

Howard Gardner MI Charter School Public Board Meeting

Tuesday, February 19, 2019

The Howard Gardner MI Charter School (HGMICS) held a Public Board of Trustees meeting on Tuesday, February 19, 2019. The HGMICS facility, located at 1615 East Elm Street, Scranton, PA was the location for the public meeting. Dr. Susan Trussler called the meeting to order at 7:08 PM and then subsequently presided over the meeting. Dr. Trussler led those assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance and then took roll call for the board members and administrators.

The following Trustees attended: Dr. Susan Trussler, Dr. John Ruddy, Laila Kane, Stephanie Westington, Dr. Amy Kenton, Dr. Clarence Lamanna, Dr. Fran Langan, and John Ezbiansky. Absent: Louis Nivert.

Also in attendance: Dr. Marie George, CEO; Maria Rozaieski, Principal; Chuck Wallinger, Business Manager; Janet Kania, School Secretary; and Kimberly Kost Scanlon, Esq., School Counsel.

Susan Trussler announced that at this time any visitor may comment or ask questions pertaining to items listed on the February agenda. At this time, the visitors in attendance had no comments or questions regarding the agenda.

I. Minutes

Susan Trussler presented the January 15, 2019 Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes and asked if there were any corrections or additions. The **MOTION** to approve the January 15, 2019 Board meeting minutes, as submitted, was made by Laila Kane and seconded by Clarence Lamanna. All Trustees present voted in favor of approving the minutes as submitted, with 1 Trustee absent.

II. President's Report

Susan Trussler

Susan Trussler announced that notification was received on Friday, February 15th that the Mandarin Chinese Teacher Grant had been approved by the Taiwanese government. The interview process will be conducted in March and April via Skype to select a qualified teacher for the 2019-2020 school year.

Susan Trussler introduced David Hemmler and Laura Gillette-Mills, representatives of the Hemmler + Camayd architectural firm, whose proposal was selected to develop a Master Plan for the school. Laura Gillette-Mills began the presentation by informing everyone that the architectural group has been in business over 41 years, with substantial experience in the education sector. A slide presentation outlined the steps to create a Master Plan and the timeline over the next few months. David Hemmler added that collaboration with all groups is essential for a productive process. Initially site observations and review of documents will occur, followed by a series of engineering studies. Throughout the process, communication with all stakeholders will take place. Several possible scenarios will be identified by the end of May with a final recommended Master Plan in June 2019 that includes phasing to accomplish short-term and long-term facility and site options. Updates will be presented at future Board meetings as the process develops. Hemmler + Camayd will be presenting the process of collaboration to the faculty and staff in the near future and will be conducting focus groups with faculty, staff, parents and students.

III. Finance Committee Report

Stephanie Westington & Chuck Wallinger

Stephanie Westington reported that the Finance Committee met prior to the Monthly Board meeting. The committee went over the External Audit Service proposals to provide annual external audits. There were 5 auditing firms who submitted proposals for consideration and two finalists were chosen. Chuck Wallinger and Marie George will begin conducting reference checks. The Finance Committee will make their recommendations to the Board of Trustees at the March 2019 meeting.

1. Financial Report

Chuck Wallinger reported that revenues for January, 2019 are \$19,576.59 above budget. Tuition revenue was above budget by \$12,816.17; this was based on increased school district per pupil rates. The federal School Improvement Grant (SIG), that was not included in the budget, issued its first payment of \$6,472.08. January, 2019 expenses were \$3,512.46 above budget due to IT/Computer costs, which will be offset with PA Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) funds. The fiscal Year-to-Date Revenues are above budget while Expenses are below budget. As a result there is an expectation of surpassing the Net Operating Revenue of \$137,232 for the 2018-2019 Fiscal Year due to no increase in health insurance costs and the Federal School Improvement Grant. A **MOTION** to approve the Financial Report, as presented, was made by John Ruddy and seconded by Amy Kenton. With no further discussion, all Trustees present voted in favor of approving the financial report, with 1 Trustee absent.

2. Revised Procurement Policy

Stephanie Westington & Chuck Wallinger

Chuck Wallinger informed the group that the Procurement Policy needed to be revised due to a change in federal, state and local procurement threshold Uniform Grant Guidelines. A **MOTION** to approve the revised Procurement Policy that reinforces compliance with recent Uniform Grant Guidance (UGG) requirements was made by Clarence Lamanna and seconded by John Ezbiensky. With no further discussion, all Trustees present voted in favor of the revised Procurement Policy, with 1 Trustee absent.

IV. School Matters

1. CEO Report

Marie George

Marie reported that Debra Georgetti, MD (pediatric specialty) has agreed to serve on a retainer basis to support the school's Student Health Services. Dr. Georgetti will be available for monthly consultations, needed prescriptions, student physical exams, and to assist in annually reviewing the School's student health policies. We are excited to have Dr. Georgetti join our student health services team. She will be visiting the school in the near future to receive an orientation to the Health Services Department that is run by Amy Ryan, BSN, CSN, school nurse.

Marie acknowledged the presentation from Hemmler + Camayd that took place at the beginning of the meeting. Marie stated that further information would follow as the subsequent planning process continues.

Marie informed the group that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Scranton

Lackawanna Human Development Agency- Early Learning Program will be established for transition services to be provided for any Head Start Student enrolled in our Kindergarten program. This is a new requirement for school's receiving federal funds through Title IA. A meeting with Meghan Degilio, Head Start Education Manager, will be held on March 21st to discuss the details of the MOU. Recent affiliation agreements were also finalized with the University of Scranton and Marywood University to engage their students in volunteer and student teaching opportunities at our school.

Marie announced that a successful Procurement Audit Report was achieved with our National School Lunch Program. Chuck Wallinger provided all required documentation of purchases for our lunch program. The final report recommended that we pursue local commodity purchasing and to diversify vendors, on a regular basis. We have since expanded our purchasing to include Sysco products, which is providing substantial savings and are exploring commodity networks that we might utilize along with diversified vendors.

On October 12th a Safety and Security Grant was submitted to the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD). In November, all 400 + applicants were asked to respond to a comprehensive Safety Survey. In January, the results of that survey were received with data summarized for all respondents and specific results for Howard Gardner. We will re-submit our grant application by the February deadline with an increased emphasis in developing a comprehensive Threat Assessment Plan for the school.

Marie reported the school was notified by the Pennsylvania Department of Federal Program (Titles IA, II, IVA) that Howard Gardner will again be scheduled for an annual monitor that includes a site visit on April 17th. By the end of March, the online report that guides the visit and all compliance requirements will be completed by the School and returned to our reviewer, Ann Way. Jeri McNulty, Maria Rozaieski, Chuck Wallinger and Marie have begun assembling all evidentiary documents in order to complete the online report in a thorough and timely manner. In addition to the Program Review just described, a fiscal review will also be conducted, our first such review that occurs every 6 years.

Marie stated an important biennial report for Civil Rights Data Collection is due on April 22, 2019. Renee Dougherty, Maria Rozaieski, Chuck Wallinger and Marie George will be working on assembling all information required but currently we're just trying to figure out what is being asked of us.

2. Principal Report

Maria Rozaieski

Maria Rozaieski, Principal, reported members of the faculty had participated in, or are currently participating in, a variety of professional development opportunities. Topics included Wilson's Foundations for Kindergarten and First grades, Text-Dependent Analysis, Stock Market Challenge Training, Pennsylvania Conference for Kindergarten Teachers, Special Education topics (IEP's and FAPE) and, "Getting Students to Tune In and Turn It Up!".

Maria reported that the Howard Gardner Multiple Intelligence Charter School Tutoring Program began on Monday, February 4th and will run through March 29th. This is a free service provided to HGMICS students and made possible through the Pennsylvania Ready to Learn Grant. The size of each tutoring group ranges from 1 to 3 students, grouped by grade level and subject area. Thirteen members of the HGMICS faculty and two outside tutors provide one hour of tutoring in Math or English Language Arts either before school or after school. There are currently 45 students being tutored.

A ten member Professional Development/Curriculum Committee has convened and will now meet on a regular basis. At this time, the committee is defining its purpose regarding faculty needs, school-wide instructional concerns and professional development opportunities to meet those needs and concerns.

Maria reported that the February School-wide Positive Behavior Reward was a Valentine's Day Dance. Each class level was treated to a 30 minute dance session with DJ and parent, Ryan Schofield. Festive attire, decorations, and photos made it a special day.

In addition, Dr. Amhed Gomaa led a group of HGMICS students to the Mathcounts competition on February 2nd. Dr. Gomaa and Upper Class teacher, Amanda Conti, worked with a group of students to prepare them for the competition. We did not come home with a trophy or move on to the next level of competition but this group will be highly instrumental in the school's participation in this event going forward. All students that participated thought it was a worthwhile and fun-filled event.

Other after-school activities include a basketball clinic and a cross country team. The school calendar will be modified slightly due to the number of weather-related closings. March 15th will now be a school day for students with an 11:30 AM dismissal; teacher in-service will be held that afternoon. Also, Second trimester report cards will be distributed on March 15th instead of March 8th.

V. New Business

At this time, Susan Trussler recognized the contributions of school's Business Manager who was hired in April 2018. Susan made a **MOTION** coming from the Personnel Committee, and seconded by Laila Kane, for a 2.5% increase in salary for the Business Manager retroactive to January 1, 2019. With no further discussion, all Trustees present voted in favor of the motion, with 1 Trustee absent.

Second Public Hearing of Visitors for any school-related topics:

At this time there were no visitors wishing to address any school-related topics.

At 8:02 PM, no further items of business were raised. A **MOTION** to adjourn was made by Amy Kenton and accepted by all Board of Trustees present, with 1 Trustee absent.

The next HGMICS Public Board meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, March 19, 2019 at 7:00 PM.**