

## **Howard Gardner MI Charter School**

### **Public Board Meeting**

Tuesday, August 16, 2022

The Howard Gardner MI Charter School (HGMICS) held a Public Board of Trustees meeting remotely on Tuesday, August 16, 2022. Stephanie Westington, President, called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. and subsequently presided over the meeting. Stephanie led those assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance and took roll call for the board members and non-voting attendees.

The following Trustees attended: Stephanie Westington, Sam Ceccacci, John Ezbiansky, Laila Kane, Michael Barbetti, Laurie Cadden, Dino Galli, Dr. Clarence Lamanna, Aaron Nivert. Absent from the meeting: Catherine Richmond-Cullen.

Also, in attendance: Dr. Marie George, CEO; TreeAnne McEnery, Principal; John Marsico, Business Manager; Joseph Ross, Director Facilities & Security, and Deana Bonacci, Administrative Assistant.

Stephanie Westington reminded the attendees the public hearing is on agenda items only, visitors may comment on items listed on the agenda, and names and school districts of residence will be recorded before remarks are made. With no request for comments from the audience regarding the June agenda, Stephanie proceeded with the meeting.

#### **I. Minutes**

**Stephanie Westington**

Stephanie Westington presented the June 21, 2022, Board of Trustees meeting minutes and asked for approval. A **MOTION** to approve the June 21, 2022 Board meeting minutes, as submitted, was made by Dr. Clarence Lamanna and seconded by Laila Kane. Stephanie asked if there were any comments or corrections on the minutes. Not hearing any, Stephanie called for a vote. All Board of Trustees members present voted in favor of approving the June 21, 2022, minutes as submitted, with one Trustee absent.

#### **II. President's Report**

**Stephanie Westington**

Stephanie Westington welcomed everyone in attendance to the August 2022 Public Board meeting as well as students and faculty back for the start of another school year in the School's new building addition.

Stephanie introduced and welcomed Michael A. Barbetti, a new Trustee, to the Board. With his financial business acumen and strong community presence, the Trustees are both honored and excited to have him join the Board.

Stephanie proceeded by giving an update on the rescheduling of the dedication and ribbon cutting ceremony to Wednesday, September 28<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. An Open House will take place on August 25<sup>th</sup> and the first day of school is on Monday, August 29<sup>th</sup>. Stephanie thanked Joe Ross and Dr. Marie George for their hard work organizing and facilitating during the construction project.

Stephanie thanked Laila Kane and her husband Frank for hosting a send off for Dr. John Ruddy. She thanked Dr. John Ruddy for his years of service on the Board and wished him well in his future.

On behalf of the entire Board of Trustees, Stephanie wished a happy retirement to Shelly Pazzaglia and thanked her for the years of service and dedication to the school and students.

### **III. Finance/Facilities Committee**

**John Ezbiansky**

Stephanie Westington reported the Finance/Facilities Committee met on August 10, 2022.

Stephanie Westington asked John Marsico, Business Manager, to detail the June 2022 Financial Report and the July 2022 Financial Report for approval.

#### **1. June 2022 Financial Report**

**John Marsico**

Revenues for June 2022 of \$341,311 are in line with what was expected for the month. The decrease in revenue for June 2022 as compared to May 2022 is due to the decrease in tuition income because of the close of the school year on June 3<sup>rd</sup>. In addition, we did not receive any Title I dollars in June 2022. As noted in the May 2022 Financial Report, we did receive a large lump sum of Title I dollars in the amount of \$60,976. The amount remaining to be received is \$3,680. Title IV grant dollars were fully disbursed to us as noted in the May 2022 Financial Report; therefore, we did not receive any Title IV dollars in June 2022. Expenses of \$523,898 are \$174,608 higher than May 2022. This increase is primarily due to having to record three payrolls in the month of June because the original May 27<sup>th</sup> payroll was inadvertently deleted. This was discovered during the monthly Cash Reconciliation performed for June. You will notice that the May 2022 Total Expenses on this month's Monthly and Year-to-Date Budget Detail differs from the May 2022 report by \$122,590. The May 27<sup>th</sup> payroll was \$113,421. The Net Operating Loss for June 2022 is \$182,587. The year-to-date Net Operating Income is \$29,912.

The school had \$1,023,944 in cash at the end of June 2022. This is approximately \$357,572 higher than the balance at the end of May 2022. This is primarily because our tuition redirection payment from the State for May 2022 was received on June 1, 2022. The amount received on June 1, 2022, was \$399,274.64. There was one draw made on the construction loan in June 2022. The total was \$241,260 and was for Pay Application #14 to Mar-Paul, Inc. in the amount of \$227,924 and Pay Application #10

to Scranton Electric for HVAC in the amount of \$13,336. Total construction funds drawn to date are \$3,106,695.

The school was awarded \$134,343 in Title I funding. \$0 was received in June with a total of \$130,663 received year-to-date. The amount remaining to be received is \$3,680. The school was awarded \$14,996 of Title II funding. \$1,073 was received in June with a total of \$11,776 received year-to-date. The amount remaining to be received is \$3,220. The school was awarded \$10,000 of Title IV funding. \$0 was received in June with a total of \$10,000 received year-to-date. Title IV funding is now complete. The school was awarded \$413,069 in ESSER II funding. \$9,687 was received in June with a total of \$115,377 received year-to-date. The school was awarded \$64,938 in ESSER III Set-Aside funding. \$1,181 was received in June with a total of \$7,085 received year-to-date. The ESSER III award of \$835,519 for the school was approved in March 2022. \$15,191 was received in June with a total of \$60,765 received year-to-date.

At this time, Stephanie Westington entertained a **MOTION** to approve the Financial Report through June 30, 2022, as reported and submitted. The motion was made by Susan Hennemuth and seconded by Aaron Nivert. Stephanie called for any questions or comments, not hearing any, all Trustees present voted in favor of accepting the June 2022 Financial Report as presented, with one Trustee absent.

## **2. HGMICS July 2022 Financial Report**

**John Marsico**

Revenues for July 2022 of \$378,145 are in line with what was expected for the month. Expenses of \$500,712 are \$23,186 lower than June 2022. Despite the typical increased spending in the month of July for curriculum materials, July 2022 expenses are down as compared to June 2022 due to the recording of three payrolls in the month of June because the original May 27<sup>th</sup> payroll was inadvertently deleted, as previously reported. The Net Operating Loss for July 2022 and year-to-date is \$122,567. This is as expected for the month of July 2022.

The school had \$894,142 in cash at the end of July 2022. This is approximately \$129,802 lower than the balance at the end of June 2022. This is primarily because the tuition redirection payment from the State for May 2022 was received on June 1, 2022, thus increasing the cash in June 2022 as compared to July 2022. As previously reported, the amount received on that date, was \$399,275. In addition, the loan draw noted below was not paid to the contractors until 8/1/2022. This cash was offset by the amount spent on curriculum materials in July 2022. There was one draw made on the construction loan in July 2022. The total was \$373,225 and was for Pay Application #15 to Mar-Paul, Inc. in the amount of \$160,014, Pay Application #11 to Scranton Electric for HVAC in the amount of \$35,625, Pay Application #11 to Scranton Electric for Plumbing in the amount of \$5,807, and Pay Application #4 to Joyce Electric, Inc. in the amount of \$171,779. As mentioned above, the contractors were not paid until 8/1/2022. Total construction funds drawn to date are \$3,479,920.

The school was awarded \$134,343 in Title I funding for FY 2021-2022. \$0 was received in July with a total of \$130,663 received year-to-date. The amount remaining to be received is \$3,680. The school was awarded \$14,996 of Title II funding for FY2021-2022. \$1,073 was received in July with a total of \$12,850 received year-to-date. The amount remaining to be received is \$2,146. The school was awarded \$132,523 in Title I funding for FY 2022-2023. \$0 was received in July. The amount remaining to be received is \$132,523. The school was awarded \$13,914 of Title II funding for FY2022-2023. \$0 was received in July. The amount remaining to be received is \$13,914. The school was awarded \$10,042 of Title IV funding for FY2022-2023. \$0 was received in July. The amount remaining to be received is \$10,042. The school was awarded \$413,069 in ESSER II funding. \$9,686 was received in July with a total of \$125,063 received year-to-date. The school was awarded \$64,938 in ESSER III Set-Aside funding. \$1,181 was received in July with a total of \$8,265 received year-to-date. The ESSER III award of \$835,519 for the school was approved in March 2022. \$15,191 was received in July with a total of \$75,956 received year-to-date.

At this time, Stephanie Westington entertained a **MOTION** to approve the Financial Report through July 31, 2022, as reported and submitted. The motion was made by Laila Kane and seconded by Aaron Nivert. Stephanie called for any questions or comments, not hearing any, all Trustees present voted in favor of accepting the July 2022 Financial Report as presented, with one Trustee absent.

#### **IV. Personnel Committee**

**Sam Ceccacci**

Sam Ceccacci reported the Personnel Committee met on July 12<sup>th</sup> and August 2<sup>nd</sup> where several topics were discussed including recent resignations, retirements, and new hires.

Sam Ceccacci called for A **MOTION** to approve the Personnel Report as presented. The motion was made by Dino Galli and seconded by Laile Kane. All Trustees present voted in favor of accepting the Personnel Report, with one Trustee absent.

#### **V. Development Committee**

**Susan Hennemuth**

Susan Hennemuth reported the Development Committee met in the beginning of August 3rd and spoke about the golf tournament, and online registrations would become possible on the website. Susan congratulated Julie Imel and Dr. Marie George for a 10,000 Grant from the SACF for a new steamer table. Discussed the playgrounds and what foundations to go to, perhaps Hawk Foundation and possibly Margaret Briggs.

#### **VI. School Matters**

##### **1. Special Education Settlement Agreement**

**Dr. Marie George**

At this time, Marie entertained a **MOTION** to approve the Special Education Settlement

Agreement as presented. The motion was made by Dr. Clarence Lamanna and seconded by Sam Ceccacci. All Trustees present voted in favor of approving the Special Education Settlement Agreement with one Trustee absent.

## **2. Principal Report**

**TreeAnne McEnery**

The School had several highly qualified applicants for the lead teacher positions the school announced in May/June. We look forward to welcoming those that demonstrated an advanced understanding of the content knowledge as well as the skills to work with middle school students. The addition of these new instructional staff will greatly support our continued progress on meeting the mission of HGMICS. We will have five instructional staff participating in the 2022-2023 Educator Induction Program.

The Math Department participated in up to three OGAP professional development trainings this summer, the Additive, Multiplicative, and Proportional Reasoning Frameworks thus completing the four-part training program. Coaching from OGAP expert, Fran Huntoon, is scheduled from October through April 2023.

The School is implementing several data management systems that will support continuous progress monitoring of student academic achievement and growth. Amplify is an online assessment program that will replace the paper/pencil administration of the national reading benchmark tool DIBELS/Acadience. Amplify will enable Title I Specialists to reports student results and allow teachers to access those reports immediately. The program will provide the Specialists and teachers with targeted intervention and enrichment resources. The program also has resources for family engagement should they wish to support student reading progress at home.

LinkIt! will transform the data culture at HGMICS. LinkIt! is an assessment management, data analytics, and intervention support program that will enhance the School's fidelity to our MTSS framework. The program creates holistic student progress reports that include all benchmark assessments, attendance, classroom grades, etc.

In addition to students-centered IT platforms, to support the administrative function regarding all thing's personnel, we're implementing Comply. Comply will allow the School to track and manage clearances/background checks, state mandated trainings, Act 48/Professional Development, paraprofessional hours, school specific items, field trip and PD requests, and annual drills.

The annual pre-service is scheduled from August 15-August 26. The week kicks-off with a new employee orientation where almost ten new employees will be welcomed into the school! The two-week schedule provides ample time for teachers to set up their classrooms as well as participate in sessions that support the development of the upcoming strategic plan, review and professional development of school policies such as special education law and anti-bullying, de- escalation training for all staff, and three sessions related to the areas of student development contained with our MTSS framework.

The significant changes to the Instructional Staff and Family/Student Handbooks predominately

consists of removing Policy-related content. All School Policies are posted on the HGMICS Website for public view. This content is not necessary in a process/procedural information resource.

A schoolwide class schedule was designed to address the individual needs of each Pod. The Kindergarten and Primary Pod schedule provides an hour and a half for both mathematics and literacy instruction, while daily intervention and enrichment classes are provided. The Upper and Senior Pod schedule includes hour-long periods for all core subjects. In addition to the hour-long classes, the senior schedule now has a designated period for Algebra I. The senior schedule also introduces a more focused time for language instruction. All schedules have a six-day rotation for music, physical education, and art.

Curriculum Night is scheduled for Wednesday, September 7th from 5:30-7:30 PM. The evening is designed this year to accommodate families that have multiple children. Kindergarten will present their curriculum at their annual meet the teacher scheduled the same evening as the Ice Cream Social. The Primary through Senior Pod is scheduled on September 7 at half-hour intervals. Specials, Parent Forum, Student Services will all be present on the Link to offer information on their program or services.

### **3. CEO Report**

**Dr. Marie George**

The Howard Gardner Multiple Intelligence Charter School begins its eleventh year since chartered in 2012. Since 2012, we have not only experienced quantitative growth among our student and staff populations (175 students to 320 students and 28 to 53 staff) but importantly we experienced qualitative growth as reflected in the priorities set forth in the School's *Strategic Plan 2018-2022 – Enhance Engage Explore*. We now look forward to charting the future for the next five more years, building on those quantitative and qualitative improvements achieved. The Strategic Planning Retreat for the Board and Administration will be held Monday, October 10<sup>th</sup> (location to be announced). Following the planning process previously used, we will establish our vision and strategies for the future in a collaborative, iterative manner engaging multiple stakeholders.

All reporting requirements were completed in a timely manner to the PA Department of Education (PDE) including FY22-23 Budget, the Annual Report for 21-22, Safe Schools Reports (n=3), Child Accounting for 21-22, Annual Reconciliation Reports with School Districts, Annual Agreement with the Scranton Police Department and numerous end- of- the- year PIMS (Pennsylvania Information Management System) reports required for all public school in Pennsylvania.

We are very grateful for the financial support received from local foundations and the continuation of the federal Title grants for the 2022-2023 School year. The School's grant submission to the Scranton Area Foundation to support the purchase of a Steamer for National School Lunch Food Service Program was approved for the full amount requested (\$10,000). For the fourth year in a row the Scranton Educational Improvement Organization (SEIO) provided financial support for 2022-23 literacy programming in the amount of \$7000. On behalf of FNCB, the School was awarded \$9500 for 21-22 by the Commonwealth Charitable Foundation and was recently notified



that an EITC award of \$10,000. will once again support STEAM innovative programming at the School for 2022-23. In addition to the Covid-related federal monies received, The Consolidated Application for the three federal Title grants – Title IA, IIA and IV – was submitted by June 30<sup>th</sup> and supports the Schoolwide Title I teachers and program, staff professional development (Title IIA) and the school band program (well- rounded program Title IV). The US Department of Education once again awarded the School a Small Rural School Achievement grant of \$12,000 for 22-23 with a two-year window to liquidate funds; this grant supports enrichment and environmental educational programming.

The American Relief Program – Elementary/Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER III and 7% Set-Aside) submitted in fall 2021, approved in March 2022, has increased its monthly payments to the School. All public schools have been expensing these monies since fall 2021, and for HGMICS these costs were absorbed in the 21-22 operational budget. It was recently announced that budget revisions can be submitted to reflect any changes in priorities since the grant's original application. This funding extends through June 2024. A summary of ARP ESSER Grants is posted on our school website, a federal requirement to support transparency.

One cannot easily describe the many, many aspects of finalizing the expansion project that includes the actual construction, the site work on the upper and lower lots, modern furniture and furnishings, and the relocation of exiting furniture, furnishings, and classroom/curricular materials. Kudos to Joe Ross who navigates the daily communications required to keep the project progressing with contractors as well as the local utility services. Additionally, the migration of Systems that integrate the expanded building with existing building are underway – key lock systems, surveillance systems, public address, fire suppression, phones, network and wireless services – all integral to the effective, efficient and safe operations of the School.

As previously reported, the expected occupancy in July shifted to an August occupancy. Of course, this required the Dedication to be rescheduled to September 28<sup>th</sup> with the emphasis in August to prepare for the reopening of school. We are on track to start the school year on August 29<sup>th</sup>, to welcome back faculty to their classrooms on August 15<sup>th</sup>, and to host an Open House for families and student the evening of August 25<sup>th</sup>.

Also noteworthy are improvements to the existing building (Phase III of the Master Plan) including office relocations, expansion of the employee lounge, improved signage, and new carpeting. Outdoor play equipment for the dedicated Kindergarten play area has been ordered; the upper portion of the campus will include the Kindergarten play area, school recess area, and employee parking. Additional projects include the Kindergarten Annex and outdoor Pavilion funded through ESSER III subgrants and a new roof designated through the School's committed reserve fund balance.

As indicated on the Personnel Report, Renee Dougherty has a new job title – Assistant Business Manager – which is more illustrative of her responsibilities and aligns her work more closely with our Business Manager, John Marsico. I am very pleased with the collaborative work Renee and John are doing to improve our procurement, grants and budget management systems.

We had four staff departures – Julie Imel (Communications Director), Michael Abballe ((IT

Manager) and Instructional Assistants, Shelly Pazzaglia and Alyson Eckler. We will seek to replace those positions (except for the Communications position) and searches are currently underway. Additionally, a Receptionist position is now required to staff the new entrance and the recommended candidate is included in the Personnel Report.

With a national shortage of certified teachers, we are extremely fortunate to have a full complement of certified teachers, except for Spanish. We have hired 4 certified teachers for Elementary Science, Middle School English Language Arts (ELA), Middle School Social Studies and the second Building Substitute. We are exploring a pilot World Language Program that will be presented at the next Academic Committee Meeting and serve to return the study of language to our educational program.

Having just completed the School's tenth year, an employee recognition event is being planned and will mark the start of an annual event focused on recognizing employees' years of service and professional achievements.

Our New Employee Orientation will be held for all recent hires and number ten individuals; this will be held the morning of our first day of Pre-Service (August 15). The two week Pre-service will allow ample time for classroom preparations, annually required training, review of policies and procedures including the new arrival/dismissal procedures. I look forward to our returning and new staff as we prepare to greet our new and returning students and families. With the building expansion and improvements to our campus, an excitement and positive buzz is in the air.

I want to extend appreciation to Board President, Stephanie Westington and Board Secretary, Laila Kane, for their prompt response to various reports that required their signatures over the recent months. Welcome new Trustee Michael Barbetti. Michael visited the School in early August as part of his orientation and will be a wonderful addition to the Board.

Much appreciation to John Ruddy for his dedicated years of service as Trustee that included years served as Secretary and Treasurer of the Board. John's dedication extended to those times when he wasn't able to make meetings; soon afterward he would call me for an update on what transpired and always asked – "do you need me to do anything?". Finally, thanks to Laila and John Kane, for hosting a farewell gathering for John Ruddy and his wife Maurie at their beautiful Moosic Lake home.

## **VII. New Business**

**Stephanie Westington**

At this time, Stephanie asked if there was any new business. Not hearing any, Stephanie moved on to adjournment.

## **Adjournment**

At 8:16 p.m., no further items of business or comments had been raised.

The next HGMICS Public Board meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, October 18, 2022, at 7:00 p.m.**