Herron Classical Schools Board Meeting
November 11, 2025

Board members present were Adrian Miller, Patrick Chittenden, Isaac Bamgbose, David Steele, Mindy Cunningham, Keith Steiner, Mac McWhirter, Meggie Dials, Michael Allen, Brenda Roper, and Miguel Rodriguez and Anne Ricchiuto, via zoom. Staff present were Janet McNeal, Katie Dorsey, Michelle Krauter, Karen Lalioff, Carroll Bilbrey, and Austin Hauser.

Miller called the board meeting to order and a quorum of the Board was present.

Minutes of the prior Board meeting were approved.

Dorsey provided a summary of the IDOE's "Flowers" regarding the GAN grant and distributed a copy of the email praising the leadership at HRHS and HPA following the on-site GAN grant monitoring review. The IDOE wrote; "During Geoff's recent monitoring visit, he left truly impressed by the meaningful and innovative ways your school is being led. He specifically highlighted some standout practices that strongly align with the priorities of the Office of Educational Options and Quality at the IDOE, especially how your school is improving the quality of education by increasing transparency and accountability in school performance metrics. HCS staff were invited to address the participants to share these standout practices in a follow-up meeting with charter school leaders.

McNeal provided the President's report. She provided an update on the work of the ILEA and the efforts of innovation charter leaders to align on positions regarding the developing set of ILEA recommendations. She stated she has attending ILEA hearings and offered public comments. She reported that the final set of ILEA recommendations will be finalized in December.

Hauser and Dorsey provided the education committee report and presented an overview of the state's proposed accountability model. Hauser reported that he has been actively engaged in the process and noted that he felt the state was taking his recommendations seriously, particularly in the timing of mandated science tests. Dorsey reported that the model is more complicated that previous accountability frameworks and would make it harder to predict report outcomes. She noted that attendance rate goals are very high in the proposed model which will make scoring an A more difficult for schools across the state. McNeal added that the state has "strong and good intentions in the formula's new model, noting the HCS have always received an A, but achieving an A will be much more difficult going forward. Cunningham asked if the report card grade will be broken down for public understanding and Dorsey said she did not believe so. Initially, there will be no impact or repercussions due to the report card but that would come later. Dorsey said HCS leadership was examining how the proposed model aligns with HCS educational model.

Miller stated that there are so many things impacting learning today, especially in technology and AI learning, and that critical thinking skills must be transcendent in the changing educational landscape.

Cunningham reported on the education committee's recommendation to approve the high school sex education curriculum. The board voted to approve the curriculum as written. Dorsey reported that the curriculum for the middle school will be ready for review in December.

Miller provided the executive committee report. Miller noted that Ricchiuto is heading up an ad-hoc committee to review board structure, committee functions, term limits, and ways to keep former board members engaged. The committee will provide it summary and recommendations during the annual retreat in February. Miller also referred to the network's ICE policy which was shared with families and said he felt extremely confident in the policy.

Bamgbose provided the Fiduciary Committee report. Michelle noted that the current audit is likely to extend beyond the due date. She reported that the network is approaching standard in OEI's framework for cash on hand, and that for the first time since 2022 it hasn't had to pull from the line of credit. She noted that enrollment at the high schools was below what was budgeted and school leaders have been tasked with making a 10% reduction in expenditures, for anything item unrelated to salaries and benefits, in order to help bridge the budget gap. In order to plan for the maturity of the bridge loan payment due in 2028, $50k a month is being set aside out of operations in preparation for that payment. Dorsey noted a report that there has been a 6.6% decline in high school enrollment among schools located in the IPS district. Allen suggested that improved athletic facilities should be a priority for increased enrollment and should be a priority. Bamgbose reported that the fiduciary committee would be meeting before the next board meeting in December. Miller noted that the network is in a far better financial place than it was a year ago with the end of ESSER funding.

There being no more business, the meeting was adjourned.