Hill View Montessori

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

Date and Time
Thursday June 25, 2026 at 6:30 PM

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

Trustees Present
A. Fergus, J. Hood, J. Landry, K. Laureano, P. Carelis (remote), S. Stecher (remote)

Trustees Absent
K. Bridges, V. Guzman

Ex Officio Members Present
G. Whitson

Non Voting Members Present
G. Whitson

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

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 Jun 25, 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 05-28-26.
K. Laureano seconded the motion.
Approval of prior meeting minutes:

- Correction noted under Accountability: Alicia should be listed instead of Felicia.
- Minutes approved with correction.

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

II. Updates

A. Pentucket Bank Access

J. Landry made a motion to Remove Ganesh and Veronica from accounts. Add Ginger to school accounts. Add Jeff/appropriate representatives to PTO account access.
A. Fergus seconded the motion.

- Jeff L. provided an update regarding school bank account access.
- Following the previous vote to remove Marc from account access, additional updates were needed.
- Board discussed approving the removal of:
  - Ganesh from all bank accounts.
  - Veronica from all bank accounts (term ending June 30).
- Ginger will be added to school bank accounts to have proper access and signing authority.
- Discussion regarding PTO account:
  - Marc was previously the only signer on the PTO account.
  - Board agreed this needed to be updated so appropriate school representatives have access.
- Jeff L. will send updated authorization documents to Pentucket Bank

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

B. 2026-27 Board Slate

- Jeff H. presented proposed Board slate:
    - Jeff Landry – Board Chair
    - Paul – Vice Chair
    - Accountability: Kristen and Kevin
    - Finance Chair: Jeff
    - Development: Andy and Scott
    - Committee on Trustees/governance development: Jeff H.
- Board thanked Veronica for her years of service.
- Sarah unable to continue on the Board.
- New candidate Nick Williamson introduced:
    - Former Hillview student.
    - Background in data analytics and operations/information management.
    - Interested in supporting the school community and data initiatives.
    - Jeff H. discussed Board governance expectations and management vs. Board responsibilities with Nick.

C. Director Evaluations

- Jeff L. provided update:
    - Director evaluations were completed through Board On Track.
    - Timing delayed due to one evaluator completing late.
    - Ginger reviewed data but had not yet received formal evaluation meeting.
- Feedback for Ginger was overwhelmingly positive:
    - Appreciation for leadership and work completed.
- Goals for next year will be discussed during August retreat.
- Marc's evaluation:
    - Unable to complete full process since he is no longer employed.
    - Jeff L. asked other Board members to send their Board On Track assessments of Marc since he is no longer here and he cannot access the results..

D. Building/HVAC Update

Jeff L. provided update:

- Two new HVAC units approved.
- Installation scheduled around July 7.
- Expected to resolve temperature issues in:
    - Middle school areas.
    - Three Upper Elementary classrooms.

E. Faculty Liaison

- Three main concerns brought forward:

1. Late Buses

- Ginger explained Hillview relies on Haverhill Public Schools transportation.
- Limited ability to control bus timing.
- Staff coverage plan:
  - Ginger, Hannah, Niamh, or June will step in after 4:00 PM so staff are not waiting.
- Board discussed continued communication with transportation. Ginger mentioned this year has been better than last.

2. Printer Issues

- Staff reported unreliable printers near the end of the year.
- Jeff explained:
  - Machines had recurring issues.
  - School is currently in a five-year lease.
  - Cannot replace equipment early.
  - Repairs are requested immediately when issues occur.

3. Pay Scale Questions

- Staff asked how placement within pay ranges is determined.
- Jeff explained:
  - Board established pay ranges.
  - Management determines placement.
  - Board should not add unnecessary layers.
- Discussion:
  - Consider explaining pay scale structure more clearly.
  - Include factors such as experience, education, and evaluations.
  - Recognized staff may still have concerns due to the transition from previous system.

F. Strategic Planning Committee

G. PTO Update

- Jeff H. provided PTO update:
  - Upcoming events:
    - August: Back-to-school balloon arch.
    - September: Fall farm event.
    - October: Five Guys fundraiser.
- PTO budget:
  - Approximately $8,000 available.
  - Funds being used for:
    - Author Day books.

    - Gym equipment.

H. New Business

- Jeff H. introduced Nick Williamson as potential new Board member.
- Discussion around:
  - His background.
  - Interest in data support.
  - Understanding Board governance.
- Vote on candidacy planned at end of meeting.

I. Directors Report

Academic Data

- Hannah's spring data presented by Ginger.
- Literacy:
  - DIBELS scores increased by 6.2%.
  - Kindergarten results were especially strong.
- Math:
  - STAR Math results were flat.
  - Niamh discussed possible causes:
    - Testing fatigue.
    - Older students completing MCAS before additional assessments.
- Math improvement plan:
  - Increase math intervention support.
  - Add additional intervention staff.
  - Nancy Adams supporting intervention hours.
  - Sarah providing push-in support.
  - Updated curriculum alignment and assessments.

Community Engagement

- Hillview participated in:
  - Arts Walk.
  - Pride Parade.
- Positive community feedback received.

School Operations

- Security cameras being installed.
- Policy will be shared with families.
- Building improvements:
  - New carpeting.
  - Lobby refresh planned.

Faculty Updates

- Natalie Mercedes received:
  - YMCA Teacher of the Year recognition.
  - Latino Educator Shine Award.
- Spanish teacher hired.
- Part-time Custodian position still open.
- Seeking additional substitute nurses.
- School is fully staffed.

J. Accountability

- Kristen reviewed the staff survey results.
  - Google Forms compiled responses into charts.
  - Short answer responses were reviewed using ChatGPT to help summarize anonymously.
- Jeff asked if there were any surprises or actionable items from the survey.
- Discussion around vague survey wording:
  - Ginger noted difficulty determining the size of concerns when responses use terms like “some,” “multiple,” or “several.”
  - Kristen clarified there were approximately 9–12 comments on short answer questions.
  - One concern area appeared to involve about 3 people, not a large portion of staff.
- Main actionable feedback:
  - Professional development/training:
    - Some staff requested more Montessori training.
    - Others felt there was already too much training.
    - Discussion around creating more targeted training based on staff roles.
- Board/staff communication:
  - Kristen suggested more education for staff about the Board’s role and how governance works.
  - Possible creation of a resource explaining:
    - Who the Board is.
    - What the Board does.
    - Who staff should go to with questions.
- Faculty Liaison discussion:
  - Current liaisons: Natalie, Patsy, and Carla.
  - Concern that expectations of the liaison role were not clearly defined.
  - Board discussed having one lead liaison rather than multiple rotating members.
  - Suggested creating a simple monthly newsletter/template:
    - Board updates.

    - Accountability items.
    - Staff feedback opportunities.
  - Purpose: improve communication and make staff feel connected to Board decisions.
- Favoritism concerns:
  - Kristen shared some survey comments referenced perceived favoritism.
  - Concerns were vague and appeared to come from a small number of responses.
  - Ginger noted she was aware of the possible concern and would think about clearer boundaries/office expectations.
  - Discussion around ensuring transparency and avoiding perceptions of favoritism.

K. Development

- Jeff L. discussed new donor tracking system:
  - DonorPerfect implemented.
  - Will help track donors and relationships.
- Development goals:
  - Build stronger fundraising program.
  - Identify community supporters.
- Rock & Roll Bingo:
  - Will continue next year.
  - Plans to add recognition component honoring long-term contributors.

L. Finance

J. Landry made a motion to Approve 26-27 Budget.
J. Hood seconded the motion.

- Jeff L. reviewed financial position:
  - School ended May approximately $400,000 favorable to budget.
  - Strong cash position.
- FY budget discussion:
  - Conservative approach.
  - Added better tracking categories.
  - Included expected expenses.
  - Reduced professional development line.
- Budget approved.
- Discussion:
  - Goal is sustainability, not profit.
  - Enrollment remains strong with waiting list.

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

III. Closing Items

A. Next Meeting

Discussion about July meeting:

- A vote for Nick Williamson to join the Board will take place at the next meeting, which may be held virtually in July (date TBD).
- August retreat is scheduled for August 20.

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 8:48 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
J. Gibbons