

Gathering Waters Board Agenda  
February 12, 2023 1 p.m - 2 p.m.  
Camp Glenbrook

**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:** Dan Kurz, Jonny Norris, Janet Gordon, Justin Somma, Katie Osawald, Eliza Murphy, Elizabeth Hamshaw, Jesse Morin, Mark Stehlik

**Non Voting Members:** Luke Goodwin

**Other Attendees:** Nora Rozell (Fundraising Committee)

## **Call to order:**

### **I. Welcome**

### **II. Approval of January Meeting Notes**

**Motion:** Justin / Jonny / Unanimous

### **III. Approval of January Closed Session Meeting Notes**

**Motion:** Katie / Janet / Unanimous

### **IV. Principal Report - Motion: Presented by Luke**

#### **a. Hiring, Governance, & Enrollment update (see attached below)**

College Counselor - David Suarez will take on 5-10 hr/week position this year, and we will look to permanently fill a part time position for next year.

Janet has been completing confidential exit interviews with families leaving the school to gain feedback

Idea proposed to include a question on enrollment form for reasons for choosing to attend GW.

Also an idea to have a teacher orientation/meeting over the summer to solidify the class ahead of the start of school.

- b. **HB272 (Increased Charter Funding) & HB354 (Building Aid)** - No definitive ETA on vote/approval. Would greatly increase available budget by increasing per student funding from \$7300 to \$9500
- c. **Principal Goals - Self Assessment** (Draft in Drive Folder)

**V. Student Life Ad Hoc Committee Report - Elizabeth & Luke (see meeting notes in folder) - (see attached below)**

Elizabeth will be contacting Tiffany Matthews as a resource, and possibly to join the committee or full Board.

**VI. Faculty Report - Presented by Katie & Jessie (see attached below)**

Discussed ideas for how to encourage attendance to Parent Meetings. Possibly send out a survey to parents for ideas. Sense of urgency to solidify the schedule for next year's school calendar.

Other ideas include providing childcare, food, combining with student performances

**VII. Eliza gave update on Divisive Concepts Law - NH HB61 to repeal this law is working it's way through the State House. No further updates at this time**

**VIII. Public Comment**

**IX. Closed Session - Per 91-A:3 Section II(a) - The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a meeting and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted.**

**Motion to enter Closed Session:** Katie / Janet / Unanimous

**a. Administrative and Faculty salaries**

**Motion to exit Closed Session:** Elizabeth / Jonny / Unanimous

**Motion to seal Closed Session minutes:** Elizabeth / Jonny / Unanimous

**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 March 11, 2022 9-11**

School Principal February 2023 BOT Report

February 12, 2023

- Hiring:

We are in our interviewing and hiring season for next year. Current updates include,

- i) new HS Humanities teacher for continued 11th grade enrollment growth
  - Three current applicants with interviews scheduled for 2/10, 2/27, 2/28. Two of these candidates could also teach middle school grades.
- ii) new HS Math/Science teacher for continued 11th grade enrollment growth
  - No current applicants for this position. However, one of our Humanities applicants could also teach our new Computer Literacy courses in 9th-11th grades.
- iii) ½ time Upper School Level Chair
  - Two current applicants. Additionally, I have proposed a job description revision for this role that I will introduce to the Board.
- iv) One-two Class Teachers
  - At this time we have two candidates that have experience teaching middle school grades and could be strong candidates for our open middle school positions.
- v) Full-time Spanish teacher

- We have an internal candidate that will fill this position.
- vi) Part-time Lower School Gym teacher to account for expanded program offering of 11th grade
  - We have an internal candidate that will fill this position.
- vii) Part-time eurhythmy teacher to account for expanded program offering of 11th grade.

We also anticipate posting for a HS Special Education teacher to round out the Special Education department.

- Governance:

The Faculty have nominated the three members of the Pedagogical Advisory Council (PAC). Laura Gomez (US), Sarah Galligan (LS), Nell Wiener (Special Subject) were nominated by their colleagues for this role. This important faculty decision making support council will support the School Principal and Lower School Faculty Chair in their roles as single decision makers. We held a first orientation meeting and began a review of hiring this week.

Enrollment:

New 2023-24 re-enrollment and new applications opened on December 1st. To date we have received 106 new student applications. Leading grades of applications are Kindergarten (42), 6th Grade (18), 9th Grade (11) and 1st Grade (9). After sibling and faculty preferences, we anticipate having 31 total open spots to fill from the total new student applications (not including leading 11th grade that has 4 open spots) with leading openings in the new Kindergarten (10 projected open spots), 9th grade (8 projected open spots), and 1st Grade (6 projected open spots). The projected open spots match our leading application pipeline. Except for the leading 11th grade class that currently has no new applications, we can project to be fully enrolled next school year.

Our internal advertising has continued on our website, in the Ripple and in social media. Our three open house events, K-5 (18 attended) on February 1, 6-8 (12 attended) on February 8, and High School (15 attended) on the evening of February 9 have been very successful, with a combination of current and new parents/guardians joining. The grades and middle school open houses were during Morning Lesson and provided an opportunity to see "Waldorf in Action." We presented the history of Waldorf education and Gathering Waters School mission and vision. This was followed by visits to the several classrooms to see students working and teacher presentations. The open houses concluded with a Q&A session with the parents—both sessions had 45 minutes of fully engaged Q&A. The high school session was similar to last winter and we invited students as well (essentially presenting to middle school families). Our middle school class teachers will promote and invite their classes to this event—we had four current middle school students attend. The high school open house also included Waldorf high

school mission and vision, high school child development and overview of curriculum and student activities.

Open enrollment concludes on February 15 and our enrollment lottery will occur on March 1.

School Principal Yearly Goals:

I have updated my yearly goals document and will begin review with the Leadership Advisory Group on a weekly basis. We wanted to share this information with the Board to request any additional feedback and comments.

Faculty Report- BOT Meeting 2/12/23

- Lower, Middle School, Upper School Open Houses went well
  - Lower and Middle School scheduled for two Wednesday mornings in a row, with an overview of Waldorf Education and broad curriculum overview before bringing the visitors into Morning Lessons for 10 minutes or so in each class. The event closed with discussion and questions from parents
  - Parents noted how different our school culture was in that the administrators were not only aware of what block each teacher was in, but could speak knowledgeably about the curriculum for each block and what exactly the class was doing. Speaks to our strength as a school to have administrators who are also Waldorf teachers.
  - Upper School Open House was in the evening, with each teacher presenting the developmental elements of the curriculum, followed by a larger discussion with questions.
  
- Teachers in the Middle and Upper School are revisiting structure of Parent Evenings to be more supportive of families.
  
- Teachers are finishing Midyear Reports this week
- Fundraising for class trips- establishing a culture of larger 8th and 12th grade trips with fundraisers spanning from selling pizza and carnations to potentially larger fundraisers having to do with the whole school community in spring and fall.
- Teacher shifts for 2023-2024- Julie Ludvigsen from 6th to 2nd, Katie Oswald from 8th to 6th, looking for a rising seventh grade teacher now.

- Concerns on the Parent Council FB page about the car line at the Upper School- there have been upset drivers yelling out their windows at the car line. Any way to shift this?
- HS- Launched honors distinction classes - students can opt in to Honors level of same class. Within first week of block or quarter, students can be recommended by teachers to participate in this honor program. More presentation opportunities, more rigorous grading.
  - Next two years:: history tracks and government classes, African studies, Health, Computer Science, Electives: Spanish until Junior year required, then a combination of art, history, or science track classes.

Student Life Committee - Initial Meeting - Feb. 1, 2023

In attendance: Luke Goodwin, Katie Oswald, Eliza Murphy, Marcy Schepker, Elizabeth Hamshaw

The purpose of this volunteer group is to support communication and initiative around student life, service learning, and after school extracurricular activities, with the goal of increasing student retention, especially in the high school.

Ideas discussed to support student life and the formation of new clubs and activities:

- Create a form students or parents can fill out to present their club idea or initiative. This will go to Luke as part of a screening process, so we can assure consistency, alignment with our values, and vetting of parent or community volunteers. (This form could also include language to encourage initiatives that benefit the community, especially when service related, but remain fun and inviting to encourage student participation.)
- List all of our GW clubs and sports on our website, and also have a section for recommended programs with dates and contact information - connect with Kelly Barker and Dan Kurz from the marketing committee
- Work closely with Parent Council to identify parent volunteers. Parent Council can also help spread the word about our current offerings



- Pursue grant funding opportunities to form clubs or programs, so start-up funds are not always coming out of the school budget. There are many smaller grants available for this purpose, especially in the Arts.
- Give students credit for certain outside volunteer activities. Best to do this as a whole class, rather than tracking individual students.
- Consider exchanges with other schools? May be tricky since our enrollment numbers are capped.
- Future Goal - Hire a Student Life Coordinator to help oversee all programs and initiatives. (UPDATE: Luke will give a further update on this at the February board meeting)

There will be 2 layers of extracurricular activities:

1. Sponsored programs that we partner with locally
  - a. Identifying local programs to partner with: this could be a way this volunteer group can help bring ideas to Luke. Established programs that we can recommend our students join in groups or friend pairs can be a great place to start, since we don't have to run the programs ourselves. Examples: The Y; Moco; Ski Mountain programs (Tiffany Matthews is currently coordinating a program at Pat's Peak)
2. GW programs that are run by hired staff or parent volunteers who meet criteria
  - a. Increase communication to parents about current offerings so more are aware of what we already have established.
  - b. Clubs mentioned that are already going or have been discussed for next year.

NOTE: clubs in bold are already established (Luke & Katie - please check as I was guessing. I might also be missing some current clubs/sports. Thanks!)

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- i. **Banned Book Club**
- ii. Creative Writing Club / Poetry Club
- iii. Drama Club
- iv. Yearbook Club
- v. **Chess Club**
- vi. Student Council
- vii. Magic Club (at the Library?)
- viii. Disc Golf Club with Adam Schepker?

- ix. Biking Club - would need parent volunteer, or connecting to community group
- x. DEIJ Club - we should make it a priority to get this one started as students are asking for it
- xi. **Basketball Team - co-ed**
- xii. **Baseball Team - co-ed**
- xiii. **Track Team - co-ed**
- xiv. **Soccer Team - co-ed**

## **Marketing, Outreach & Enrollment Committee February 2023 Board Report**

- **Permanent Signage for Lower School**
  - Initial Installation quote came in much higher than expected
  - Kelly is getting additional quotes to compare
  - Options for reducing cost include a thinner wood sign to reduce the weight, or switching materials to PVC or Plywood
  - Permit needed through Keene - Dan is working to gather info and fill out
  
- **Extracurricular activities**
  - Working on how to get the word out -
    - Include banner on home page of website that changes frequently to include new clubs, activities, etc.
    - Updates in Ripple and social media
    - Adding students to email list for Ripple
  
- **Open House**
  - How to create a more inviting environment at the upper school
    - Create signage (banner, countertop sign, etc.)
    - Create informational brochures to hand out
    - Display case for student work (like at lower school)