APPROVED

Hill View Montessori

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

Date and Time
Thursday May 28, 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. Bridges, K. Laureano, P. Carelis, S. Stecher, V. Guzman

Trustees Absent
A. Fergus, S. Brush

Ex Officio Members Present
G. Whitson

Non Voting Members Present
G. Whitson

Guests Present
H. Herklotz, J. Gibbons, N. Dolan

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 May 28, 2026 at 6:30 PM.

C. Public Comment

D. Approve Minutes

J. Hood made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustees Meeting on 04-30-26.
K. Laureano seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

II. Updates

A. Director of Finance & Administration Access

J. Landry made a motion to To remove Maec Wright as a bank signatory.
J. Hood seconded the motion.

- Jeff L. reported that Marc Wright's position ends June 30
- Marc is currently unavailable, so the standard bank signature removal process cannot be completed normally
- Board discussed the need for a formal vote to remove him as a bank signatory
- Motion made to remove Marc Wright from all bank accounts
- Vote: all in favor
- Action: Removal will be documented in meeting minutes and submitted to the bank for processing

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

V. Guzman	Aye
S. Brush	Absent
P. Carelis	Aye
J. Hood	Aye
A. Fergus	Absent
K. Bridges	Aye
J. Landry	Aye
K. Laureano	Aye
S. Stecher	Aye

B. Director Evaluations

- Ginger submitted her self-assessment and presented her director report

- Board members were asked to complete director evaluations for Ginger and Marc, due by the 22nd, with discussion scheduled for the next meeting
- Ginger reported on academic and assessment completion:
    - MCAS testing is fully completed for the year
    - STAR and DIBELS assessments for the final term are also completed
    - Data is being entered into Open Architects, with a full report expected at the June meeting
    - Final performance data is still being compiled, but overall trends are positive
- Credentialing update (Ginger):
    - Significant improvement in teacher licensure completion this year
    - Last year: 20 licensed / 18 not licensed
    - This year: 32 licensed / 8 not licensed
    - Of the 8 remaining, 6 are actively in the licensure process
    - Stronger hiring expectations now in place so teachers are either already licensed or complete licensure within their first year
    - Niamh added context about testing timelines, SEI endorsement requirements, and delays in exam scheduling
- Family and community engagement (Ginger):
    - Highlighted successful school events, including The Lion King performance, noting strong student participation and community turnout
- External professional development visit (Hannah present):
    - HVM hosted Greenfield Learning, a national PD organization focused on special education, literacy, and math
    - School received an $18,000 gift certificate from Greenfield Learning
    - Feedback included strong validation of instructional practices and student engagement
    - High levels of student engagement across classrooms, including students with IEPs and 504 plans being highly integrated and active
    - Organization emphasized systems coaching over curriculum sales
    - STAR assessment dips mid-year were noted as expected due to adaptive testing design
- After-school programming expansion (Ginger):
    - Introduced new branding: “The Hive Montessori Explorations”
    - Designed to align with school mascot identity (“Buzzy”)
    - Program includes 23 clubs plus athletics and theater
    - Structured into seven 5-week sessions (38 total offerings)
    - Designed to increase student choice and avoid scheduling conflicts
    - Also supports revenue generation and teacher stipends
- Logistics discussion:
    - Jeff L. asked about potential parking and pickup congestion with expanded programming
    - Ginger responded that staggered scheduling and enrollment limits should prevent traffic issues
- Hiring updates (Ginger):

    - Strong hiring activity over the past two months
    - New hires include special education, Spanish, middle school math, and health/wellness (pending acceptance), plus classroom assistants and support staff
    - Emphasis on stronger hiring process including demonstrations and team interviews
    - Continued need for additional nurse substitutes
    - Custodial coverage restructuring underway (second shift custodian replacing contracted cleaning support)
    - Remaining hiring efforts to continue into August
- Summer operations (Ginger):
    - Building hours standardized: 9:00 AM–1:00 PM, Monday–Thursday
    - Front desk staffed for calls and deliveries
    - Employment agreements distributed and returned smoothly
    - Pay scale updates improved transparency and predictability
    - Some staff received lump-sum bonuses (~3%) instead of base increases
- Additional programs and events:
    - Planned graduation “clap-out” on June 2 for returning alumni in caps and gowns
    - Students will line hallways to celebrate
    - Veronica suggested adding an 8th grade clap-out at graduation, which Ginger supported as a strong idea to include in graduation celebrations

C. Building/HVAC Update

Jeff H. noted next item was the building/HVAC update following completion of evaluation timeline discussion
Jeff L. reported that increased heat has highlighted ongoing air conditioning issues across the building
The team is currently waiting on a final quote, expected Monday, for HVAC work
Plan is to replace two HVAC units this summer using a capital expense already included in the budget
Estimated timeline: purchase/installation around July 1 or later
System overview discussion:

- Approximately 16 HVAC units total across the building
- Some units are not connected or not functioning properly
- Ongoing effort to create a full map of what each unit serves and what is actually operational

Specific problem areas identified:

- Middle school units, including systems affecting Sycamore (longstanding issue)
- Upper L classrooms including Cedar and Sequoia areas

- Some shared systems affect multiple rooms due to linked thermostat zones

Ginger noted that part of the issue is lack of clarity historically around what systems control which areas, and current work is focused on mapping and diagnosing system function
Discussion on removal of old/non-functioning units:

- Question raised about whether existing non-working units should be removed
- Jeff L. noted this may be considered during crane work, though not fully confirmed or in scope yet
- Agreement that removal could be addressed while equipment is already on-site, depending on cost and logistics

Functionality discussion:

- Some units provide both heating and cooling, with cooling being the primary issue area
- At least one unit (notably affecting Cedar/Sequoia) may no longer be functioning effectively
- Winter heating has generally not been a major issue compared to cooling failures

Jeff L. confirmed final quote is expected Monday and will determine final scope and cost
Jeff H. closed the discussion and invited questions before moving on

D. Faculty Liaison

- Jeff H. asked the faculty liaison if there was anything to share from the faculty
- Natalie (faculty liaison) responded that she had nothing to report at this time

E. Strategic Planning Committee

- Group met on May 22nd and included Ginger, Jeff H., Jeff L., Hannah, Andy, and Scott
- Focus was on refining the school’s strategic planning process, particularly around facilities and long-term growth
- Existing strategic priorities were reviewed and validated, with some refinement based on feedback (including an AI-generated review process)
- Strong emphasis on facilities planning, including developing a realistic 3-year facilities approach while maintaining a longer-term vision
- Discussion included alignment with ongoing work in general operations and recruiting processes
- Agreement that current priority should be strengthening academics and board development to build operational capacity before pursuing major expansion efforts
- Recognized need to increase “board horsepower” before scaling larger initiatives

- Plan for strategic plan to function as a living document:
    - Year 1: detailed and focused
    - Years 2–3: more flexible and adaptive
- Consideration of forming a formal strategic planning committee going forward
- Next meeting and potential vote/next steps to be scheduled
- General agreement that the structure and planning process will support clearer execution and accountability moving forward

F. PTO Update

- Ice cream trucks scheduled for field day
- Jeff H. reported the PTO's last meeting of the school year is scheduled for June 2 at 5pm

G. New Business

- Jeff L. shared that Robert Carpenter from the Massachusetts Charter Public School Association (MCPSA) sent a survey request asking board members to complete it to help inform how MCPSA can better support member schools

H. Directors Report

I. Accountability

- Jeff H. asked Kristen if there were any additional items to cover on the accountability side following discussion of surveys and related action items
- Kristen provided an update on the family survey, noting:
    - She received follow-up from Alicia after about two weeks
    - The prior year's survey has been consolidated into JotForm to allow for translation capabilities
    - Plan is to finalize edits and send out the updated version after the next meeting
    - Requested input on additional questions and confirmed needed languages: Spanish, Portuguese, and Haitian Creole

J. Development

- Jeff L. reported meeting with a fundraising consultant, Star Sneed, who has experience in school and education fundraising
- Initial discussions were described as productive, with several key strategy questions and follow-ups to revisit at the next meeting
- Jeff L. and Hannah also met with a representative from DonorPerfect (donor management software)
- Donor management software discussion (DonorPerfect):

- ◦ Platform presented as a comprehensive donor tracking and fundraising tool
    - ◦ Includes wealth prospecting features, allowing identification of potential donors based on capacity and location
    - ◦ Can generate lists of prospective donors (e.g., estimated giving capacity, proximity to school, philanthropic history)
    - ◦ System allows task assignment and team coordination for outreach efforts
    - ◦ Provides tracking of donor activity, contributions, and engagement history in one system
    - ◦ Noted as cost-effective and includes strong functionality compared to expectations
    - ◦ Team expressed cautious excitement, noting both effectiveness and sensitivity/privacy considerations
- Hannah added:
    - ◦ The system can identify high-capacity donors and philanthropic networks in the area
    - ◦ Raised discussion about how detailed and "data-driven" the prospecting feels, but acknowledged industry standard use
    - ◦ Noted that serious donors often expect schools/nonprofits to use structured fundraising and prospect research tools
- Jeff L. noted:
    - ◦ The platform cost is minimal relative to its functionality
    - ◦ The team plans to continue evaluation and meet again next week before full implementation
    - ◦ Supports collaborative use, with shared access and assignment features for fundraising tasks
- Additional fundraising strategy ideas discussed:
    - ◦ Paul suggested promoting corporate matching gift programs, noting many families may not realize employers will match donations
    - ◦ Idea introduced for a campaign encouraging parents to check employer matching opportunities
- Hannah added:
    - ◦ Some organizations offer incentives based on participation rates rather than donation amounts
    - ◦ Example discussed: grants triggered when a certain percentage of families contribute, even small amounts
- Jeff L. proposed:
    - ◦ A possible "$1 drive" campaign to increase participation rates
    - ◦ Goal would be broad participation rather than donation size, to help meet potential grant or funding thresholds

K. Finance

Jeff L.

- Reported projected net surplus of over $300,000 (closer to $380,000) for the current fiscal year
- Current approach is to apply incoming funds toward the current year and reduce surplus where appropriate
- Overall financial position for the year described as strong and stable
- Jeff L. noted:
    - No significant unexpected expenses anticipated for the remainder of the year
    - Financial outlook may improve further as Marc Wright is fully removed from payroll/expenses
    - Budget for next year is still being refined and will be voted on at the next meeting
    - Current projection shows approximately $195,000 under budget surplus for next year
    - Continued effort to maintain a “snapping model” budget approach (controlled and flexible spending)
    - Professional development costs are being managed through a tuition reimbursement policy, reducing prior overages
    - Organization remains focused on responsible spending and long-term revenue growth planning
- Overall sentiment: school is in a strong financial position with stable projections moving forward

III. Closing Items

A. Next Meeting

June 25th

B. Executive Session

C. 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. Gibbons