

**Howard Gardner MI Charter School
Public Board Meeting
November 15th, 2016**

The Howard Gardner MI Charter School (“HGMICS”) held a Public Board of Directors meeting on Tuesday November 15th, 2016. Dr. Susan Trussler called the public meeting to order at 7:18 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: Laila Kane, Amy Kenton (via Skype), Clarence Lamanna, Lou Nivert, John Ruddy, Susan Trussler and Stephanie Westington. Also in attendance were Maria Rozaieski, school principal and Renee Dougherty, HR Manager. Kimberly Kost Scanlon of Oliver, Price and Rhodes was also in attendance. No public visitors were present at the meeting.

Susan Trussler led those assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance and then took roll call for board members and administrators.

Directors

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

Administration:

Maria Rozaieski, Principal (non-voting)	<u>X</u>
Renee Dougherty, HR Mgr (non-voting)	<u>X</u>

The Board members unanimously approved the Board meeting minutes from the October 18th, 2016 meeting. Lou Nivert made a motion, seconded by Stephanie Westington, to approve the minutes as presented. There was no further discussion of the October minutes and all directors voted in favor of the minutes.

Maria Rozaieski provided a brief financial update. As of October 30th, the accounts payable balance was \$104,974.00 and the accounts receivable balance was \$322,534.21. Mary Ann Novak of McGrail, Merkel, Quinn and Associates (MMQ) had made a presentation earlier in executive session concerning the HGMICS 2016 audit and financial statements. The financial position of the school is stable and MMQ plans to issue a clean audit report. There were no comments or questions about HGMICS financial statements or the audit. Dr. Trussler asked for a motion to approve the financial report, which John Ruddy made and Fran Langan seconded. All directors voted unanimously to approve the financial report and the related audit by MMQ.

Next, Susan Trussler discussed Charter Choices, a private firm that currently provides business services to 41 charter schools in Pennsylvania. Due to Brent Pennington's resignation as an HGMICS employee, HGMICS no longer has staffing to conduct its business operations in-house. The HGMICS facilities was the site for a November 9th meeting between HGMICS representatives and Ryan Schumm of Charter Choices to determine if the firm had sufficient knowledge and expertise to provide HGMICS with business services. Among other things, Charter Choices helps Pennsylvania charter schools bill school districts, collect monies, track and make disbursements to school vendors and PSERS, create budgets and aggregate financial information. Prior to the 11/9 meeting, Laila Kane called many charter schools serviced by Charter Choices, all of which provided very positive reviews of the performance of Charter Choices. HGMICS representatives asked Mr. Schumm about the services that his firm does and does not provide. Dr. Trussler asked for a motion to approve a contract, effective immediately, between HGMICS and Charter Choices at the rate of \$5,750 per month. The contract would start immediately (November, 2016) and end on June 30, 2017. Charter Choices would perform all business services for HGMICS, except the school's payroll. Lou Nivert made a motion, and Laila Kane seconded, to approve the proposed contract between HGMICS and Charter Choices. All directors voted unanimously to approve the motion.

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

1. **Comprehensive Plan:** The school's Comprehensive Plan has kept the same goals as it had on its initial plan but has expanded and changed its measurable goals and the

implementation steps to achieve those goals. The Comprehensive Plan has been posted on the school's website for public review and will be resubmitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Education on November 30th.

2. Winter/ Holiday Celebration– on Saturday December 10th, the Parent Forum will host a holiday celebration. It will include time with Santa Claus, crafts, music and light refreshments from 11am-2pm.

Neither of the above matters required a board vote.

Dr. Trussler had one board item to discuss: Charter renewal. As approved by the Board last month, HGMICS representatives had a very productive Skype conference call with Alex Schuh of School Frontiers on November 2nd. to discuss the list of items that schools should typically prepare for Charter renewal that Mr. Schuh had provided. HGMICS representatives are currently working on the list and already have collected some of the suggested items as part of this effort. Dr. Trussler requested each Board member send her a one paragraph Bio and updated contact information by November 30, 2016 as part of the Board's contribution to this effort.

Regarding the HGMICS facilities, the Board discussed three topics, two of which required a board vote.

Triguard estimate: As the October 2016 HGMICS board minutes indicate, the HGMICS school facilities include an outbuilding that has a fire alarm that is not connected to the main building's fire alarm system. Triguard provided HGMICS with an estimate to connect the two fire alarm systems. For a cost of \$2,167.75, Triguard can connect the two systems, such that the Scranton fire department would be notified in the event of a fire in either building. Fran Langan made a motion, seconded by Clarence Lamanna, to accept Triguard's estimate and proposal to connect the outbuilding to the main fire alarm system. All directors voted unanimously to approve the proposed contract. The Board noted that before the outbuilding can again be used by HGMICS students, the maintenance equipment currently stored in one section would need to be removed from the outbuilding.

Duct cleaning estimate: During the last month, the HGMICS facilities experienced two false fire alarms. The Scranton fire department responded in both cases. The false alarms were caused by dust affecting a fire alarm sensor in the air duct system in the Early Childhood Center.

The HGMICS administration obtained two estimates to have the Early Childhood Center's duct system cleaned. One estimate was for \$1,085 and the other was for \$4,800. The large difference in the estimate amounts caused the HGMICS personnel to question whether the bids covered the same services. As a result, the school is soliciting a third bid. An experienced HVAC professional will help HGMICS review the estimates. Fran Langan made a motion, seconded by Clarence Lamanna, to authorize the school administration to select and engage a firm to conduct the duct cleaning, following evaluation of the three estimates by an experienced HVAC technician. All directors present voted unanimously to approve the motion.

The third facilities item was raised by Lou Nivert who suggested the school engage the company that evaluated the condition of the building's roof to write detailed specifications and scope of work as well as act as supervisor/inspector for repair work to the roof. Given that the proposal was in excess of \$3,000, not including the actual cost of repairs, the Board requested that we get a broad sense of the potential cost of the actual repair before moving ahead on this suggestion.

On personnel issues, Maria Rozaieski reported that the newly hired School Nurse is working out well.

The Board also discussed the recent resignation of Maria Deibert, who assisted HGMICS with its business operations on a part-time basis. Laila Kane made a motion, which was seconded by Susan Trussler, to accept Ms. Deibert's resignation. All directors voted unanimously to accept the resignation.

Under New Business, the HGMICS board discussed two items. December 12th will be Grandparents Day, when grandparents of current students will be hosted and honored at the school. Second, one family has donated an inflatable planetarium for a one-day event. The planetarium can hold up to 90 students at one time in the school's gymnasium. When the Parent Forum learned of the generous gift, they also pitched in to donate items for the event. The HGMICS board and administrators thank all the parents for their generous contributions.

At 8:15pm, no other items of business were raised. Susan Trussler adjourned the meeting. The next HGMICS Public Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday December 20th at 7:00 pm.