

August 18, 2026 Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes.

HOWARD GARDNER MI CHARTER SCHOOL (HGMICS)

Board of Trustees Public Meeting

1615 East Elm Street, Scranton, PA 18505

Tuesday August 18, 2026

5:30 pm

AGENDA

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance led by School Board President, Sam Ceccacci

Board Members

Sam Ceccacci, President

Mary Beth D'Andrea

Dr. Catherine Richmond-Cullen, Vice President

Al Dorunda

Dino Galli, Secretary

Wayne Evans

Michael Barbetti, Treasurer

Dr. Fran Langan

Suzanne Ambrogio-Jaffe

Judy Price

Laurie Cadden

Public Comment on *Agenda Items Only*

Visitors may provide comment on items listed on the agenda, Names and School District of residence will be recorded before remarks are made.

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|-------------|---|----------------------|
| I. | Approval of June 16, 2026 Minutes | Sam Ceccacci |
| II. | President's Report | Sam Ceccacci |
| III. | Finance/Facilities Committee | Mike Barbetti |
| | 1. June and July 2026 Financial Reports | |
| | 2. HGMICS 2026-2027 Fiscal Year Budget (Attachment D.) | |
| | 3. JM Young & Sons Roof Replacement Contract | |
| | 4. Purchase convection oven from Nova | |
| | 5. Policy Review Summary Chart | |
| IV. | Personnel Committee | Dino Galli |
| | 1. August 2026 Personnel Activity Report (Attachment F.) | |
| V. | School Matters | Joe Ross |
| | 1. Administrative Updates (Attachment E.) | |
| | 2. Employee Handbook | |
| | 3. Family and Student Handbook | |
| VI. | New Business | Sam Ceccacci |

Adjournment

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM. President Sam Ceccaci led the Board in saying the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Participation:

Sam Ceccacci asked if anyone wanted to address the Board. There were no comments.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion: *Approve minutes from the June 17, 2026 HGMICS Board Meeting*

The motion was made by Mary Beth D'Andrea and seconded by Mike Barbetti.

All Trustees voted yes with 10 Trustees present, and one excused.

President's Report:

Sam Ceccacci delivered the following President's report:

August 18, 2026

As we begin another Academic Year, the 15th year for Howard Gardner Multiple Intelligence Charter School, we look forward to providing all of our students with a safe, healthy and happy school year.

We welcome back a skilled and capable staff of returning faculty and support staff. We welcome new staff who were chosen for their skill and expertise and look forward to their contributions. And we thank those staff members who have left Howard Gardner for their service while they were members of the faculty.

The summer months have been spent in preparation for the 2026-2027 school year with upgrades to the building and grounds including the boiler replacement project, a soon to be completed roof replacement project, hiring of new staff and providing the all-important Orientation and Pre-Service Training for all staff in preparation for the arrival of students for the first day on classes on Monday August 25, 2026. Preparations have also been made for each student to receive free breakfast and lunch under the Community Eligibility Provision of the School Lunch Program.

In addition to the regular school year tasks, staff will be completing Policy Reviews and be involved in the Charter Renewal Process. As Board Members we need to stand ready to help in those processes in any way we can assist.

Board Members should also be aware of the "15th Anniversary Celebration Calendar" and are encouraged to be mindful of the activities that are scheduled to take place each month.

Let's all do our part to make year 15 of HGMICS the best year yet.

Respectfully submitted,

Sam Ceccacci
Board Chairman

Finance Facilities Committee:

June 2026 Financial Report

Motion: *Approve the Financial Report through June 30, 2026.*

The motion was made by Al Dorunda and seconded by Wayne Evans.
All Trustees voted yes with 10 Trustees Present, and 1 excused.

July 2026 Financial Report

Motion: *Approve the Financial Report through July 31, 2026.*

The motion was made by Fran Langan and seconded by Mary Beth D'Andrea.
All Trustees voted yes with 10 Trustees Present, and 1 excused.

HGMICS Elementary Building Roof Replacement

Motion: Authorization for HGMICS to enter into a contractual agreement with J.M Young & Sons Inc. for the replacement of the roof in an amount not to exceed \$490,035.

The motion was made by Al Dorunda and seconded by Laurie Cadden.
All Trustees voted yes with 10 Trustees Present, and 1 excused.

Electric Convection Oven

Motion: Authorization of HGMICS to purchase an electric convection oven from Nova Company in the amount of \$11,079.

The motion was made by Catherine Richmond-Cullen and seconded by Dino Galli.
All Trustees voted yes with 10 Trustees Present, and 1 excused.

Policy Review Summary

Motion: Approve the Policy Review Summary, as reported and submitted.

The motion was made by Fran Langan and seconded by Mary Beth D'Andrea.
All Trustees voted yes with 10 Trustees Present, and 1 excused.

Personnel Committee

August 2026 Personnel Activity Report

Approve the August 2026 Personnel Activity Report as submitted.

Motion: Approve the August 2026 Personnel Activity Report as submitted.

The motion was made by Fran Langan and seconded by Mary Beth D'Andrea.
All Trustees voted yes with 10 Trustees Present, and 1 excused.

Academic Committee

Catherine Richmond-Cullen reported there was no meeting conducted in August. First meeting will be September 1, 2026.

School Matters

Administrative Updates

August 2026

CEO Update-Joe Ross

Welcome Back!! We are thrilled to welcome back students and staff for what promises to be an exciting school year. Significant upgrades have been made at the school to accommodate our growth. We have a full complement of over 400 students and a full-time staff of 74 professionals. The summer flew by as the HGMICS staff were busy preparing the school to welcome our students for the first day of classes on August 25, 2026. Consistent with our identity of multiple intelligences, we will offer our students a full range of curricular and extracurricular activities to allow them to explore their individual interests.

CHARTER RENEWAL APPLICATION

The Leadership team has been working on gathering the documents to support the Charter Renewal application. The Scranton School District responded to our July 2, 2026 with letter identifying the documents requested for renewal. The Abington Heights School District did not respond to the same request. SSD set an ambitious deadline of August 31, 2026, for submission.

Included on the Board Drive is an initial draft of the narrative response for your review, edit, and comment. The narrative references the supporting documents that are currently housed in a shared drive. Ultimately, we will send the response with a share file drive furnished by McKenna Snyder to both Scranton and Abington Heights and remain confident we will meet the targeted date of August 31st for submission.

A huge thank you to the leadership team who compiled the voluminous amount of documents requested in breakneck speed to comply with the requested deadline!! Each professional played an integral role in submitting the information. In my humble opinion, this document demonstrates the exemplary work that is occurring at our school!

15 YEAR ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

The 2026-2027 School Year marks our 15th year as being a public charter school. We will embark on a year long celebration of HGMICS. In the board drive is the 15-year celebration outline. The theme for the celebration will be- **15 Years of Growing Every Mind**. Each month a multiple intelligence will be featured, and events will be planned both in and out of school. Some of the aspirational goals is to provide 15 acts of service to the community, tell 15 stories of founders and vision for HGMICS, work in conjunction with the BOT Development Committee to host a Founders/Vision event to spur fundraising, and develop opportunities to spotlight the people that make HGMICS the special place that has stayed consistent to its mission.

STAFFING UPDATES/Pre-Service

As evidenced by the August personnel activity report, the leadership team has done an outstanding job of hiring and onboarding staff. Due to a recent resignation, the only remaining vacancy is for a school counselor, and interviews for that position have commenced. On Friday, August 14th, Principal McEnery organized a successful new employee orientation to introduce new staff to the school. This event was attended by all of the new hires.

Pre-service training for staff will start on Monday 8/17/26. Events are planned to get ready for the first day of school. Once again, we will host a back-to-school night in conjunction with the parent forum ice cream social on Thursday August 20th. A new wrinkle for this event has been added through the wellness committee, under the guidance of Patty Mickavicz. We will include a community resource fair for the event. Historically, this is widely attended event.

GRANTS

During the summer months, the school received the second installment of \$5,000 from Peoples Security Bank. This is a three-year commitment from the bank. Resources will be used to offset the cost of the community garden.

The Commonwealth Charitable Foundation has increased their EITC donation to \$15,000. This money has been allocated to technology and arts. This will enable use to purchase equipment and supplies for classrooms that will help support the STEAM program immersion through grades K-8.

The Consolidated Application for Federal Grants TITLE I,IIa, Iva were all submitted by June 30, 2026 which allows the school to begin spending the funds on July 1, 2026.

Additionally, the school has received \$7,359 Ready to Learn Grant.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

HGMICS is in the process of finalizing details to collaborate with Friends of the Poor/Catherine McCauley House on their Growing Giving Greens project. This partnership will bring a hydroponic growing program to the school complimenting our community garden project. Friends of the Poor will provide the growing tent, seed trays, seeds, and technical support. This program will be introduced to the Science program at all grade levels. Students will plant, tend, grow, and harvest basil and parsley. Once

harvested, the product will be distributed at a Friends of the Poor food distribution. A nutritionist will include a guide to healthy eating with the giveaway bringing the project full circle. Funding necessary to support this program will come from the above-mentioned Peoples Security Foundation grant of \$5,000.

The school through the social work department is in the early stages of entering into an affiliation agreement with Millersville and Marywood University's to host social work students for practicum and internship experiences during the school year. This agreement will blend nicely with the Scranton counseling outpatient counseling services that will commence this school year.

ANNUAL REPORTS

The summer months are always filled with the required annual reporting to various state and federal agencies. All PDE reports have been submitted in a timely manner. This includes the Annual Report, a signed Memorandum of Understanding with the Scranton Police Department, all PCCD annual reports, Consolidated application, annual financial report, and all PIMS required reports.

FOOD SERVICE

This will be the first year of the school entering the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) which provides every student with a free breakfast and lunch. In preparation for this we hired three part-time employees to serve the meals. We will evaluate the flow of students and will adjust as needed to the expected increase in meals served.

BUILDING RENOVATION PROJECTS

Two major renovations were scheduled for the summer months. The boiler replacement project has been successfully completed. Balancing and testing was conducted, and the boiler is fully operational. The City of Scranton will schedule an inspection, and our insurance company may schedule one as well.

The initial logistics and organizational meeting with J.M. Young was conducted on the roof replacement project. The drain replacement work that would be the only interior disruption has been completed. Roof Materials have been ordered and we are waiting for confirmation on delivery dates. JM Young is ready to mobilize as soon as delivery is received. Tentative date for project start is 9/8/26 with an estimated completion date of 10/16/26. Dates are subject to change based on delivery and weather. The meeting went well. Updates will be provided as received.

GOLF TOURNAMENT

The annual golf tournament is scheduled for Sunday, October 11, 2026. It will be held at Pine Hills Golf Club with a 9:00 am shotgun start. Sponsorship opportunities are available. Last year, we had a full field of golfers.

Additionally, the 2026-2027 Family & Student Handbook and 2026-2027 Employee Handbook were submitted and discussed.

Joe Ross introduced a plan to celebrate 15 years of being a charter school that encompasses a year long celebration of the school's founding and vision for moving ahead. This will be a working document that will involve all members of the school. More information will be shared as the year starts.

The Meeting was adjourned at 6:10 PM.

Next meeting will be held on September 15, 2026 at 5:30 PM.