APPROVED

MCCPS Board of Trustees

Minutes

MCCPS Board of Trustees Annual Retreat

Date and Time
Saturday June 21, 2025 at 9:00 AM

Location
At MCCPS.

Please note that the in-person meeting will not be suspended or terminated if technological problems interrupt the remote connection.

Trustees Present
Ellen Lodgen, Emily Promise, Eric Neagle, Katie Holt, Kimberly Nothnagel, Lindsay Smith, Polly Titcomb, Stephanie Brant

Trustees Absent
Carol McEnaney, Ian Hunt

I. Opening Items

A. **Record Attendance**

B. **Also Present: - Facilitator, Will Gardner - Two potential Board members, 1. Karen Kagan 2. Carly McIvan**

C. **Call the Meeting to Order**

Lindsay Smith called a meeting of the board of trustees of MCCPS Board of Trustees to order on Saturday Jun 21, 2025 at 9:15 AM.

II. Other Business

A. Retreat

B. Welcome & Warm-Up

1. Icebreaker Exercise (favorite educator from K-12 and two items always in our fridge)
2. Review of Board Norms - Guidelines for Retreat expectations

C. Review and Discussion of Board Roles and Responsibilities

Overview of Board's Role Per DESE and ByLaws

1. Greater autonomy in exchange for higher accountability

- Board of Trustees - we don't answer directly to local district or school board
- DESE looks more carefully at Charter schools and their data than they do at traditional public schools
- Accountability requires strong Charter Board
- Strong oversight on Governance frees up the Head of School (HoS) to focus on other critical tasks related to her role

2. Board of Trustees Holds the Charter

- Charter schools have 5 year Charter cycles
- Board is responsible for adhering to the Charter (to avoid state intervention/having Charter revoked)

Key Areas for Which Board is Accountable

1. Exercise: reviewed DESE Performance Criteria to identify "key areas" of Board accountability

- Oversight of Academic Achievement
    - Equity lens applied to this oversight
- Financial Health
- Head of School
    - hiring/firing
    - retaining
    - performance reviews
- Governance
    - Compliance with applicable laws and regulations
    - Create and approve policies and ensure equity is protected in these
- Promoting school's mission
    - DEI big focus here as well

Stakeholders we are accountable to:
- Students
- Families
- Staff
- HoS
- DESE
- Colleagues

Through whom/what:
- DESE inspections
- accountability plan
- annual audit
- MCAS scores
- graduation/discipline/attendance rates
- enrollment numbers
- reputational elements
    - Helps in case of future crisis if ever there were community need
    - ensuring that we are champions for the school - recruiting and promoting - and clarifying - its mission

Governance v. Management
- Common question is what the right level of engagement for Board (and what is overstepping)
- The group did an exercise using case studies
- A healthy Board has a tension between supporting the HoS and holding HoS to high standards (by being fully informed on decisions, asking hard questions when needed, voicing concern and/or dissent when applicable, etc.). Engaging in these conversations over issues - even if we can't vote on the issue - actually gives Board, families, staff more confidence in the school leader.

D. Setting Goals for Board Development

Handout: MA Board Effectiveness Survey (by Bellwether)

Board Survey Data:
- What are some areas of strength for the Board?
    - Collaboration between HoS and Board
    - Level of engagement of board members
    - diverse skill sets
    - connection to school (5 parents, 2 teachers)

- What might be an area of improvement?
    - Membership (number of board members)
    - diversity (racial and gender)

- Academic data oversight and awareness
- Compliance (OML, minutes, etc.)
- Advocating in community
- Awareness of state landscape
- Onboarding process
- Commitment: both in attendance and fundraising

Exercise: Each member chose two topics for building capacity that we think the Board should prioritize this year.
Topics included:
Budget (one tab, one support),
Compliance (4 tabs, 4 supports)
Data/Academic Oversight (5 tabs, 8 supports)
Board Recruitment (2 tabs)
Commitment (1 tab)
Onboarding (1 tab, one support)
State landscapes (2 tabs, 2 supports)
Advocacy in the community (2 tabs, 1 support)

Results:
1. Academic Data/Oversight
2. Compliance

Next Step: Pick one priority area, draft specific, measurable, achievable and timebound Actionable Goal for this priority area

1. Academic Data/Oversight

Start with the Basics: Create Foundational Understanding
- Data literacy: what are the reporting data, how do demographics play into this, what is disaggregated data, how does data gets reported to board (e.g. proven provider status)

End Point:
- Create system by which Board is reviewing (according to trimesters) an academic dashboard that summarizes academic data through each school year (disaggregated by sub-group)
- Components:
  - Data monitoring system
  - Measurable growth
  - existing reporting structures (iReady, etc.)
  - trimester reporting

Integrated Decision Making Process
Propose - person makes and explains a proposal

Clarify - round of clarifying questions by other participants
React: round of reactions and suggestions; proposer listens but does not respond to feedback
Adjust: Proposer may edit the proposal (or not) based on what they've heard (or remove proposal entirely)
Consent: going around, participants have a chance to voice and objection, if they have one
Integrate: Objector/proposer work together to edit the proposal and address objections
Stamp: group approves proposal

E. Review & Approve Proposed Onboarding Plan for New Trustees

Lindsay handed out Board of Trustees Responsibilities
Brief introduction to first draft of Board of Trustees Handbook

Discussed overall thought and impressions.

Next Step:
- Add review of Letter and Handbook at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

F. Parking Lot

1. Board Role - PR in Community
2. Perception of Charter - Reputation for "whom we serve"
3. Clarification of which policies the Board approves
4. Developing more financial literacy as a Board

III. Closing Items

A. Lunch

Closing Appreciation of each Board Member

Survey for Will Gardner/Prospect Leadership Group

B. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 1:15 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Polly Titcomb