

**Howard Gardner MI Charter School
Public Board Meeting
March 20, 2018**

The Howard Gardner MI Charter School (HGMICS) held a Public Board of Directors Meeting on Tuesday, March 20, 2018. Dr. Susan Trussler called the public meeting to order at 7:09 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. Clarence Lamanna, Dr. Frances Langan, Mr. Louis Nivert, Dr. Susan Trussler, Ms. Stephanie Westington. Also in attendance were Dr. Marie George, CEO, Ms. Maria Rozaieski, Principal, Ms Renee Dougherty, HR and 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	Absent	Mr. John Ezbiansky	X
Ms. Laila Kane	Absent	Dr. Amy Kenton	X
Dr. Clarence Lamanna	X	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

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

Karen McKeon, Scranton; Joy Nelson, Riverside; Mina Ardestani, Scranton

Clarence Lamanna moved to approve the minutes of the February meeting and the motion was seconded by Stephanie Westington. The HGMICS board unanimously approved the February 20, 2018 meeting minutes.

Finance Committee:

Ms. Westington reviewed the financial report submitted by Charter Choices for the period ending February 28, 2018. Net income 7/1 to 2/28 was \$207,719 and this is in line with budget. No issues were noted. Question from a visitor: Where does the revenue stream come from? Answer: Tuition from school districts and federal revenue from various programs. Fran Langan moved to approve the financial report and John Ezbiansky seconded the motion. The HGMICS Board unanimously approved the February financial report as presented.

The Parent and Family Engagement Policy:

This policy was discussed as a policy formulated to provide equitable treatment for all families and to actively engage families in school programming. The policy will be placed on the School drive, posted to the website once redesigned and incorporated into the next Parent Handbook. A motion was made by Lou Nivert, and seconded by Fran Langan, to approve the Policy. The HGMICS Board unanimously approved the Parent and Family Engagement Policy.

Facilities:

Upgrading Safety and Emergency Systems – HGMICS is examining all emergency and safety systems of the school and the first priority is the examination of the mass announcement system. Proposals were received from Guyette Communications and Triguard Security Systems to upgrade both the current emergency mass communication system and the camera surveillance system. More in-depth evaluation of the proposals still needs to occur and to support the final decision the Board discussed the upgrades, approving the upgrades at a cost not to exceed \$43,000. A motion was made by John Ezbiansky and seconded by Clarence Lamanna to approve these safety and emergency upgrades at a cost not to exceed \$43,000. The HGMICS Board unanimously approved the motion.

Personnel:

Discussion turned to the hiring of Theresa Quinn, M.Ed. as a Teacher for the Title I program and needed classroom substitute effective March 26, 2018, i.e. for the balance of the 2017-2018 school year or 51 days. Based on an annual salary of \$35,000, the prorated salary, plus 18% mandatory benefits, is \$9,650. A motion to hire Theresa Quinn for the teaching

position effective March 26, 2018 was made by Clarence Lamanna and seconded by Lou Nivert. The HGMICS Board unanimously approved the hire.

School Matters:

1. CEO Report: Dr. Marie George, CEO

- Marie George, CEO, reported 94 responses from the web survey. Good feedback was obtained that will be used to redesign the website.
- The National School Lunch Program application is progressing and it looks favorable that HGMICS free and reduced lunch program will be approved for next year.
- A practice lock down drill was held on 2/23/18, which was the impetus for upgrading the mass notification system as a priority for the school.
- Maria will provide a report on a school incident related to school safety.
- A Parent Safety Advisory Group, sponsored by the Parent Forum, will be formed and its first meeting is scheduled for March 26. The focus of this group is to increase communication among parents and school staff regarding safety related issues/ideas; provide education and information to parents, teachers and staff; assist in fund-raising efforts related to school and student safety; and to be aligned with teachers in discussing and promoting preventative measures e.g. bullying prevention.
- With the aim of being State certified, a School Safety Committee will be convened on April 4, 2018 and thereafter will meet monthly. The School Safety Committee will have a parent representative in addition to staff, faculty and administration. This Committee will propose/review school policies and procedures, investigate incidents/accidents, evaluate threat assessment recommendations, conduct school inspections, and attend/facilitate safety training.
- For the seventh year in a row, there will be a Mandarin Chinese program at the School next year. Ms. Andie Lao, our Chinese teacher will return for a second year in 2018-19. The program is funded by a collaborative partnership among HGMICS, the University of Scranton and a competitive grant from the Taiwan Ministry of Education.

2. Principal Report: Maria Rozaieski, Principal

- Ms. Rozaieski's report primarily focused on a potentially threatening situation that she became aware of, and immediately investigated, on March 5, 2018. She immediately involved the Scranton Police, whose investigation also concluded that there was no threat to the School nor to any individual. As a precaution, as recommended by the Scranton Police, the next morning students in grades 3 through 8 had their backpacks and coats searched upon arrival. Follow-up classroom discussions of the situation also were held.. Email communications were sent to all parents and a special parent meeting was held on March 13. Ms. Rozaieski and Dr. George were commended for their efforts to immediately address the situation and to foster timely and transparent communications with parents.

New Business

A question and answer discussion ensued with visitors to the meeting placing the questions.

Q- 1. When will families find out about lotteries for places in the school for 2018-2019?

Answer: The lottery will take place Friday, March 26, and families will be notified the following week.

Q -2. What will class size be with the renewed Charter?

Answer: Homeroom size is, and will remain, 22. However, in order to serve all students, some subject classes may have more students based on student learning needs,. Homeroom classes are where students spend the majority of their learning time.

Q-3. What enhanced safety elements will be implemented this year?

Answer: The safety enhancements will be upgrades to the emergency notification and camera systems.

Q-4. Will you implement gifted education?

Answer: HGMICS uses differentiated instruction to ensure that ability differences are addressed in a quality manner. There are no plans to implement a designated gifted education program.

Q-5. Will there be an additional 5th grade next year?

Answer: An additional Upper Class will be added that includes both 5th and 6th grades; it is anticipated that only 6th grade will have openings.

A motion to adjourn was proposed by Fran Langan, seconded by Clarence Lamanna, and unanimously approved. The meeting was then adjourned at 7:50 p.m...

The next HGMICS Public Board meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, April 17, 20018 at 7 PM.**