APPROVED

Hill View Montessori

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

Date and Time
Thursday April 30, 2026 at 6:30 PM

Location
Hill View Montessori Charter Public School
75 Foundation Ave.
Haverhill, MA 01835

Trustees Present
J. Hood, J. Landry, K. Laureano, P. Carelis, S. Brush, S. Stecher, V. Guzman

Trustees Absent
None

Ex Officio Members Present
G. Whitson

Guests Present
A. Fergus, H. Herklotz, Kevin Bridges

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B.

Call the Meeting to Order

J. Hood called a meeting of the board of trustees of Hill View Montessori to order on Thursday Apr 30, 2026 at 6:30 PM.

C. Public Comment

None

D. Approve Minutes

J. Hood made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustees Meeting on 03-26-26.
S. Stecher seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

II. Updates

A. Candidate Interview - Andy Fergus

Andy got interested when he met, spent day with Ginger with mutual friends, driven by interest to expand the board to non-parents. Ginger and Jeff L spent time meeting with Andy to explained what the board/school were looking for. Andy also attended the Development Committee in April to get a feel for what we were looking for, presented a very comprehensive plan to seek out high-value donations. Really enjoyed R&R Bingo, getting to meet staff and families. Toured school with Scott Stecher, was really impressed by our operation. Clear that HVM has something special and unique. Andy has been looking for ways to contribute locally.

Jeff H asked about Andy's familiarity with the idea of governance vs management. Andy expressed that he was very familiar thanks to work with corporate boards.

For many years, Andy was a Global Project Leader, leading a cross functional team with main objective to long-term planning which will help our strategic planning.

Board voted on Andy's candidacy, all approved.

B. Board Candidate - Kevin Bridges

Kevin has a soft spot for HVM, his son attended HVM from K-8, was really enriched by his time here. Found his son benefitted greatly from being at HVM. Jeff L recruited Kevin, trying to get experienced professionals to drive things forward. Happy to present himself as someone who does not have a direct connection to the school, wants to give back in thanks for son's time.

Jeff H asked if Kevin has the time to commit to time outside of meetings. Kevin explains he's good at time management and though he is busy with work, he will be clear and upfront about his ability to commit.

Jeff H asked what committee he would like to serve on. Kevin explains he's a metrics guy so would be interested in Accountability.

Board voted on Kevin's candidacy, all approved.

C. 2026/27 Calendar

Ginger presented for Niamh. Team was waiting for the HPS calendar, which came late. School will start late in 26/27 - first day of school will be 9/2. We typically start the day before, but will start on the same day this year. Ginger also pointed out that we added half days on the Fridays before February and April break. 180th day would be June 21.

Veronica motoined to approve calendar, Sarah seconded.

D. Director Evaluations

I wanted to bring up the matter of School Leader assessments prior to the April 30th board meeting so that you all had time to ruminate on the matter beforehand. As I just sat in on a MCPSA Leadership meeting on School Leader Evals, the topic is fresh in my mind. Attached is a modified version of the Evaluation criteria we established for Ginger and Marc at the beginning of the school year. It is modified in that I added a tab for both Ginger and Marc to conduct a self-assessment of their performance along with the sections denoted for Board commentary. My proposal that we can discuss on 4/30 1. Discuss matter on 4/30, with the end result that Ginger (and Marc) will have an action item to complete the self-assessment portion of the evaluation and provide it to the board by May 22nd. One item for the Board to discuss is how salary increases should be determined for the Director role. 2. The Board will discuss the self assessment during the 5/28 Board Meeting, with an action item to complete their individual assessments by June 15th. Board members will provide their assessment to me by June 15th, and I will have collated results by the June 25th Board Meeting. 3. The Board will review the collated assessment with Ginger (and Marc) during the June 25th Board Meeting. Given Marc's current status, Marc will likely not be involved in this process, but per DESE guidelines, the Board will still need to complete and present his assessment in a public forum. This will likely (obviously) need to be done without the self-assessment piece.

All members were ok with the timeline. Given his new status, Scott will not need to participate in the evaluation process this time around.

E. Faculty Liaison

No liaison present

F. Strategic Planning Committee

Jeff H gave an update on the strategic plan process, which has involved Jeff H, Jeff L, Ginger, Hannah, and Niamh. Next meeting scheduled for 5/8.

Board Capacity

- Adjusted targets to reflect recruitment realities:
  - 8–10 members by Dec 2026
  - 10–15 members in Year 2
- Priority remains on quality of members over quantity.

2. Development & Fundraising

- Competitive grants will be tracked as a percentage of total fundraising:
  - Year 1: 15%
  - Year 2: 25%
  - Year 3: 30%
- Strategy reflects:
  - Long lead times for public grants
  - Faster turnaround for private funding opportunities

3. Foundation Growth

- Year 1 focus: build internal structure and capacity
  - Goal: Increase membership by ~100% (e.g., 4 → 8 members)
- Event strategy:
  - Year 2: 1 major + 2 smaller events
  - Year 3: 1 major + 4 smaller events
- Approach includes leveraging board members, alumni, and low-lift volunteer roles.

4. Academic Excellence (Top Priority)

- Agreed performance targets:
  - 10–15 percentage point growth over 3 years
  - 2–5 points annually
- Key initiatives:
  - Curriculum and assessment alignment (already underway)
  - Expanded math intervention support
  - Exploration of culturally responsive/anti-bias training
- Challenge:
  - Limited real-time performance data; outcomes largely depend on annual assessment results

5. Strategic Risks & Gaps

- Current plan assumes Year 1 changes will drive results, with limited contingency planning.
- Need to:
  - Define clear Year 2–3 action steps
  - Establish progress monitoring and adjustment mechanisms

6. Facilities & Expansion

• Area requires further development.
• Agreed next step:
o Conduct a feasibility study for preschool expansion (Year 2–3)
• Key constraint:
o Expansion dependent on improved academic performance metrics
7. AI & Innovation
• Recognized as critical but rapidly evolving.
• Initial actions:
o Form a working group focused on AI and learning science
o Explore future professional development opportunities
• Emphasis on impact on learning, not just technology adoption
Next Steps
• Continue refining goals, benchmarks, and timelines
• Identify required resources for implementation
• Develop a system for monitoring, evaluation, and iteration
• Next meeting scheduled: Friday at 12:15 PM
Bottom Line
The plan is now more grounded and realistic, with clearer targets and priorities.
However, success will depend on:
• Strengthening mid- and long-term action plans
• Building systems to track progress and adapt quickly

G. PTO Update

Per the PTO: We will be purchasing yearbooks for all graduating 8th-grade students. Our yearbooks
have been a great success. Additionally, we are starting a new tradition of purchasing a tree for each 8th-grade class to plant, accompanied by a marker indicating their class year.
We had to postpone our Earth Day cleanup due to rain, but I am hoping to work with Rob to get that rescheduled soon.
To ensure our teachers feel appreciated, the PTO will be offering chair massages provided by two local massage therapists. We also secured a blender bike to make smoothies for the teachers one morning and will be donating lunch for them one day as well.

H. New Business

Jeff mentioned that he will be checking in on Board slate for next year.

I. Directors Report

Ginger reviewed results of Accountability site visit. Focus points are to look at board minute-taking, and to look at MTSS process for special ed students and more clearly

define the tiers that differentiate intervention states. Good news is that special ed team has already begun implementing change to address the concern.

Jeff asked about MTEL status for teachers, asked if we have a plan. 3 current teachers don't have MTELs, but the plan is in place to move them towards completion.

Veronica asked Ginger to upload the Accountability report to Board on Track.

Ginger addressed professional standards - she is creating job descriptions for all positions in the school. Piloting a new interview process for new hires (step one leadership team does phone screen, candidates come in for in-person meeting, do a demo classroom lesson, then candidate meets with teacher team.) Good feedback from staff.

5/11 week - employment agreements will be handled.

Hannah updates that $20k earmark grant just passed the house to cover phase two of our security camera install. Check should be available by July. School already spent $21k on phase one of security cameras, this will expedite implementation of phase two.

Faculty update - offered UE Lead teacher role to 15-year experienced Montessori teacher. Also offered roles to 3 new UE assistants. Hired new Business Admin to start on 4/30.

Ginger read letter from Jaileen Baptista, who will be leaving next year to attend a prestigious teaching program at Harvard,

Still looking for a Spanish teacher and Special Ed teacher, plus PT math interventionist.

J. Accountability

No data to present until the end of the year data cycle.

Hannah touched on Accountability plan, tracking KDs for the year for DERS, Math growth potential, and Dibels success. Teachers receiving full coaching cycles. Two Montessori based PD sessions have been offered, and we met criteria for dissemination.

Staff survey will be out within 2 weeks after MCAS. Family survey targeted for early June.

K. Development

Jeff L presented results from Rock N Roll bingo, as reported by Tara Salvi from the Foundation. The rough estimate is that the event will net close to $13k for the school, a significant jump from last year's $8k, thanks in large part to increased sponsorship and better auction turnout. Next year, we hope to run the event again, but perhaps modify it to include a live auction and add an element of community service awards to bring in more outside people.

Jeff L reviewed the merch sale results from Bonfire - 78 items/$728 in the first campaign. Lower than expected, but still good given the short turnaround and busy time of year. The team discussed a strategy for next year, offering items at the beginning of the school year, before the holidays, and again in March. Sarah encouraged that we offer more youth size options, as those were limited in the first run.

L. Finance

Jeff L presented an overview of the monthly financials, which are showing that the school should have a surplus of close to $200k for the FY. The leadership team is looking at possible ways to allocate those funds in the short term to make some school improvements, including classrooms smartboards and playground equipment. Jeff L also presented that the budget for FY27 is rounding into form, after Ginger and Jeff L met with the Benefits vendor this week. Jeff L reported that HVM was quoted a 25% increase in health insurance cost, which has since been reduced by a couple percentage points. Jeff L and Ginger worked with the vendor to continue to swing the share of the insurance cost towards the employer to reduce the employee impact (indiv coverage is split 35% ee/65% er, while spouse/family coverage has moved from a 50/50 split to a 42/58 split over the last two years). Board agreed to vote on final budget in May.

III. Closing Items

A. Next Meeting

Next meeting is 5/28.

B. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
J. Hood