

Gathering Waters Board Agenda

March 16th, 2024 9am -11am

Lower School

98 South Lincoln St, Keene

Gathering Waters Board Meeting

Saturday, January 20 · 9:00am – 11:00am

Time zone: America/New_York

Google Meet joining info

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/oax-rfoa-och>

Or dial: (US) +1 601-526-1294 PIN: 574 911 013#

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: Tiffany Mathews, Dan Kurz, Doug Warrender, Anny Hamshaw. Jan Lyndes, Janet Gordon, Julie Ludvigsen, Dallas Welch

Non Voting Members: Luke Goodwin

Other Attendees: Marcy Schepker, Fiona Laurie, Emily Murphy Kaur

Welcome:

I. Approval of February Meeting Notes

2024.2.17 Board Meeting Agenda - Draft

Motion: First Tiffany, Second Jan, All in favor.

II. Welcome to Julie Ludvigsen & Update on Board Membership

Announcements

Jamie Mankhen will be stepping down from the board due to family emergency.

Elizabeth Hamshaw is stepping down as of this month - she has stayed on well past her original planned exit date..

III. Vote to approve updated Covid / Respiratory Virus Procedures policy

Updated based on current standards mirrors SAU 29 in "what to do if"

- Will update in handbook and send out to parents.

Revised COVID/Respiratory Virus Procedures March 2024

Motion: First Tiffany , Second Janet , all in favor.

IV. Vote to approve updated Principal Review Process

Changes: yearly review vs previous 18 mo.

Added: Principal to write a letter to full faculty to outline what was understood from the process and what would come from the process. Reviewed by governance committee. "The principal will write a letter to full faculty and staff..." Will add " This letter will be reviewed..."

☐ Policies

Motion: First, Doug, second Tiffany, all in favor.

V. Vote to approve Revised Background Check Policy - *Striking MVR check from language*

One line of language was retracted "This includes MVR checks..." MVR checks will be required on an individual basis. Standards are needed for when the MVR check is required (flow chart).

Parent orchestrated Carpooling vs a **School Sponsored Driver** needs to be clarified in this document. A clarifying statement is needed here.

GWCS LS tracks who is allowed to pick up students. Emergency contact pick ups- if anyone else is to pick up, inform the front office in writing. (email? text?) If text is allowed, how is this kept a record of?

Motion to approve the Background Check Policy striking the MBR language.

Motion: First Janet, Second Tiffany, all in favor.

Future topic: liability around transportation of students in all categories outside of designated volunteers.

VI. Vote to approve updated Designated Volunteer Policy

i. Overlaps with Driver Policy

☰ DRAFT - Designated Volunteer Policy

What is GWCS's Volunteer application process? NEWC uses a form that is handed out upon enrollment and all school activities.

Background check is based on level of contact with students. "Plain Volunteer": craft fair etc, "Designated Volunteer"; direct contact with students.

Strike out previous wording in the current policy.

Motion: First Doug, Second Tiffany, all in favor.

Future work: Same as above, liability around transportation of students in all categories outside of designated volunteers.

VII. Vote to approve updated Governance Structure

PAC needs clarity around the 2-4 year commitment and clarity on the review process.

Motion: First Janet, Second Tiffany, all in favor!

Governance Structure document will be held in the Human Resource drive that all faculty have access to. Luke has been and will bring this to full faculty. It will be part of the Handbook.

VIII. Review Upper School lease for 24/25 school year

Will be brought to closed session for details on financial and term.

Floor plan of 31 Washington Street : an addition of space from the current 13 sq feet to 31 sq feet. No auditorium due to the need for major remodel and improvements. Unlimited use of the gym for after school activities. US has full usage of the front greenspace; build fence, gardens, and signage.

IX. Budget Preview

a. What's new (91,000 surplus)

- i. Enrollment 315 total. 141 on waiting list. HS has 15-18 open spots.**
- ii. New positions LS chair increase 50%, US chair position, HS Humanities. Special Education teacher, 2nd Counselor, new paraprofessionals not currently in the budget**
- iii. Lease differences more than 100% sq ft. + increase, approximately 6K a month more**
- iv. Salary increases 3.5 increase (45K ish)**

b. Ongoing question of Admin Boosts / Compensation Analysis

X. Update on Strategic Planning

W Copy of Rolling report: Strategic Planning Committee Report .docx

Action items: Jan will talk with Elizabeth Hamshaw regarding the Marketing and Enrollment committee regarding the SPC findings of the enrollment process

Luke will follow up with Nell regarding the 3 week process work of goal #4 Faculty and Staff Recruitment, Retention and Development as a sister 'red flag' to previous red flag of goal #2.

XI. Principal Report

XII. Committee Reports

Family Council: Have a secretary and work toward ways of supporting teachers and staff as part of P/T meetings. Interest in learning about Waldorf education. Signed up for Pizza Night at Orchard Hill. Will work toward finalizing structures around budget / reserve funds and channels of communication with the Board and Admin.

☰ March 2024 MOE Committee Board Report

XIII. Public Comment

Marcy Schepker: teaching with students has been put on hold due to the late notice of background checks. Additional volunteers are needed to support this teaching. Anny will bring this to Bob Best on Monday.

Fiona Laurie; proposal to each board member to volunteer 'day at school'.

Marcy Schepker: US practical arts teacher, LS chair not mentioned in community letter.

Emily Murphy Kaur: Ayurvedic Medicine practice, Special Education teacher, Policy Making, Grant writing, Strategic Planning Windham County Vermont, Waldorf Homeschool now, Is considering joining the Strategic Planning Committee and possibly the Board of Trustees.

XIV. 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 - April 20th @ 9 am - Location: Lower School