

Gathering Waters Board Agenda

April 20th, 2024 9am -11am

Upper School

31 Washington 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: Dan Kurz, Doug Warrender, Anny Hamshaw. Jan Lyndes, Janet Gordon, Dallas Welch, Mark Stehlik, Justin Somma, Katie Oswald, Emily _____

Non Voting Members: Luke Goodwin

Other Attendees: Marcy Schepker, Laura Rubiano-Gomez , Sarah Galligan, Ben Swain, Erin Moody?

Welcome:

I. Approval of March Meeting Notes

2024.3.16 Board Meeting Agenda - Draft

Motion: 1st Mark, 2nd Anny all in favor

II. Vote on Approval of New Board Members

a. Emily Murphy Kaur

Motion: Janet, Mark, all in favor

b. Jessie Morin

Motion: POSTPONED

III. Update on Board Members & Officer Positions

Jan Lyndes will be stepping down from the board and secretary position due to taking a teaching position at GW.

The secretary position will need to be filled.

Doug is voted in as treasurer as Justin Somma steps down.

IV. Accounting Software Proposal - Dallas

Postponed to next month.

V. Update on Strategic Planning

■ Rolling report_ Strategic Planning Committee Report.pdf

Discussion on holding a jointly held retreat to work on SP goal #4. June 20th to start with a follow up in August work week.

Needs a task force to take up the forming of the work of this retreat.

SPC needs an active board member to facilitate this work.

VI. Admissions Policy Discussion

Connected to SPC goal #2

Clarify how GWCS communicates with incoming families as to what GWCS' enrollment process is.

MOE looked at our current process/ policy. Bob Best and Tal were resourced to identify Charter School latitude in this process.

How best can we facilitate the enrollment process? Parent education, meeting with teacher... Clarity with Marketing and Outreach to clarify what GWCS is and can offer; Academically rigorous and a vigorous and facilitated discipline policy.

Admissions, discipline, and academic policies are all part of this picture.

Clarity both inward and outward is necessary.

Reporting out to MOE - WHO WILL DO THIS?

MOE needs an active board representative.

VII. Principal Report

☰ School Principal 4.20.24 BOT Report

VIII. Committee Reports

IX. Public Comment

Laura Rubiano-Gomez as part of the SPC and facilitating the joint board/ teacher/ admin retreat; goals of getting everyone involved and informed. Identify appropriate professional development around behavior and special education. Training and retreat planners need to reach out to teachers for fully informed. Discipline Policy needs clarity and refocus on the discipline process (connected with restorative justice involving students, parents, school). The work needs to include more than just the principal.

US/LS Chairs will be instrumental in making these connections between faculty and oversight.

Admissions process: US shadow days- unclear if the student is aware of what GWCS is and what is possible/ expected. Needs a recap/ education session at the end of the day that includes parents and teachers. This interview/ meeting with a faculty member helps start the conversation and connection.

US Faculty needs to have a more full picture of who the students are and what they need that are coming in so that they can plan to meet them where they are.

Gaining these records prior to the student attending is crucial.

Policy needs to be enforced that a student begin at GW until the records from the sending school are obtained.

Ben Swain: Parent and Waldorf grad.

Media policy- K/ 1st grade is missing the home visit that is classically part of Waldorf Education and would benefit the community.

Festival life of Waldorf Education is a heart beat of the community and includes the family and community.

Application process: High Mowing included a drawing of 'the human being' as part of the application process, not as an assessment of their drawing ability but instead a window into how the student is presenting in the 'incarnation process'.

Facility- roof replacement could include insulation that would allow for a functional space in the attic.

Marcy Schepker; Community member and block teacher.

Moment of reflection on the work of GWCS over the past 3 years

Amber Moody: Parent

Called to help parents be more involved. What is the appropriate avenue to include more parents? Family council!

Enrollment: Supports the reading of the policies and handbook with the incoming families as an educational process and relationship building process.

Professional development: supports the need for training. Need for para II vs only para I (level of training).

Retreat: Supports the coming together of faculty so that they are connected and supported for if they do not feel connected and heard they will be quality teachers.

Discipline policy vs discipline process: the latter supports each student to reach their best self. Restorative Justice is beneficial (specifically for her son).

- X. Closed Session** - The dismissal, promotion or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against the employee, 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. RSA 91-A:3, II(a). *Notice that this section does not create a right to a meeting for an employee.* The right to a meeting must arise from some other source, such as a collective bargaining agreement, a personnel policy, or a state statute.

Motion to enter closed session: 1st Justin, 2nd Mark, all in favor.

Motion to seal closed session minutes: 1st Justin, 2nd Anny all in favor

Motion to exit closed session: 1st Doug, 2nd Justin all in favor

XI. 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 - May 18th @ 9 am - Location: Lower School