Gathering Waters Board Minutes

November 13, 2021 9 a.m.-11 a.m. 98 South Lincoln Street

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.

Public Waldorf education emphasizes continuous engagement in learning and self-reflective practices that support ongoing improvement. At the individual and classroom level, teachers reflect regularly on their observations of the students and of the educational process. Essential aspects of school-wide work and professional development include self-reflection, peer review, faculty and individual study, artistic activity, and research.

Rudolf Steiner is a primary, but not exclusive, source of guidance for developing an active inner, meditative life and an understanding of the dynamics within society.

Public Waldorf schools encourage all community members to engage in active and ongoing ways to enhance their capacities as human beings through self reflection and conscious social engagement.

**In Attendance:** Board Members: **Gabrielle, Dan, Janet, Eliza, Jonny, Elizabeth, Emily, Holly, Anny, Katie Oswald, Jessie Morin,**

Non Voting Members: **Luke Goodwin**

Other Attendees: **Shana Kirschner (parent council rep), Maia Beh (parent), Jennifer Daffledecker (parent), Justin Somma**

**Reading of the Mission-**Shana

1. **Non Public Session**- RSA 91-A:3, II(c). 3. Matters that, if discussed in public, would adversely affect the reputation of someone *other than a member of the public body*. However, if that person requests it, the meeting must be public. Such matters include any application for assistance or tax abatement, or waiver of fees or fines based on poverty or inability to pay.

**Motion to move board into closed session - Gabrielle / Second: Anny / Vote: Unanimous**

**Motion to welcome Jessie Morin and Katie Oswald as Faculty Trustees as recommended by Governance Committee: Anny / Second: Elizabeth / Vote: Unanimous**

1. **Principle #7** -Jessie Morin
2. **Approve Minutes from 10/9/2121 meeting**

**Motion to approve: Gabrielle / Second: Jonny / Vote: Unanimous**

1. **Reports**
2. **Lead Admin and Special Education-**Luke

Faculty, staff and students are preparing for a stretch of “holiday intensity” and fatigue. Looking to hire a number of classroom assistants (K, Aftercare, 1st grade, 3rd grade, Upper School) most of whom will be paid for via home public districts and IEP support. Upper school office manager hired. Big Thank you to Theresa Majoy for volunteering in this role!

Formation of Faculty Leadership Task Force to write and propose the job descriptions and hiring process for the Faculty Level Chair leadership positions and support the Lead Administrator in faculty leadership activities until these positions are filled.

Lead Administrator Job Description has been updated. Luke has drafted yearly performance goals and Governance has outlined an evaluation process all to be approved at the next Board meeting.

COVID Health and Safety Updates:

1. Will begin administering rapid COVID tests onsite for symptomatic students, faculty and staff.
2. Revision of class quarantine policy-classroom contacts not considered family contacts but only close contacts.
3. Continuing to monitor the county positivity and transmission rates and will make any changes accordingly

COVID policy amendment/clarification

COVID POLICY AMENDMENT

The Board of Directors of Gathering Waters delegates to the Lead Administrator the authority to make changes in mask protocols and other mitigation strategies based upon regional infection and vaccination rates, classroom size and age of the student, that are consistent with the overall goals of the COVID Reopening Plan approved by the Board at the beginning of the year.

Motion to approve with addition that the board will be notified and consulted prior to community messaging with the opportunity to make motion for emergency board meeting to address any concerns: Emily / Second: Jessie / Vote: Unanimous

1. **Finance-**Justin and Jonny

Reimbursements from Federal grant have been delayed due to back and forth with the Dept of Ed. Accounts used for the grant do not align perfectly with the accounts set up in our chart of accounts. Justin is working on realigning all of this. Discussion about Federal Grant money. Need to look long-term after grant money dries up to ensure sustainability of the school.

FACILITIES-31 Washington

Gym is currently being repaired and our usage is limited. We hope to offset the loss of the gym for regular operations by leveraging that loss in negotiations to rent the gym for after school hours (not part of our lease).

Revised Budget Approval **Motion to approve: Eliza / Second: Gabrielle / Vote: Unanimous with 3 abstentions (Emily, Katie, and Jessie)**

**Fundraising and Development-**Holly

* $145k raised to date
* Little Green Light recording donors, future work includes creating templates for thank you letters, etc. and training GW employees on using LGL.
* Thank You Event December 17th-Anniversary of the charter, Unveiling of the wave painting
* Future Fundraising Initiatives
	+ Giving Tuesday (November 30th)
	+ Thank you/tax letters going out by end of year
	+ Research into available grant opportunities
	+ Preparations for next community supported education appeal
1. **Marketing, Outreach and Enrollment**
2. Re-enrollment and Lottery timing-Luke More details to come as procedures get finalized

**\*\*Special public comment period moved to mid-meeting to accommodate community member’s schedule \*\***

Jennifer Daffledecker requested a copy of the budget. This will be available on the website.

Maia Beh presented a petition to make outdoor masking for K and 1st graders optional.Gabrielle received the petition and will give it to Luke.

1. Website Development and Social Media-Moving forward with website redesign in Squarespace with Bob Lawson of [Sustainable Digital](https://www.sustainabledigital.com/).
2. Crafts Fair-Banners are displayed at the Lower School, the Post Office and in front of People’s Bank on West St.
	1. Ad in the Shopper News 11/10 and 11/17. Press release 11/10.
	2. The fair is listed in the Keene Sentinel’s online calendar.
	3. Foam board display made for donation table at fair. Magnets being made for donation thank-you’s
3. Apparel Talking with Gemini Screenprint in Keene for our first run of Gathering Waters apparel. This will not be ready in time for the Crafts Fair but will be in time for the holidays.

1. **HR**-Anny **-**Will report next Month on work on Handbooks. Committee working on issues related to Health Insurance next year.Will present next meeting
2. **Governance**-Gabrielle
3. Revised Board By Laws **-Discussed. Postponed until next meeting to allow for review and changes.**
4. Governance and Operation Policies **- Postponed until next meeting**
5. Revised Conflict of Interest Policy and disclosure forms - **Motion to approve: Jonny / Second: Gabrielle / Vote: Unanimous** Forms given to board members to sign and return to Justin
6. Reminder to set Committee Meeting Times-see below
7. Lead Admin Review Process/Job Description-to be approved at December meeting **- Postponed until next meeting to allow adequate time to review and make changes.**
8. Proposal to change Lead Admin title to Principal. Discussion about importance of communicating to community collaborative nature of this role. **Motion to approve: Dan / Second: Jonny / Vote: Unanimous**
9. **DEIJ Advisory Group-**Eliza

Advisory Group and a resource for the whole school community (board, faculty and staff, and families). Not a decision making body.

The principle responsibilities of the council are to consider policies, practices, and concerns that come up that have a DEIJ element, and to respond with resources, council, and recommendations for the appropriate groups to evaluate and consider implementing.

Currently working on:

* + - Response to SB2/HB544 “divisive concepts” bill
		- DEIJ Professional Development opportunities for faculty/staff/board
		- Standardized testing evaluation and alternatives ([PACE](https://www.education.nh.gov/who-we-are/division-of-learner-support/bureau-of-instructional-support/performance-assessment-for-competency-education))
		- Inclusive festival planning resources :
			* thanksgiving; winter holidays
		- Demographic data collection
		- Considering submitted questions from faculty and community
		- Creating an awareness-building statement of purpose for the community
1. **Parent Council-**Shana

Primary work has been on crafts fair and support of school activities where needed.

1. **Strategic Planning-**Emily

The Strategic Planning Committee seeks BOT approval of our revised mandate:

The purpose of this committee is to develop and facilitate a process for strategic planning that coordinates development of pedagogical program, faculty recruitment, student enrollment growth and retention, school governance, marketing and outreach, financial sustainability, medium to long-term facilities, and an inspiring vision for long-term sustainability of the school. This committee will engage members of the community regarding the needs and desires of different constituencies as they relate to the future of the school. This committee includes but will not be limited to the Board Chair, Lead Administrator, Business Administrator, a Faculty member(s) and members of the Finance Committee to write a set of desirable, aspirational, and sustainable 4- and 10-year plans.

The Strategic Planning Committee has met three times since our October Board meeting, and is drafting a process to engage stakeholders in the strategic planning process. We anticipate bringing specific goals to relevant Board Committees for input within the next month, and a full report of these for Board approval at the 12/11 BOT meeting. The stated goal areas are drawn from our mandate as follows:

Development of

* pedagogical program
* faculty recruitment
* student enrollment growth and retention
* school governance
* marketing and outreach
* financial sustainability
* medium to long-term facilities

We have proposed a tentative date for a collaborative BOT/Faculty meeting during the MLK weekend in January. This would be an opportunity for us to develop these goals into a larger sustaining vision that will inform the specifics of a 4 and 10-year strategic plan.

Committee Mandate Approval - **Motion to approve: Gabrielle / Second: Jonny / Vote: Unanimous**

1. **Public Comment Period**

See public comment above

Shana asked about school nurse position. Luke addressed that this has been a topic in mind, and will consider adding to Finance Committee agenda as well as next Board meeting.

**Closing Verse-**Emily

**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 December 11, 9 a.m. in person Auditorium 98 South Lincoln.**

**Committee Meeting Times:**

**Governance** 1st Friday 1:30 p.m.

**Fundraising and Development** 2nd Friday 11 a.m. ZOOM

**Strategic Planning** 2nd/4th Monday 7 p.m. ZOOM

**Finance** 3rd Monday 5:50 p.m. ZOOM

**DEIJ** bi-weekly Fridays, 3:30-4:30

**Marketing, Outreach and Enrollment -** 1st Wednesday 10:30 a.m. ZOOM

**HR** - First Friday of the month at 12:30 pm Zoom