

Gathering Waters Board Agenda

September 11, 2021 9 a.m.

The mission of Gathering Waters Chartered Public School is to offer students in the Monadnock region an education that enables them to discover their interests and capabilities; explore the surrounding world; and cultivate a lifelong love of learning, a sense of community responsibility and understanding of environmental sustainability. We carry out this mission by providing a rich and engaging curriculum that integrates the arts, meaningful practical work, outdoor education and service to the larger community.

Our vision is an inclusive school culture of compassion and respect where deep interest in others goes hand in hand with individual growth. The educational environment enables students to develop self-confidence, self-knowledge, intellectual flexibility, and the capacity for creative problem solving that supports ethical action in their local and global communities.

Core Principles of Public Waldorf Education

1. Image of the Human Being:

Public Waldorf education is founded on a coherent image of the developing human Being.

Each human being is a unique individual who brings specific gifts, creative potential, and intentions to this life. Public Waldorf education addresses multiple aspects of the developing child including the physical, emotional, intellectual, social, cultural, moral, and spiritual. Through this, each child is helped to integrate into a maturing whole, able to determine a unique path through life.

Rudolf Steiner's educational insights are seen as a primary, but not exclusive, source of guidance for an understanding of the image of the human being.

2. Child Development:

An understanding of child development guides all aspects of the educational program, to the greatest extent possible within established legal mandates.

Human development proceeds in approximate 7-year phases. Each phase has characteristic physical, emotional, and cognitive dimensions and a primary learning orientation.

The Public Waldorf educational program, including the curriculum, teaching methodologies, and assessment methods, work with this understanding of human development to address the needs of the individual and the class in order to support comprehensive learning and healthy, balanced development. Our developmental perspective informs how state and federal mandates, including curriculum sequence, standardized testing, and college and career readiness, are met.

3. Social Change Through Education

Public Waldorf education exists to serve both the individual and society.

Public Waldorf education seeks to offer the most supportive conditions possible for the development of each student's unique capacities and for engendering the following qualities to work towards positive social change:

A harmonious relationship between thinking, feeling, and willing;

Self-awareness and social competence;
Developmentally appropriate, academically informed, independent thinking;
The initiative and confidence necessary to transform intentions into realities; and
An interest in the world, with active respect and a feeling of responsibility for oneself, one's community, and the environment.
Such individuals will be able to participate meaningfully in society.

4. Human Relationships:

Public Waldorf Schools foster a culture of healthy relationships.

Enduring relationships — and the time needed to develop them — are central to Public Waldorf education. The teacher works with each student and class as a whole to support relationship-based learning.

Healthy working relationships with parents, colleagues, and all stakeholders are essential to the well being of the student, class, and school community. Everyone benefits from a community life that includes festivals, events, adult education, study, and volunteer activities.

Public Waldorf education encourages collaboration in schools, within the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education, among all schools working out of a developmental approach, in conjunction with the broader field of education.

5. Access and Diversity:

Public Waldorf Schools work to increase diversity and access to all sectors of society.

Public Waldorf schools respond to unique demands and cultures in a wide range of locations in order to provide maximum access to a diverse range of students. Schools work towards ensuring that students do not experience discrimination in admission, retention, or participation.

Public Waldorf schools and teachers have the responsibility to creatively address the developmental needs of the students with the most inclusive possible approaches for all learners.

The Public Waldorf program and curriculum is developed by the school to reflect its student population.

6. Collaborative Leadership:

School leadership is conducted through shared responsibilities within established legal Structures.

Faculty, staff, administration and boards of a Public Waldorf school collaborate to guide and lead the school with input from stakeholder groups. To the greatest extent possible, decisions related to the educational program are the responsibility of those faculty and staff with knowledge and experience of Rudolf Steiner's educational insights.

Governance and internal administration are implemented in a manner that cultivates active collaboration, supportive relationships, effective leadership, consequential action, and accountability. A Public Waldorf school is committed to studying and deepening its understanding of best practices of governance appropriate to its stage of organizational development.

7. Schools as Learning Communities:

Public Waldorf schools cultivate a love of lifelong learning and self-knowledge.

In Attendance: Gabrielle, Dan, Janet, Eliza, Anny, Jonny, Elizabeth, Emily

Non voting member-Luke Goodwin,

Other Attendees: Justin Somma, Marcy, Shana Kirschner (parent council rep)

I. Principle #6 -Luke - Read by Jonny

II. Approve Minutes from 8/14/2021 meeting Motion to approve: Emily / Second: Eliza / Vote: Unanimous

III. Updates- Discussion (30 min)

Finance-Justin - Relooking at budget to conform with state requirements, including structuring spending categories correctly. He will present a final budget at next meeting including actuals and cashflow statement.

Federal grant of 1.5m over 3 years, is administered through State Dept. of Education (date for fund available for reimbursement: TBD). Spending over 750k in any one year triggers audit, planning to spread out over three years. Funds will carry us through summertime expenses including facilities cost, payroll, etc.

Lead Admin Update - Luke also gave brief overview of governance and decision making structure within the Waldorf philosophy. School has 21 special ed students currently enrolled. Noted that most would not be enrolled if we were an independent school. Celebrating the fact that we are able to be accessible to these students and offer these services. In addition to two special ed teachers, we also have a pt counselor, and multiple paraprofessionals assisting.

Enrollment - Justin - A lot of shifting of students in first week. Some unenrolling due to changing schools or because of mask mandate. Some switching to GW from another school after first week, some still quarantining from travel, and some new students coming from waiting lists. Will have more accurate enrollment numbers next week. Current class openings in 3rd grade (2), 6th grade (6) & 9th grade (3). First day head count determines initial payment from state, but will be reconciled throughout the year to ensure accuracy.

Marketing-Elizabeth Also noted that we have two potential candidates for Marketing & Communications Manager

Fundraising and Development-Holly - Holly not able to attend, Justin updated on Little Green Light software being up and running to track donations and facilitate recurring payment. Marcy gave update on Craft Fair, being planned for No. 19th & 20th.

HR-Anny/Justin - They have finalized the Student Handbook, but will work on condensing it down from the current 40 pages, as well as separating it into a Guide & Procedures.

Strategic Planning-Emily - Will present next meeting.

Parent Council-Shana - Introduced Shana Kirschner as parent council rep. Discussed processes for communication between parents and administration. Asked about the possibility of integrating parent council notes into GW website for easy access and integration.

Governance-Board Member Application and Committee Responsibilities - **Looking for more committee members.**

A. Process for **Committee** Members:

1. Parent or community member expresses interest in committee or is invited to consider.
2. Committee chair shares committee description and expectations
3. . Invitation is made to new member

Motion to approve: Gabrielle / Second: Janet / Vote: Unanimous

B. Faculty Board Member Process

Proposal: Faculty board members will go through same application process as other board members- Motion to approve: Anny / Second: Elizabeth / Vote: Unanimous Further discussion needed about the actual Board Member application and clarification on background checks. Governance committee will review and present at next Board meeting.

IV. DEI- Eliza (20 min) - Proposal - Commitment of board to the work of the DEI committee and committee structure. Further definition and clarification needed for creation of Advisory Committee (will they be advising the board only, or also faculty, staff, how will they be communicating with parents and greater community). Motion to approve commitment of the Board to DEI work: Emily / Second: Jonny / Vote: Unanimous

V. EMAILS - Will only use GW emails moving forward, reminder of expectations for timely responses

Closing Verse-

You have been joined by fate together
To unfold the powers
Which are to serve a good creative work.
Wisdom itself will teach you as you walk on the soul's path
That greatest things can be achieved
When souls who give to each other spirit certainty
Unite and work towards the healing of the world in faithfulness.

- Rudolf Steiner (From Benedictus, a character in the Mystery Dramas or also called the Portal of Initiation-thank you to Janet for bringing this)

Next Meeting: Saturday October 9,2021 9 a.m.