

**Herron Classical Schools Board Meeting**  
**April 30, 2024**

Board members present were Dan Roy, Adrian Miller, Meggie Dials, Michael Allen, Keith Steiner, Brenda Roper, David Steele, Caryl West, Mindy Cunningham via zoom, Mary Ann Sullivan via zoom, Isaac Bamgbose, Mac McWhirter, John Watson via zoom, and Miguel Rodriguez, Staff present were Janet McNeal, Michelle Krauter, Karen Lalioff, Bethany Lowery, Katie Dorsey, Casey Osterkamp. Emanuel Harper, Anne Deckard, and Cody Whitesell. Guests included Meghan Paden, HPA parent, and HCS student, Oyenmwosasere Ekhosuehi.

Roy called the board meeting to order and a quorum of the Board was present. Guest speakers began the meeting.

Meghan Paden, HPA parent, shared her reasons for choosing to send her son to HPA. She noted that he was behind academically when she enrolled him but he is now excelling due to the quality of teaching, the strong curriculum, and the time his teacher spends in getting to know the individual students and their needs. She told the board that they “have created a beautiful community” at HPA.

Whitesell provided a report on I-Read and I-Learn projections. He explained that I-Learn is a federally-mandated text that measures reading and math proficiency, while I-Read is the longest-standing exam that tests foundational reading skills at the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. He reported that last year’s pass rate was 96.4% with only one student not passing I-Read. He said projections for this year are expected to be on par with last year.

Harper spoke on behalf of a student who planned to attend the board meeting but was unable to due to transportation. He said Gabby had planned to share how meaningful her education at HRHS has been, how she valued the diversity, and how the rigorous curriculum led to receiving a full ride scholarship to IU.

Minutes of the prior Board meeting were approved.

Roy provided the Executive Committee report. He referenced the resume of prospective board member Brian Brase which had been previously distributed to board members. He thanked David Steele for bringing the candidate to the board’s notice. Roy referenced Brase’s extensive athletic background and his interest in helping to improve athletic offerings at HCS, which is an area of expertise not yet represented on the board. A motion to elect Brase to the board was made, seconded, and unanimously approved by vote.

Deckard introduced HHS senior student, Oyenmwosasere Ekhosuehi. Ekhosuehi provided leadership for the annual Herron Riley Dance Marathon which raises money for Riley Children's Hospital. Proceeds broke records this year. Ekhosuehi shared that her cousin has serious health challenges and she sees first-hand the impact Riley Hospital has on families. She said she received a full-ride scholarship which would not have been possible without a HCS education. She plans to study marketing.

Returning to the executive committee report, Roy presented the election slate and noted that Vice Chair Mark Nottingham has resigned from the board. A motion to approve the slate as written was made, seconded, and approved by unanimous vote. Mindy Cunningham was elected to the position of Vice Chair. A discussion about the annual Conflict of Interest Statement and Board Evaluation followed. Members completed and submitted their forms. Roy expressed that in addition to the formal assessment, he is always open to conversations with fellow board members.

Miller provided the Treasurer's Report. He discussed a confluence of circumstances such as the end of ESSER funding, increased healthcare costs, and construction loans for HPA that have created a deficit which the HCS team was challenged to eliminate in the 2024-2025 budget. Numerous measures to reduce operating costs have been implemented with the goal of preserving every dollar in the classroom. The HCS leadership team worked to review every department carefully to ensure that reductions were made equitably with as small of an impact as possible. Dorsey explained that natural attrition would provide some cost reduction but not to the extent that it would be possible to avoid staffing reductions. She also discussed pursuing additional revenue sources such as Medicaid reimbursement for eligible activities as well as reimbursements for certain CTE courses provided by the state. HRHS enrollment remains and student mobility issues are a challenge. Dorsey discussed programs to attract new families and increase "stickiness" of enrolled students such as an emphasis on STEM programs and tech design courses at HRHS. Dorsey also discussed the ongoing impact of the 30<sup>th</sup> St bridge closure has had on enrollment. As part of the cost reduction effort, the network's leadership team have agreed to not accept raises this year, and staff raises will be held to 3% this year. A motion was made to empower the executive committee to approve the budget to present to the board in June. The motion was seconded and the vote was unanimous.

Dorsey provided the personnel update/teacher hiring/retention report. She said there has been very little turnover in staff this year and that teachers have been informed of the 3% raise for the coming year. Hiring is underway for HPA's expansion.

Osterkamp provided a facilities update. She reported that construction at HPA is on track for a July 10 move-in, and that the temporary modular classrooms would be removed in June. Some of the funds from a Charter Facility grant will be used for the expense but it means cutting back on

some of the planned HVAC upgrades and repairs. She offered to provide board members tours of the HPA construction in progress.

Lowery provided a report of current giving. Annual fund gifts were \$165K in unrestricted funds. She reported that Movie Night was a great success with over 700 attending the event which was held on a bigger screen this year. A new online giving platform enabled donors to purchase tickets for families who could not otherwise afford to participate, and 33 families were able to attend on donated tickets. Forty student volunteers help make the event successful. She also provided a report on campaign timing.

Lowery also provided an enrollment report. HHS is tracking as expected with a high response on the intent to return form distributed to families. HPA will be fully enrolled next year. HRHS enrollment goal is 400. Marketing efforts include billboards and social media videos targeting the growing Hispanic population. McNeal stated that charter school leaders are reporting that the expanded voucher program is impacting public school enrollment.

McNeal provided a graduation report and commencement details. HHS's Class of 2024 is 216 students, and HRHS's is 88 students. Of those graduating students, 168 have earned the Academic Honors Diploma. A total of 26 seniors will be completing the credit requirements during Summer Academy or through Edmentum. She reported that many colleges have extended their enrollment deadlines due to the nationwide FAFSA issue that prevented families from having a clear view of their financial aid. Some of the colleges the Classes of 2024 will be attending are: Ball State, Butler, IU, IU-Indianapolis, Purdue, Purdue-Fort Wayne, Manchester, UIndy, Indiana State, Wabash, Alabama State, U Cincinnati, Kalamazoo C, SCAD, Tulane, West Virginia State, Ivy Tech, Vincennes U.

There being no more business, the meeting was adjourned.