Hiawatha/Howe Site Council Notes

February 25, 2025

Virtual

8:30-9:20

Meeting Norms

Be present and share your presence

Be real, but be hopeful

Be prepared

Be solution-oriented

Maximize our time to maximize impact

Seek out and honor all perspectives

HHCS GOVERNANCE STANDARDS

Attending Online: Alayna Davis (co-chair), Gloria Cazanacli (co-chair), Mercedes Walker (principal), Abigail Armstrong, Britta Walker, Chris Jones, Jessica Johnson, Kaitlin Zurn, Lynn Pyfferoen, Peggy Winchell, Sharon Delcambre, Melissa Andrie (PTO), Jenny Graff (PTO), Brian Paulson (PTO)

AGENDA ITEM	NOTES	PRESENTER	TIME
Warm Welcome and Introductions		Principal Walker and Caregiver Co-Chairs Davis, Cazanacli	3 min
Review Agenda	No additions.	Principal Walker and Caregiver Co-Chairs Davis, Cazanacli	
Review of Last Meeting	Postponed to make time for budget conversation.	Principal Walker and Caregiver Co-Chairs	

		Davis, Cazanacli	
Caregiver Update	Postponed to make time for budget conversation.	Caregiver Co-Chairs Davis, Cazanacli	
Principal Update	Postponed to make time for budget conversation. For future agenda, recap: • American Heart Association (AHA) Kids Heart Challenge • Family Fun Night • African American Parents Involvement Day (AAPID)	Principal Walker	
Teacher and Staff Update	Postponed to make time for budget conversation.	Teacher/staff representative	
Special Project	Postponed to make time for budget conversation. For future agenda: State of the Schools Task Force update	Kelly and Delcambre	
Main Topic	Council and PTO members reviewed caregiver survey on budget priorities. General notes: • Budget numbers will remain internal with HHCS staff until Principal Walker has had meetings with staff and union stewards • Community release of budget numbers will be on March 3; budget is due back to the district on March 7 • Hiawatha/Howe teachers are a strong community that has risen to the challenge this year, but further cuts will be felt really	Principal Walker	45 min

	deeply • Budgets are handed to principals with tight parameters on how it can be sent • This year the district has explained that there is no extra cushion for schools, the budget reflects the exact per pupil funding, which is calculated by the projected number of students • Principal Walker attended the School Finder Fair to try to drive recruitment, but those families won't necessarily end up at Hiawatha/Howe, they will still be sorted through the lottery process Council and PTO reflections: • Class sizes, safety, teacher support, and more recruitment were the most common themes • Less staff turn-over was also identified as a high priority, may be partly addressed by new licensing procedures • Path forward with budget restrictions is grant writing, support from external organizations (e.g. reading corps), more volunteers, leaning on e-learning in classrooms to help manage large class sizes • Are there ways to advocate for speeding up the process of reconciling staffing if actual student numbers are higher than projections? Likely not given the budget projections and the threat of disruption in federal funding for MPS; the budget is tight enough that the district is probably going		

	to lean into paying teachers extra for higher class sizes, rather than allocating funds for additional associate educators		
Questions and Closing	Council will meet again on February 28 to review budget numbers, prior to the PTO/community meeting on March 3. Principal Walker will send out details and a Google Meet link.	Principal Walker and Caregiver Co-Chairs Davis, Cazanacli	2 min