

Great Hearts Texas Stakeholders,

On March 6th, the Great Hearts Texas (GHTX) Board held its regularly scheduled board meeting. The Great Hearts America (GHA) board of directors also held a contemporaneous board meeting with board members on-site in Texas and remote. We truly appreciate everyone who took time out of their schedules to attend, in-person and virtually, and to share their thoughts and perspectives.

After GHTX Board President Shannon Sedgwick Davis opened the board meeting, Kurt Davis of GHA made opening comments on the importance of the Great Hearts mission and the pursuit of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty.

The floor was then opened for public comment by those in attendance, and public remarks were shared.

Superintendent Report:

Interim Superintendent Kurtis Indorf began by stating his belief and understanding that Great Hearts academies are where our mission comes to life. He then shared his key learnings from his first three months in his role and what steps are being taken:

1. Parents want and need more communication and more responsive feedback channels. In response, communications are being prioritized, and the parent feedback survey was shared with families.
2. Headmasters have varied perspectives on approaching the Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA). As a result, TIA has been delayed to thoroughly evaluate and consider all approaches.
3. Great Hearts Northern Oaks has parking needs, and next steps toward resolution are being evaluated and will be shared by the end of the academic year.
4. There is a need for stronger engagement from parents and staff on phase two buildings and construction as GHTX grows.
5. Great Hearts Monte Vista South needs a playground, and there is now a confirmed play space lawn that will be turned into a full playground throughout the 2024-2025 academic year. A partnership was reached with The Koehler House across the street from the campus to utilize their space for an outdoor playground for scholars.
6. GHTX needs to strengthen support and culture around Special Education, and the team is crafting priorities and strategies to move forward.
7. GHTX has real work to do with regards to its current and future budget. With no increase in public funding from the State of Texas, achieving enrollment goals is essential to guiding the budget.
8. Teacher pay is a significant challenge across schools. We need to retain our high-quality teachers. Existing staffing models must be analyzed and improved approaches must be integrated.

Mr. Indorf recognized the incredible support of staff, the community, and the Board. As always, school safety remains a top priority. Looking toward the future, we will continue to grow and invest in our existing communities, while also planning for enrollment growth and phased campus growth.

Texas Academic Performance Report:

Mr. Rutherford presented the 2022-2023 Texas Academic Performance Report.

- Across all STAAR assessments, there has been a recovery in academic performance over the last three years, following the “COVID slide.”
- Over the last four years, GHTX has opened seven new schools, nearly tripling its enrollment, while maintaining solid academic performance.
- GHTX schools consistently outperform their peers across Region 20 and the state of Texas at large.
- The attendance rate dropped in 2021-2022 (the state has not yet released this year’s official accountability), following the change to in-person learning and the departure from online and hybrid classes.
- GHTX graduation rate is 9-11% higher than peers across the state: 99.1% of GHTX scholars graduated in 4 years. [[Link: Graphic shared during the board meeting](#)]
- 9/10 GHTX graduates met the Texas Success Initiative, outperforming college, career, and military readiness in comparison to peers across the region and state by as much as 24%.
- 100% of GHTX scholars participated in the SAT/ACT and outperformed their state peers in SAT/ACT results.

Main areas of growth have been seen where intervention and accelerated instruction was applied to improve academic gaps and test scores. Better scores directly correlate to funding. GHTX organizations are also working for better means for scholars to receive college credit for work they are doing in the classroom. Great Hearts Online students are now able to attain an associate degree at high school graduation.

Finance Report:

Vice President of Finance Kevin Byrne provided updates on the following:

- Average Daily Attendance YTD is 95.44%
- Fiscal Challenges
 - With lack of state funding, close attention must be paid to enrollment targets and watching expenses. Since 2019, Texas legislature hasn’t changed its per pupil spending, despite experiencing a 17% rise in inflation.
 - Philanthropy has decreased.
 - Debt Service continues to increase.
 - GHA billed fees continue to increase.
 - ESSER funding will no longer be available.
- Enrollment Update: 20.9% increase, year by year
- Fiscal Year 2024 Forecast: \$2M deficit

Following the Finance Report, a motion was made to adjourn to a closed Executive Session.

Board Approvals:

During the March 6th meeting, the following votes occurred:

- The Board approved the Story Road (Irving) real property purchase.
- The Board reappointed Ms. Moczygamba to the Board of Directors.
- The Board authorized the President of the Board of Directors to set up a formal search process for the position of Superintendent of Great Hearts Texas, along with mechanisms for receiving parent feedback in the search process.
- The Board appointed Jim Rahn and Kevin Hall to the GHTX Board of Directors, longtime supporters of Great Hearts and the classical education model.
 - Mr. Rahn is President of the Kern Family Foundation, where he leads efforts to expand programs in alignment with the foundation's mission. An education reform leader, he co-founded two education nonprofits and has served on the boards of Great Hearts America and the Charter School Growth Fund.
 - Mr. Hall is the CEO of the Charter School Growth Fund, a national organization, and brings a wealth of experience in education leadership. Previously, he was Chief Operating Officer of the Broad Foundation and co founded Chancellor Beacon Academies.
- The Board approved the election of new officers, naming Jim Rahn as President and Brandon Byrne as Secretary.
 - Jim Rahn has transitioned from serving on the Great Hearts America board to also assume the role of Board President at Great Hearts Texas. In this capacity, his unwavering dedication to the classical education model, and significant contributions to the Great Hearts community, will continue to influence the future trajectory of our organization in Texas.
- The Board accepted the resignations of Wade Dyke, Kim Tanner, and Mike Burke from the Board of Directors. Their exemplary service, leadership, and unwavering dedication have greatly enriched the Great Hearts Texas community.

Following the adjournment of the GHTX board meeting at 1:22 PM, the GH America board meeting resumed and the GH America board approved all four new appointments to the GHTX Board: Mr. Rahn, Mr. Hall, Dr. Sanford, and Mr. Byrne.

For more information on the board meeting and future meetings please visit:
<https://texas.greatheartsamerica.org/finance-compliance/public-board-meeting/>

Thank you for your continued support of the Great Hearts Texas community.

In partnership,
Great Hearts Texas