

**Howard Gardner MI Charter School  
Public Board Meeting  
June 19, 2018**

The Howard Gardner MI Charter School (HGMICS) held a Public Board of Directors Meeting on Tuesday, June 19, 2018. Dr. Susan Trussler called the public meeting to order at 7:02 pm and 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: Mr. John Ezbiansky, Dr. Amy Kenton, Dr. Frances Langan, Mr. Louis Nivert, Dr. Susan Trussler, Dr. John A. Ruddy, Ms. Laila Kane and Ms. Stephanie Westington. Also in attendance were Dr. Marie George, CEO, Ms. Maria Rozaieski, Principal, Ms. Renee Dougherty, HR, Mr. Charles Wallinger, Business Manager and Ms. Kim Scanlon, Solicitor.

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

**Directors (voting)**

Dr. Susan Trussler, President	X	Dr. Frances Langan, Vice President	X
Dr. John Ruddy, Secretary	X	Mr. John Ezbiansky (via skype)	X
Ms. Laila Kane	X	Dr. Amy Kenton (via skype)	X
Dr. Clarence Lamanna	Absent	Mr. Lou Nivert	X
Ms. Stephanie Westington	X		

**Administration and External Counsel (non-voting)**

Dr. Marie George, CEO	X	Maria Rozaieski, Principal	X
Atty. Kimberly Kost Scanlon, Esq.	X	Renee Dougherty, HR Manager	X
Charles (Chuck) Wallinger	X		

**Public Guests and their respective school districts (non-voting)**

Arielle and Joseph May, Dunmore, SD; and Mina Ardestani, Scranton SD.

**Approval of May Minutes:**

The motion was made by Lou Nivert and seconded by Fran Langan to approve May 15, 2018 meeting minutes as presented. VOTE: **8 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain, 1 Absent.** Thus, the May 2018 meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

**President's Report:** Susan Trussler had two items for presentation:

1. HGMICS has a fully signed and executed charter from the Scranton school district. This is great news that will allow HGMICS to operate for an additional 5 year period (from the end of previous charter period).
2. HGMICS proposes that minimum teacher salaries for the coming year will be based on a step chart reflecting 80 percent of the average of Scranton and Abington Heights targets. This is more than what was approved in the initial 2018-2019 budget. This matter will be discussed in more detail later in the session. The proposal is that all teachers will receive a raise equal to the greater of 2.5% of their previous base salary, or the amount needed to bring them to the appropriate minimum on the 80 percent step chart.

Neither of the items in the President's report required a HGMICS Board vote.

Ms. Mina Ardestani asked how the 80 % target was established and on what the salary steps are based. Susan Trussler explained that 2 years ago, the HGMICS board considered the teacher salaries of both the Scranton and Abington Heights School districts – the two HGMICS chartering districts. At the time, HGMICS teachers salaries were at about 60% of the average of Scranton and Abington Heights teacher salaries for given qualifications and experience. The HGMICS board wanted to improve our teacher salaries commensurate with those of the chartering districts, but realized that financially it could not be accomplished in one or even in two or three years. The 80 percent goal represents 80% of the average of the Scranton and Abington Heights teacher salaries for given qualifications and experience. Our step chart, a hybrid of the two districts' versions, has four columns based on qualification: BA, BA+24 credits, MA (or BA +36 credits), MA + 15 credits. The steps are minimum salaries based on years of service to the school.

**Finance** - the board considered three financial items:

1. Charles Wallinger presented the financial report as prepared by Charter Choices through the end of May. The details are as follows: revenues are 0.4% behind budget due to the timing of grant funding. Expenditures are in line with budget, but salaries are below budget . The motion was made by John Ruddy and seconded by Laila Kane to approve

the financial reports through May 31, 2018. VOTE: **8 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain, 1 Absent.** Thus, the financial report was approved unanimously.

2. Charles Wallinger informed that two insurance firms made proposals to provide casualty, liability and other insurance coverages to HGMICS and its representatives. The finance committee recommendation was to select the firm of Joyce, Jackman and Bell. Marie George explained that the new insurance policy provides the school a savings of over \$10,000 per year in premiums and includes insurance coverages that our previous policy did not (cyber and fiduciary). VOTE: **7 Yes, 0 No, 1 Abstain, 1 Absent.** Thus, the decision to accept the proposal from Joyce, Jackman and Bell was approved.
3. The HGMICS board considered revising the 2018-2019 budget. The revised budget includes an additional \$51,000 (approximate) projected cost for teacher salaries than the initial budget approved at the May 2018 HGMICS meeting. Fran Langan made a motion to approve the revised fiscal year 2018-2019 budget based on the higher teacher salary increase of 2.5 % or 80% of the salary step program. Lou Nivert seconded the motion. VOTE: **8 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain, 1 Absent.** Thus, the revised 2018—2019 budget was approved unanimously.

**Personnel:** the board considered appointments to four positions.

Stephanie Westington made a motion that was seconded by Fran Langan to appoint Patty Biko to the 11 month full-time Operations Coordinator position at a salary of \$35,000 and estimated benefits at 35% (\$12,250) for an estimated total of \$47,250. VOTE: **8 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain, 1 Absent.** Thus, the HGMICS board unanimously approved the appointment of Patty Biko.

Fran Langan made a motion, which Lou Nivert seconded to appoint Karen Yevitz to a full-time 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher position for the 2018-2019 school year at a salary of \$35,000 and estimated benefits at 35% (\$12,250) for an estimated total of \$47,250. VOTE: **8 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain, 1 Absent.** Thus, the HGMICS board unanimously approved the hiring of Karen Yevitz.

Laila Kane made a motion, which Stephanie Westington seconded to appoint Barbara Ainey to a full-time 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher position for the 2018-2019 school year at a salary of \$35,000 and estimated benefits at 35% (\$12,250) for an estimated total of \$47,250. VOTE: **8 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain, 1 Absent.** Thus, the HGMICS board unanimously approved the hiring of Barbara Ainey.

John Ezbiansky made a motion, which Amy Kenton seconded to appoint Hazel Hess M.S. to a full-time special education teacher position for the 2018-2019 school year at a salary of \$36,400 and estimated benefits at 35% (\$12,740) for an estimated total of \$49,140. VOTE: **8 Yes 0 No, 0 Abstain, 1 Absent.** Thus, the HGMICS board unanimously approved the hiring of Hazel Hess.

**School Matters-** the HGMICS board considered 3 matters:

1. The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) requires that HGMICS approve an annual improvement plan. Stephanie Westington made a motion, which John Ruddy seconded to approve the School Improvement Plan that must be submitted to PDE by June 30, 2018. VOTE: **8 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain, 1 Absent.** Thus, the HGMICS board unanimously approved the Improvement plan.
2. HGMICS has had a Title I policy in place since the inception of the school's grant. Lou Nivert made a motion, which Fran Langan seconded, to approve the HGMICS's Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy. VOTE: **8 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain, 1 Absent.** Thus, the HGMICS board unanimously approved the Title I parent and Family Engagement Policy.
3. Each year, HGMICS must formally approve the school's contract with the Northeastern Intermediate Unit (NEIU). Laila Kane made a motion, which John Ezbiansky seconded, to contract with the NEIU for provision of itinerant special education services for the 2018-2019 school year. VOTE: **8 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain, 1 Absent.** Thus, the HGMICS board unanimously approved the contract with the NEIU.

**CEO's Report** – Dr. Marie George highlighted the following items in her Board report:

- Personnel hiring for next school year is underway in light of needs previously discussed with the board and its personnel committee. The school is recruiting aides for open positions. The school is also recruiting an IT specialist, who will report to Chuck Wallinger. .
- The School Improvement Plan is completed and has been posted on the website since late May. It mirrors the school's comprehensive plan, which includes an update (progress report) on items identified last summer as needing the school's attention.
- Applications for federal grants are due in June and July. For example, a safe schools grant is due on 7/14.
- The annual HGMICS golf tournament was held at Pine Hills Country Club on May 26<sup>th</sup>. It was a resounding success. The net revenue from the Tournament was \$15,450, which will enable the School to purchase upgrades to its phone and camera surveillance equipment.
- Several summer projects are underway including the installation of the fence for the playground area, the wiring for the intercommunication system and scheduled summer classroom cleaning.

**Principal Report:** Maria Rozaieski presented the following items in her Board report:

- The last few weeks of the school year included field trips for each and every grade. The field trips included Gettysburg, the museum of Natural History (in NYC) Marley's Mission and Discovery Center.
- The Graduation ceremony for our 8th grade graduating seniors was held at the Country Club of Scranton on the evening of June 7th. This year HGMICS had 19 graduating students and a wide range of selected high schools being attended.
- Our summer camps program, SCAMPS, is currently running six half-day and one full-day session. New this summer are four half-day sessions of a camp for Title I students.
- Teacher classroom observations were completed by the end of May. Maria will be meeting with teachers throughout the summer to finalize documentation of the observations.

### **New Business**

Amy Kenton wanted to emphasize how Susan Trussler has been on a mission to support teacher salaries and equity. She has made it a strategic initiative to increase HGMIC teacher salaries.

Dr. Kenton stated how the efforts have been made to preserve the school's feeling of community and continuity. Fran Langan supported the notion by stating that the board is comprised of many current and prior educators who support HGMICS teacher compensation and rewards.

Laila Kane made a motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

The next HGMICS Public Board meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, July 17, 2018 at 7 PM.**