

Howard Gardner MI Charter School

Public Board Meeting

Tuesday, May 16, 2023

The Howard Gardner MI Charter School (HGMICS) held a public Board of Trustees meeting on Tuesday, May 16, 2023. Stephanie Westington, President, called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. 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: Sam Ceccacci, Laila Kane, John Ezbiansky, Laurie Cadden, Dino Galli, Susan Hennemuth, and Dr. Clarence Lamanna. Absent from the meeting: Michael Barbetti, Wayne Evans, and Dr. Catherine Richmond-Cullen

Also in attendance: Dr. Marie George, CEO; TreeAnne McEnery, Principal; John Marsico, Business Manager; Joe Ross, Director of Facilities and Security; and Deana Bonacci, Assistant to the CEO.

Stephanie Westington announced that no visitors were present.

I. Minutes

Stephanie Westington

Stephanie Westington presented the April 18, 2023 Board of Trustees meeting minutes and asked for approval. A **MOTION** to approve the April 18, 2023 Board meeting minutes, as submitted, was made by Dr. Clarence Lamanna and seconded by John Ezbiansky. 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 April 18, 2023, minutes as submitted, with three Trustees absent.

II. President's Report

Stephanie Westington

Stephanie Westington welcomed everyone in attendance to the May 2023 Public Board meeting. Stephanie began by reporting that the Board of Trustees, upon recommendation from the CEO Search Committee, voted at the April 2023 meeting under New Business to approve the appointment of Joseph Ross as the new Chief Executive Officer of the Howard Gardner MI Charter School effective July 1, 2023. The appointment was subject to the execution of a three-year employment agreement. Stephanie was pleased to report that an agreement was executed by both parties on May 10, 2023. She congratulated Mr. Ross and stated that she, as well as the Board, are looking forward to working with him in his new role. Stephanie continued by thanking the CEO Search Committee and the entire Board of Trustees for their leadership and engagement during the search process. The input, suggestions, and

recommendations on conducting the search were most helpful. The engagement and discussion during the interview process both at the Search Committee and full board levels was remarkable. Comments and questions were thoughtful, professional, and relevant and brought all perspectives to a consensus. Stephanie thanked Dr. George for sharing her experience, expertise, and guidance during the process. Stephanie stated the thoroughness of the search allowed them to select and approve the best candidate and outcome for the School.

Stephanie continued her report by expressing her gratitude to the Trustees for sponsoring the Employee Appreciation dinner this past Thursday at Glenmaura National Golf Club. It was a wonderful evening enjoyed by all who attended. The support of the school's faculty and staff builds on the already amazing culture of the school.

Lastly, Stephanie stated the 8th Grade Graduation is scheduled for June 1, 2023, which will be held on the school's campus. All Trustees are welcome to attend. Trustees were reminded that there will be no July 2023 Board meeting.

III. HGMICS Educational Session – “Multitiered System of Support (MTSS)”

Colleen Coolbaugh, School Psychologist

Colleen Coolbaugh, School Psychologist, began her presentation by reviewing the MTSS Tiers of support, Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III. Tier I every student has access to and it avoids the wait to fail. Tier II is more focused, and Tier III is intense intervention. This year, a Data team was created that meets monthly. From the data collected, multiple combinations of academic, social emotional and behavioral interventions are planned.

Also discussed during the presentation was Amplify, an assessment tool used to look at reading and math skills, and the SSIS screener or Social Skills Improvement System screener, which the teachers use to guide social emotional learning and the 5 levels of self-awareness. This occurs in Tier I and all students have access. In Tier II, benchmark data is looked at and students below the benchmark are monitored monthly. If specific students are struggling, the School Psychologist and School Guidance Counselor will group students together for Tier II intervention by relationship skills and if needed, individual counseling occurs. Movement throughout the Tiers in continuous and based on fidelity and consistency of interventions because one size does not fit all when it comes to Multitiered Systems of Support.

Mrs. Coolbaugh also provided specific case examples to illustrate how the MTSS works and supports student needs and success. Trustee questions followed and accolades for the presentation that more fully illuminated the MTSS program and its impact on the students.

IV. Finance/Facilities Committee

John Ezbiansky

1. April 2023 Financial Report

John Marsico

Revenues for April 2023 of \$488,429 are \$19,173 higher than the revenues for March 2023. Tuition Revenue remains consistent with what we bill to the school districts. In April, the Howard Gardner Charter School Foundation Board of Directors approved \$50,197 to be transferred to the School's General Checking account. This amount represented monies that were donated to the school but held in the Foundation account despite the dollars having been spent during the period of 7/1/2021 through 6/30/2022 through the school's general operating fund. This transfer was recorded as Donation Income in the month of April 2023. Otherwise, revenues for the month of April 2023 were as anticipated. Expenses for April 2023 of \$479,416 are \$106,505 higher than the expenses for March 2023. This is as expected again due to the billing issues encountered by PPL. Once again, we did not receive a March 2023 electricity bill. PPL has corrected the issue and we paid two months of bills in April 2023. In addition, two months of health insurance bills were posted to the system in the month of April. The second month's bills were not paid until the first week of May, but the expense was recorded in April. This is simply a result of when the bills are posted. The Net Operating Income for April 2023 is \$9,013, as compared to Net Operating Income of \$96,345 in March 2023, with a fiscal year-to-date Net Operating Income of \$472,396. This is as expected for the month of April 2023 for the reasons above. Title and ESSER funding received, as well as the National School Lunch Program, remained consistent for April 2023.

The school had \$990,160 in cash at the end of April 2023. This is \$48,341 higher than the balance at the end of March 2023 and is as expected. We did receive our April redirection payment from Scranton, Dunmore, Mid-Valley, and Old Forge school districts on 4/27/23 in the amount of \$350,510.40. We are currently making principal and interest payments on the Construction Loan in the amount of \$25,035.47 per month. The amounts being applied to principal and interest each month are based on a 20-year amortization schedule for a \$4,500,000 loan at an annual percentage rate of 2.99%. The amortization schedule was provided by Baker & Tilly and is being compared and reconciled, if necessary, monthly to the Construction Loan bank statement. The principal balance outstanding after the April 2023 payment is \$4,416,150.

At this time, Stephanie Westington entertained a **MOTION** to approve the Financial Report through April 30, 2023, as reported and submitted. The motion was made by Dino Galli and seconded by Sam Ceccacci. Stephanie called for any questions or comments, not hearing any, all Trustees present voted in favor of accepting the March 2023 Financial Report, as presented, with four Trustees absent.

2. HGMICS Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Reserve Allocations

John Marsico

Stephanie Westington entertained a **MOTION** to approve the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Reserve Allocations that allocates \$100,000 for Committed, \$82,744 for Assigned and \$659,504 for Unassigned. The motion was made by Dr. Clarence Lamanna and seconded by Laila Kane. Stephanie Westington called for any questions or comments, not hearing any, all Trustees present voted in favor of accepting the HGMICS Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Reserve Allocations as presented, with four Trustees absent.

V. Academic Committee

Dr. Clarence Lamanna

Dr. Clarence Lamanna stated the Academic Committee met on Tuesday, May 9, 2023, where the Committee discussed a number of items. Principal McEnery reviewed and shared demographics for an Equity plan in regard to distribution in homerooms, a Family Engagement policy, which is a requirement for the Schoolwide Title I programming that will be updated and brought to the Board in June 2023, and a review of the newly listed Dean of Students position. Also discussed at the meeting was the timeline for next triennial Comprehensive Plan, the PaTTAN articulated plan for literacy development, and teacher appreciation week.

VI. Nominating Committee

Laurie Cadden

Laurie Cadden reported the Nominating Committee met on May 3, 2023, to discuss the slate of officers for the 2023-2024 year, which will be presented at the annual Board meeting in June 2023.

VII. Personnel Committee

Sam Ceccacci

Sam Ceccacci stated the Personnel Committee met on Tuesday, May 2nd, 2023. The Committee discussed the Employee Recognition event as well as new positions. The next Personnel Committee meeting is scheduled for June 6, 2023.

A **MOTION** to approve Joseph Ross as an authorized signatory for Howard Gardner Multiple Intelligence Charter School based on his appointment as Chief Executive Officer, effective July 1, 2023, was made by Laurie Cadden and seconded by Stephanie Westington. All Trustees present voted in favor of approving Joseph Ross as an authorized signatory for the School, with one abstention and four Trustees absent.

VIII. School Matters

Dr. Marie George

1. NEIU 2023-24 Special Education Agreement

A **MOTION** to approve the Intergovernmental Agreement for the provision of Special Education Services by Northeastern Intermediate Unit (NEIU 19) for the 2023-2024 school year was made by Dr. Clarence Lamanna and seconded by John Ezbiansky. All Trustees present voted in favor of the Agreement, with four Trustees absent.

2. Title IX Policy Update

A **MOTION** to approve the revisions to the HGMICS Title IX policy as amended was made by John Ezbiansky and seconded by Sam Ceccacci. All Trustees present voted in favor of the Agreement, with four Trustees absent.

3. Administrative Updates

Dr. George referred to the updates provided by the Administrative team including reports from the Principal, Director of Student Services, Director of Facilities and Security, School Operations Director, and Assistant Business Manager. Dr. George pointed out that at the April Board meeting, Cathy Opshinsky, Director of Student Services was unable to present during the Education Session and included her presentation in the administrative updates. Dr. George also pointed out that summer hours will begin at the school as of June 5, 2023. With the advent of summer hours and vacation schedules, administrative updates will be suspended until the August 2023 Board meeting, with the exception of the CEO report.

IX. New Business

Stephanie Westington

At this time, Stephanie Westington asked if there was any New Business. Not hearing any, Stephanie moved on to adjournment of the meeting.

Adjournment

At 8:03 p.m., Stephanie Westington asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was made by Sam Ceccacci and seconded by Dino Galli.

The next HGMICS Public Board meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, June 20, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.**

