutes were mentioned but did not require discussion or approval.

Maria Rozaieski provided a brief financial update. As of October 18th, the accounts payable balance was \$70,511.05 and the accounts receivable balance was \$322,436.01. There were no comments or questions about HGMICS finances. Dr. Trussler asked for a motion to approve the financial report, which Laila Kane made and Stephanie Westington seconded. All directors voted in favor of approving the financial report.

Regarding School Matters and Policies, Maria Rozaieski provided brief reports on eight items.

1. Current student clubs: Art, Ukulele, Yoga and Basketball. There are several clubs at the school and basketball is a new addition this year. The board briefly discussed the clubs but did not have any major items of focus.
2. Dare Program – DARE is a drug and alcohol training provided by the Sheriff's department. It's designed to raise awareness of the dangers of drugs and alcohol to children and adolescents. HGMICS recently hosted the Sheriff's department for a presentation to 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students.
3. Garden Grant – HGMICS recently had the swimming pool filled in with dirt. It applied for a \$500 grant to help pay for supplies to till the ground and plant a garden. The garden space will be divided amongst the different HGMICS classrooms.
4. Classroom Diagnostic Tools (CDTs) – CDTs are diagnostic tests that indicate which students (3<sup>rd</sup> -8<sup>th</sup>) need assistance and in what areas they need assistance. HGMICS utilizes other tools as well, but CDTs have been a primary tool.
5. PSSA Data Analysis – Cecelia Mecca from NEIU is going to work to help HGMICS staff analyze data at the grade level in regards to student performance. The work is upcoming.
6. Formative Assessment – to help improve HGMICS teaching practices, teachers go through a two-year process of attending seminars and applying new teaching methods. Teachers can immediately apply what they learn in the seminars to their classrooms. Formative Assessment originally involved five HGMICS teachers + Maria Rozaieski.

7. Fall Bazaar – each year HGMICS and the Parent Forum organizes a Fall Bazaar. This year the Bazaar will be held at the Jewish Community Center in Scranton on November 13<sup>th</sup>. We are still looking for additional vendors to participate in the event.
8. Parent Forum Mixer –this was a Parent Forum event on October 14<sup>th</sup>. The mixer was designed to recruit additional interest in active involvement in Parent Forum.

None of the above eight matters required a board vote.

Dr. Trussler had one board item to report. The Salaries and Benefits Ad Hoc Committee of the HGMICS Board is analyzing how HGMICS teachers' salaries compare to the salaries at Scranton and Abington Heights school districts. The first goal is to determine the cost of bringing HGMICS salaries much closer to salaries at local school districts.

On facilities, Maria Rozaieski reported that the school recently had fire drill testing. Each year the local fire department performs routine building testing to ensure student safety. This year, there was one item of concern: HGMICS' Cottage, where the music classes and storage of maintenance materials have been located. The Cottage's fire alarm is not tied in to the main building fire alarm system. As a result, the music room has been relocated to a vacant classroom inside the main building. The fire alarm for the Cottage soon will be tied into the main alarm system.

On personnel matters, Maria Rozaieski stated that HGMICS recently hired a school nurse and that she will start on October 24<sup>th</sup>. In addition, the Board voted on five motions:

1. HGMICS would like to hire Melissa Hiller as a full-time teacher. Though a fully certified teacher she currently serves as an aide. Susan Trussler made a motion, which John Ruddy seconded, to hire Ms. Hiller. All directors voted in favor of hiring Ms. Hiller as a classroom teacher.
2. Brent Pennington resigned from HGMICS effective October 28<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Trussler asked for a motion to accept Mr. Pennington's resignation. Laila Kane made a motion and John Ezbiansky seconded the motion. All directors voted in favor of accepting Mr. Pennington's resignation.
3. In light of Mr. Pennington's resignation, the HGMICS board moved to authorize the hiring of an outside IT contractor on a temporary basis. The contractor is to perform

- IT services currently performed by Mr. Pennington. The arrangement is contingent upon a review of any specific matters by the HGMICS board President and the HGMICS Solicitor. Laila Kane made a motion and John Ezbiansky seconded the motion concerning the matter. All directors voted in favor of the motion.
4. Also in light of Mr. Pennington's resignation, the HGMICS board made a motion to authorize the hiring of an outside Business contractor on a temporary basis. The contractor is to perform business services currently performed by Mr. Pennington. The hiring is contingent upon a review of any specific matters by the HGMICS Board President and Solicitor. Laila Kane made a motion and John Ezbiansky seconded the motion concerning the matter. All directors voted in favor of the motion.
  5. Also in light of Mr. Pennington's resignation the Board made a motion to arrange for Jade Volchoff, the school counselor, to input the PIMS data for mandatory school reporting to PDE on a temporary basis. The temporary arrangement would be paid via a stipend. Susan Trussler made the motion and Clarence Lamanna seconded it. All directors voted in favor of the motion.

On other items, the Board briefly discussed updates on the initiatives suggested by current grandparents of HGMICS students as well as the recent PCPCS (Charter School) conference. In August 2016, a group of grandparents had asked the HGMICS Board if they could form their own forum group that grandparents would use to raise monies and interact with the school. The grandparent group has now agreed that they will operate under the aegis of the Parent Forum. Regarding the recent PCPCS conference, Maria Rozaieski and Board member Laila Kane attended and found the conference informative. One matter that the conference addressed was Board electronic voting. The conference recommended voting on matters only in person and not via email (electronic). The HGMICS board discussed the issue and as a result, decided to vote on/approve Board meeting minutes only in person going forward.

On new business, the Board discussed charter renewal. Susan Trussler informed the board that she and Dr. Amy Kenton recommend that HGMICS engage School Frontiers, a

Pennsylvania based consultancy firm to help HGMICS with charter renewal. Two motions resulted from the discussion:

1. That the HGMICS board authorize an expenditure of \$500 to engage School Frontiers to meet via Skype with school administrators and Board officers to identify the documents and materials most often requested by school districts in the charter renewal process. Susan Trussler made the motion and Laila Kane seconded the motion. The hiring is contingent upon a review of any specific matters by the HGMICS board President and Solicitor. All directors voted in favor of the motion.
2. Assuming the successful completion of actions under Motion #1, that HGMICS board engage School Frontiers to help with the collection and analysis of any necessary data to allow for successful completion of the school's charter renewal. The hiring is contingent upon a review of any specific matters by the HGMICS board President and Solicitor. The maximum expenditure for this item is \$5,000 and can only be increased via an additional Board vote in the future. Susan Trussler made the motion and Laila Kane seconded the motion. All directors voted in favor of the motion

On other New Business, John Ezbiansky informed the Board that several current parents asked him about the flexibility of the Board's meeting dates. Several parents who would like to attend HGMICS board meetings cannot do so on Tuesday evenings. Kimberly Kost Scanlon stated that the school's by-laws specify Tuesday HGMICS Board meetings, and the meetings for the entire school year are announced publicly in the Scranton Times Tribune. The school would have to revise its bylaws in order to change the day of the week on which the HGMICS board meets.

At 8:30pm, no other items of business were raised. Susan Trussler adjourned the meeting. The next HGMICS Public Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday November 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm.