

Howard Gardner MI Charter School Public Board Meeting

Tuesday, March 19, 2019

The Howard Gardner MI Charter School (HGMICS) held a Public Board of Trustees meeting on Tuesday, March 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 7:07 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. Clarence Lamanna, Dr. Fran Langan, and John Ezbiansky. Absent: Dr. Amy Kenton.

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 March agenda. At this time, the visitors in attendance had no comments or questions regarding the agenda.

I. Minutes

Susan Trussler presented the February 19, 2019 Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes and asked if there were any corrections or additions. The **MOTION** to approve the February 19, 2019 Board meeting minutes, as submitted, was made by Laila Kane and seconded by Stephanie Westington. 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 nominations are now being accepted for two positions that will be vacated for the Board of Trustees. Trustees are appointed for a 3 year term and the two vacancies are the result of Dr. Amy Kenton and Mr. Lou Nivert completing their terms. Dr. Amy Kenton has been a valuable asset with her extensive experience in education and Lou Nivert has contributed greatly in the areas of finance and facilities. Susan commended both Amy and Lou for their dedication to the School and to their roles on the Board of Trustees. Nominations should be submitted to Dr. Fran Langan, Nominations Committee Chairperson, no later than April 5, 2019. Open Board of Trustee positions will be posted on the web.

In addition, Susan announced that 3 teacher positions will be posted on the web. One teaching position will be for the "unassigned" classroom teacher. The second position will be for the Primary II classroom teacher and the third position will be the Senior III classroom teacher for the 2019-2020 school year. Anyone interested and who meets the qualifications is encouraged to apply.

The Board of Trustees recently approved and endorsed the job posting for an Assistant Principal for the 2019-2020 school year. The job posting will be advertised and posted on the school website in April. Anyone interested who meets the qualifications is encouraged to apply.

Susan Trussler announced that the grant funding for the Mandarin Teacher was received from the Taiwanese government along with notification that the Director of the Taiwan Ministry of Education and her assistant will be arriving on Tuesday, April 2nd to visit both the University of Scranton and our Howard Gardner MI Charter School.

1. Finance Committee Report

Chuck Wallinger

1. Financial Report

Chuck Wallinger reported that revenues for February, 2019 are \$16,726.43 above budget. Tuition revenue was above budget by \$8,240.19; this was based on increased school district per pupil rates. All school district payments are currently up-to-date. The School Improvement Grant (SIG) federal grant revenue of \$3,236.04 for February 2019 had not been included in the budget. The Food Service revenue surpassed the budget by \$3,374.97 for February 2019. School expenses were reported as \$15,224.63 above budget for February 2019. The budget variance is 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, the projected Net Operating Revenue of \$137,232 for the 2018-2019 Fiscal Year has been surpassed. A **MOTION** to approve the Financial Report, as presented, was made by Stephanie Westington and seconded by John Ezbiansky. With no further discussion, all Trustees present voted in favor of approving the financial report, with 1 Trustee absent.

2. External Auditors

Stephanie Westington

Stephanie Westington informed the group that a solicitation for proposals for an External Auditor to be retained for the next three-year period recently took place. Five proposals were received and reviewed by the Committee. Three finalists were identified, with one proposal standing out. Following reference checks the Committee is recommending the Baker Tilly Firm, whose proposal was competitive, provided a high level of support service, and showed experience with charter schools. A **MOTION** to approve the auditing firm of Baker Tilly to conduct the School's financial audits for the three-year timeframe 2019, 2020, 2021 with annual fees of \$18,550, \$19,150 and \$19,800, respectively was made by Fran Langan and seconded by Lou Nivert. With no further discussion, all Trustees present voted in favor of engaging Baker Tilly as our external auditor, with 1 Trustee absent.

2. School Matters

CEO Report

Marie George

Marie reported the Master Planning process is progressing. Representatives from Hemmler + Camayd were onsite conducting observational studies, examining facility systems, and meeting with stakeholders. A series of focus groups for faculty, staff, parents and the comprehensive plan committee have been scheduled over the next two weeks.

Marie announced that HGMICS has been the beneficiary of funding from the Scranton Educational Improvement Organization (SEIO) to support after school literacy tutoring for our students. The initial SEIO donation of \$7,000 has been augmented by a second contribution of \$11,000. This additional support enables the program to continue through the 2019-2020 school year.

Marie informed the group that the 14th Annual HGMICS Golf Tournament will be held on May 25,

2019 at the Pine Hills Country Club. A *Save the Date* postcard was distributed to all former Tournament golfers, 50/50 raffle tickets were distributed to all parents of current students, and the Schools' website was updated to feature the Golf Tournament and to make available sponsorship and golfer information/forms. Both staff and parents have volunteered to assist with the planning efforts.

Marie announced that re-enrollment for the 2019-2020 school year is completed. A lottery selection will take place on March 28th by Karoline Mehalchick, Esq. Kindergarten transition planning for new students will include vision, hearing and speech screening during the month of May.

The recently approved 2019-2021 HGMICS Strategic Plan is now prominently located on the School website. Kristina Grego, parent, has volunteered to design a brochure that will serve to communicate our future goals to various audiences.

The Scranton School District is going through a financial recovery process, which includes a Financial Recovery Advisory Committee that represents various stakeholders, including charter schools. Marie was pleased to announce that Chuck Wallinger, Business Manager was formally appointed to the Committee at a recent Scranton School Board Meeting and attended its first meeting on March 6th.

Principal Report

Maria Rozaieski

Maria Rozaieski, Principal, reported as part of Black History month in February, Glynis M. Johns, gave a presentation to students in grades 5 through 8. Her primary focus is on archiving local Black history and culture and curating space for emerging and POC (person of color) artists, writers, and scholars of NEPA. She also discussed career planning.

Maria reported that many HGMICS faculty and volunteers participated as guest readers in Kindergarten and Primary rooms to celebrate Read Across America during the week of March 4th-8th. Recent field trips include: Primary I, who went to the Aquarium at Steamtown; all Intermediate classes, who went to Cappa's presentation of Cinderella; the Senior classes who visited the Escape room at the Viewmont Mall for some team building activities.

On March 2nd, seven Senior Class students participated in the local Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science competition at Wilkes University. Students included Emily Kesler, Finnbar Whittaker, Dylan Tost, Maeve Kennedy, and Noah Planey who all received 1st place awards and will move on to the State competition in May. Rose Zamcho and Keira Evans received 2nd place awards.

Maria reported that Barb Ainey recently entered some of the Upper-Class students in the Stock Market Game. This is an online simulation of the stock and bond market. Maria congratulated Barb Ainey and the class for achieving 3rd place among Middle schools and one student who has achieved 12th over-all in the competition.

In addition, Kim Hoskins, coached Senior Class students who participated in the annual Pennsylvania High School and Middle School Computer Fair sponsored by NEIU. All students in 7th and 8th grade competed in a school-wide level of competition by developing a logo that would represent the 2020 PA Middle School Media and Design Competition. Two logo designs from our school were chosen to move on to the Regional competition that was held at Keystone College on March 12th. The local level winners were Noah Planey, who worked independently, and Keira Evans

and Camryn Thomas that worked as a team. Two students achieved 1st place in web page design. The State level of competition will take place on or about May 21st in Harrisburg, PA.

Faculty are involved in the process of examining the school's growth and achievement data in an effort to determine reasonable goals for this year. The group is working to determine possible root cause of the deficits that are being seen in the areas of Math, ELA and Science.

Amy Ryan, School Nurse facilitated a "Go for the Greens" event on March 13th in honor of national nutrition month. Amy encouraged healthy eating habits with a green "tasting table" that included cucumbers, celery, broccoli, green peppers, sugar snap peas and seaweed. The Grandparents, Family and Friends group met on March 14th to organize the books in each classroom library by lexile level. They plan to begin the process this week. More volunteers are encouraged to join.

Second trimester report cards were distributed on Friday, March 15th. Parent observations are scheduled to take place March 19th through the 29th. Faculty participated in a half-day inservice on March 15th which included a brief training on "Managing the Cycle of Emotional Escalation" and how it relates to the Crisis Prevention Intervention Team at the school. A presentation for Title I services called "Spac-Skits" will be demonstrating good vs bad examples will be presented at the upcoming Parent meeting.

3. Presentation – Schoolwide Positive Behavior Intervention Support Arielle May

Arielle May, Kindergarten teacher presented a PowerPoint on Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) to the group. The PBIS Committee consists of Maria Rozaieski, Principal; Marie George, CEO; Jade Volchoff, Guidance; Arielle May, Kindergarten teacher; Chrissi Polizzi, Primary teacher; Suppi Chandragiri, Upper aide; Michael Rescigno, Senior teacher; Brian Kubilus, Physical Ed teacher; Joe Bomba, Spanish teacher. The PBIS Committee is establishing the behavior matrix that will be implemented next school year for positive behavior.

The presentation explained the three tiers of behavior within the matrix. The full implementation will be a two-year process to gather and implement a comprehensive positive behavior program. The PBIS Committee would also like the Video Club to create a video to depict positive behavior utilizing both students and faculty from HGMICS. The committee will be attending its final training session on March 20th at the NEIU.

4. New Business

At this time, there had been no new business items that needed to be addressed.

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 7:55 PM, no further items of business were raised. A **MOTION** to adjourn was made by Lou Nivert and accepted by all Board of Trustees present, with 1 Trustee absent.

The next HGMICS Public Board meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, April 16, 2019 at 7:00 PM.**