

Howard Gardner MI Charter School
Public Board Meeting
Tuesday, October 15, 2024

The Howard Gardner MI Charter School (HGMICS) held a public Board of Trustees meeting on Tuesday, October 15, 2024. Sam Ceccacci, President, called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. Sam led those assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance and took roll call for the board members and non-voting attendees.

The following Trustees attended: Dr. Catherine Richmond-Cullen, Dino Galli, Suzanne Ambrogio-Jaffe, Laurie Cadden, Mary Beth D’Andrea, Susan Hennemuth, and Dr. Fran Langan. Absent from the meeting: Michael Barbetti, Al Dorunda, and Wayne Evans.

Also in attendance: Joe Ross, CEO; TreeAnne McEnery, Principal; John Marsico, Business Manager; and Deana Bonacci, Assistant to the CEO.

Sam Ceccacci announced that there were no visitors present.

I. Minutes **Sam Ceccacci**
Sam Ceccacci presented the September 17, 2024, Board of Trustees meeting minutes and asked for approval. A **MOTION** to approve the September 17, 2024, Board meeting minutes, as submitted, was made by Susan Hennemuth and seconded by Suzanne Ambrogio-Jaffe. Sam asked if there were any comments or questions on the minutes. Not hearing any, Sam called for a vote. All Trustees voted to approve the September 17, 2024, minutes as submitted, with three Trustees absent.

II. President’s Report **Sam Ceccacci**
As we reach the middle of October, the school year is in full swing as learning opportunities and activities abound.

Training opportunities go hand in hand with the ability to present quality programming. The HGMICS staff successfully conducted ACT 55 Training for trustees, and the CEO and business manager attended training focusing on administrative and financial issues. Teaching staff will focus their training on Suicide Awareness and Gender Identity, and TBM Autism and Elementary TBM will be the focus during an In-Service Day on October 31st.

Academically, staff and students have settled into the new school year with established routines and a knowledge of the expectations for each student. Reading and mathematics benchmarking is underway at the beginning of the year, and testing should be completed by October 18th. The PBIS Program is underway, and the HGMICS Program will be recognized at a state conference in Hershey next month. National School Lunch Week is being celebrated this week with themed activities.

Finally, the Golf Tournament was held on Sunday, October 13th, with a record number of 120 golfers. Thanks to all who participated and contributed to the success of the tournament in any way!

III. Finance/Facilities Committee **Dino Galli**
1. September 2024 Financial Report **John Marsico**

John Marsico stated that the fiscal year-to-date revenues for the period ending 09/30/2024 were \$1,716,053 compared to \$1,431,767 for the period ending 9/30/2023. Fiscal year-to-date expenses for the period ending 09/30/2024 were \$1,365,806 compared to \$1,572,983 for the period ending 9/30/2023. The fiscal year-to-date Net Operating Income for the period ending 09/30/2024 was \$350,248, as compared to a Net Operating (Loss) of (\$141,216) for the period ending 9/30/2023.

The school had \$1,457,343 in cash as of 09/30/24 as compared to \$714,407 as of 09/30/2023. The balance in Due From Districts 2023-2024 of \$90,499 represents the amounts due to HGMICS from the 2023-2024 Reconciliations. Of this amount, \$80,220 is from the Scranton School District, which was communicated to their Business Manager. A follow-up was sent on October 7, 2024, requesting this payment. The balance in Construction In Progress of \$96,303 represents the construction cost of converting the old Music Cottage into our new Administration Building. This \$96,303 will be capitalized via a Journal Entry, and depreciation will begin in October 2024. The outstanding loan balance after our August 2024 payment is \$4,176,024.

At this time, Dino Galli entertained a **MOTION** to approve the Financial Report through September 30, 2024, as reported and submitted. The motion was made by Laurie Cadden and seconded by Susan Hennemuth. All Trustees voted to approve the September 2024 Financial Report, as presented, with three Trustees absent.

IV. Academic Committee

Dr. Catherine Richmond-Cullen

Dr. Catherine Richmond-Cullen stated that the Academic Committee met on October 1, 2024, and discussed student benchmarking and the potential mentoring roles for department chairs. The artist-in-residence program introduces performing arts activities to the school through a local artist who is wonderfully talented. Adjustments to next year's staff pre-service training and built-in educational hours were discussed for the 2025-2026 academic calendar.

At this time, Dr. Catherine Richmond-Cullen entertained a **MOTION** to approve the HGMICS 2025-2026 School Calendar as submitted. The motion was made by Dr. Fran Langan and seconded by Laurie Cadden. All Trustees voted to approve the HGMICS 2025-2026 School Calendar, as submitted, with three Trustees absent.

V. Development Committee

Susan Hennemuth

Susan Hennemuth stated that the Development Committee met on Wednesday, October 2, 2024. The Committee deliberated on enhancing fundraising efforts and identifying potential donors. Upcoming events like Grandparents Day are seen as opportunities to engage with families, potentially leading to capital donations. The committee discussed the need for government funding for large-scale projects and considered future initiatives focused on performing arts support.

VI. School Matters

Joe Ross

1. Administrative Updates

CEO UPDATES – Joe Ross

GOLF Tournament

The golf tournament was held on Sunday, 10/13/24. We had a record number of golfers in this year's event. The final total was 120 golfers. Raffles for 50/50 was approaching \$7,000, and basket sales will produce additional levels. Our sponsorship totaled approximately \$13,000. Final financial reports will be available next week, but it was a successful event.

ACT 55 BOT Training

On October 2, 2024, HGMICS staff successfully conducted ACT 55 training for Trustees. Online versions of the training will be made available to those Trustees who were unable to attend.

PCCD Grant

HGMICS staff submitted a \$70,000 funding request to PCCD for physical security improvements on the school grounds. One project included in this request was paving the access road to connect the lower lot to the middle school to allow students to safely and efficiently get to the lower portion of the school grounds. We are anticipating approval of this grant request in the near future. Previously funded grants enabled the school to install security film on the kindergarten portion of the building. Additionally, we will begin to recoup a portion of the salary for our new school counselor through this funding.

Pa Charter School Coalition Conference

The CEO and Business Manager both attended the 3-day conference in Lancaster, Pa., between 10/8-10/10. A plethora of sessions were attended, focusing on administrative and financial issues. This event also allowed us to increase advocacy and networking opportunities for the school.

Student Ambassadors

The student ambassadors are organizing a "Thank you to our Veterans Day" at HGMICS. This event will allow us to honor those who served our country and will culminate with events on Friday, 11/8/24. These events will include an America's White table display in the cafeteria. This table is designed to demonstrate the significance of veterans' service. Additionally, they will contact veterans in the school community and invite them to lunch with their students on 11/8. Lastly, the ambassadors will organize a school-wide thank a veteran project. Students in the school will write a thank you to veterans on a placemat. The ambassadors will furnish the placemats for the Gino Merli Center, which will be used to serve lunch to the residents.

Grandparents Day

The Development committee conducted an initial meeting to host a grandparent/special friends' day at HGMICS. This is in the early stages of development. More information will be provided as details emerge.

PRINCIPAL UPDATES – TreeAnne McEnery

Staff and students have settled into the school year; routines are established, S.T.A.R. expectations are well-known by all students and curriculum is proceeding. The school is active and engaged!

Beginning-of-Year (BOY) reading and mathematics benchmarking is well underway. Testing should be completed by October 18.

Kindergarten benchmarking is completed. See the following results.

Kindergarten Beginning-of-Year Benchmarking					
2024-2025					
Reading			Mathematics		
33%	Above Benchmark		33%	At Benchmark	
25%	At benchmark		59%	Below Benchmark	
20%	Below Benchmark		8%	Well Below Benchmark	
22%	Well Below Benchmark				

The kindergarten results provide teachers with an understanding that students have a solid foundation of oral language fluency, the first step in reading development, and a strong number sense, a necessary concept as mathematics becomes more abstract.

Integrative Counseling will be conducting the **annual staff training on Suicide Awareness & Gender Identity** training on October 29 during a staff meeting. On October 31, the **annual in-service** is scheduled. The in-service will focus on **TBM Autism & Elementary TBM**.

Mid-Trimester 1 Progress Reports were published for parent/guardians on Monday, October 7.

There have been many exciting student **activities** and **experiences** throughout the **month of October**:

1. **PBIS Blow-out**: Grades 3-8 attending a Penguins Game. K-2 chose to watch a movie.
2. **HGS Marching Band** led the opening parade for the Greenhouse Project Bee and Harvest Festival.
3. **STEAM program** is busy working on the Future Cities competition.
4. Grade 7/8 students, Kirstyn Z., Alexej E., Keller E., and alternate, Luke G. Golembeski will be participating in the 28th annual **Young Scholars Competition** at Scranton Preparatory.
5. Parent Forum annual **Trunk or Treat** is scheduled for October 27.

Conducted a **Band program survey** to identify strengths and needs for program expansion. Overall, families are very pleased with the program. Additionally, a survey was sent to gather interest in an after school **musical performance program**. We are the honored recipient of an aieNEPA grant this year. 87 students expressed interest in the program. Erin Malloy will be our resident director. The plan is to produce the musical Annie. Auditions and rehearsal are scheduled for the week of October 28th, with the final performance scheduled during the National School Choice week in January 2025.

DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SERVICES UPDATES – Cathy Opshinsky

PBIS Team Update

The PBIS team has kicked off the school year with great momentum! We are proud to share that our Tier 1 and Tier 2 programs have been recognized at the state level, and we will be honored at the upcoming state conference in Hershey this November. In addition to receiving recognition, we will also be presenting a poster on PBIS Family and Community Involvement at the conference.

To celebrate students' efforts, we've launched an exciting "pop-up STARburst" event. Students have been earning STAR cards since the beginning of the school year, and those with 15 cards can "purchase" their way into this fun reward. On October 3rd, students in grades K-2 will enjoy a special

movie day with popcorn and pajamas, while students in grades 3-8 will be attending a Penguins Hockey Game. This event promises to be a great way to reinforce positive behavior and build excitement among the students.

In addition to these initiatives, the Core PBIS Committee has introduced a new organizational structure designed to sustain our program's implementation and ensure the involvement of all staff members. Each faculty member will now serve on one of the following established committees:

- Professional Development
- Family and Community Involvement
- Rewards Committee
- Planning and Reinforcement
- Finance/Fundraising Committee
- Data Committee
- STARBursts
- STARBus Awards

These committees will meet at least once per month during extended faculty meetings throughout the school year. Each committee will be responsible for carrying out specific roles and tasks, with progress, updates, and challenges documented by the committee chair. These reports will then be shared with administration, coaches, and other chairs during monthly leadership meetings to ensure continued progress and collaboration. We're excited about the year ahead and look forward to the continued success of our PBIS initiatives!

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS UPDATES – Patty Biko

School Reporting: PIMS

The October Collection has been uploaded successfully. This collection closed 10/11 with ACS submissions prior to 11/15 (*where required*). Collection included: C1 Grad Drop Cohort 2023-24- An annual collection in which the LEA submits to PDE student level data on the completion, withdrawal, or transfer of students.

C1 SPEC ED ACT 16 2023-24- For the previous school year, the LEA will identify the educational expenditure cost range category for each student with disabilities. The expenditure range is based on the total cost of the student's special education program directed by an IEP for the entire school year (7/1 through 6/30).

C1 OCT Student 2024-25- This is a collection of student demographics that includes the reporting of low-income students, immigrant students, students who receive special education services, and English Learners. These data, which are mandated by the federal government, are collected for students who are educated by the local education agency (LEA) on the first business day in October of the current school year.

C1 OCT Student 2024-25 (Child Accounting)- All charter schools that operate a kindergarten program are required to upload this file which collects the starting age (in months) for the youngest kindergarten student (K4 or K5), as well as the cutoff date to reach minimum age for the program.

C1 Title 3 Non-Pub Student 2024-25- This reports the counts of nonpublic ELs and Nonpublic Immigrant Children and Youth.

C1 Staff Oct 2024-25- This data set uses a snapshot to summarize a school’s professional staff. The data set is designed to capture all professional-level positions and the people filling those positions in a LEA.

An additional file within this collection is the Support Personnel data collection which is designed to capture support positions in an LEA.

C1 Oct Prof Staff Vacancy 2024-25- The collection is used to submit counts of all full-time and part-time, vacant, professional staff positions as of the Staff Snapshot date (10-1-2024). For this collection, a vacant position shall be defined as an unoccupied position that has been board approved and posted to allow the LEA to proceed through the hiring process.

C1 Act 35 2024-25- The collection is used to submit counts of the total budgeted complement of professional staff positions and the number of those budgeted professional staff positions that are vacant as of the date of final budget adoption by the LEA’s governing Board.

C1 EL Coordinator- Collection in which identifies the LEAs EL Coordinator in order to receive communications and updates for ACCESS for ELLS. This information will be submitted to the test vendor and will ensure that only authorized personnel have access to testing materials and LEA test setup information.

All Accuracy Certification Statements will be review by the Data Team and sign of by Mr. Ross, CEO.

Food Service

As the school year settles, our student participation for both breakfast and lunch has increased tremendously since last year. We are proud to announce our top day for breakfast served was 144 and lunch was 165!

NSLP Verification (Began 10/1-11/15 Reported by 2/1)

SFAs participating in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program are required to verify income for a small percentage of households approved for free or reduced price meals each school year.

National School Lunch Week - HGMICS will celebrate National School Lunch Week from October 14-18, 2024. The fun and creative campaign theme, “School Lunch Pirates: Find Your Treasure,” highlights the importance of a healthy school lunch to a student’s success both in and out of the classroom. There will be Pirate inspired lunch treats, free give-a-ways and games to celebrate this annual event.

VII. New Business

Sam Ceccacci

At this time, Sam asked if there was any new business. Not hearing any, Sam moved to the adjournment of the meeting.

Adjournment

At this time, Sam Ceccacci called for a **MOTION** to adjourn the meeting. Suzanne Ambrogio-Jaffe made the motion, and MaryBeth D’Andrea seconded that motion. The HGMICS October 2024 Public

Board of Trustees meeting adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

Next Meeting Date: Tuesday, November 19, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.