

Gathering Waters Board Agenda

August 26, 2023 8:00 am

Google Meet

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, Janet, Elizabeth, Jonny, Katie, Eliza, Justin, Mark

Non Voting Members: Luke Goodwin

Other Attendees:

I. Welcome (5)

Approval of past meeting minutes: Postponed until Sept. meeting

II. Vote on Approval of New Board Members: (10)

a. Jan Lyndes - Motion: Jonny / Janet / Unanimous

Will begin in September

b. Tiffany Mathews - Motion: Justin / Jonny / Unanimous

Will begin in September

c. Anny Hamshaw - Motion: Mark / Justin / Unanimous

Will begin in September

Jamie will also be officially joining in September

Katie Schwerin expressed willingness to join the Board in January

III. Principal Report - Luke (5) There has been some attrition in the HS grades over the summer. Current average of 20 students per class in grades 9-11. There will be a focus this year on addressing attrition and on matriculation from 8th to 9th grades.

Current enrollment - 280 students out of 300. Current budget is based on 292 students. Justin will review implications on budget in the next finance meeting, and will ask Dallas to give an update to the Board at the next meeting.

IV. Finance Committee - Justin (15)

a. Vote on resolutions:

i. Appoint Dallas as signer now that bookkeeper has started (adequate separation of duties)*; with the understanding that a bookkeeper is now on staff and will be responsible for reviewing all


transactions, the board approves of adding Business Manager Dallas Welch as a signer on the school bank account.

- ii. **Require 2nd signature** on payments over \$5,000 (additional protection).

Motion: Mark / Eliza / Unanimous

V. Governance Committee - (30-40)

a. Board Faculty Reps Job Description:

- i. 2nd Reading  Faculty Board Representation - DRAFT

Luke will bring to the faculty for review and to collect nominations to replace Jessie Morin since she stepped down. Final vote will occur at the next Board meeting.

b. Board Leadership and Upcoming Transitions

- i. Discussion and succession planning

Elizabeth will step down from her role as interim chair after September. Eliza & Janet want to step down from their leadership role soon as well, with no exact date at this time.

Jonny needs to reduce his role on the Board due to work / family commitments.

Justin feels he is able to continue with his current role as Treasurer, but does not feel that he is able to take on a larger role.

Mark & Dan expressed concern over difficulty with their home's distance from Keene, but could help more remotely in the interim. Both would be willing to help with transitional responsibilities as able, and will plan to meet with Elizabeth, Janet and Eliza soon to discuss details.

A preliminary plan should be in place by the next meeting to give confidence to new incoming Board members.

Board Leadership vs. Governance Committee

There is a need to further define the Board's role in the school. In addition to the self-review we could also have a full Board review to identify any deficiencies. Eliza will send a review from the NH Center for Nonprofits she is familiar with.

VI. Other committee reports (0)

VII. Public Comment

VIII. 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.

IX. Executive Closed Session (10)

Motion to enter Executive Closed Session: Justin / Janet / Unanimous

Motion to exit Executive Closed Session: Janet / Eliza / Unanimous

Motion to seal Executive Closed Session minutes: Jonny / Justin / 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.