

## Gathering Waters Board Agenda

June 10, 2023 9 a.m - 11 a.m.

### Lower School

**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, Janet Gordon, Justin Somma, Elizabeth Hamshaw, Jesse Morin, Katie Oswald

**Non Voting Members:**

**Other Attendees:** Jeronima Carral

**Call to order:**

**I. 9:00 Welcome (5)**

**II. Approval of May Meeting Notes**

**Motion:** Justin / Katie / Unanimous

**III. Approval of May Closed Session Meeting Notes**

**Motion:** Tabled to give time to set up Closed Executive Session shared folder on the Drive

**IV. 9:05 Officer nominations: Vote to Approve incoming officers (15)**

**Results\*:** Janet / Justin / Unanimous

**V. Vote to Approve incoming board member(s) (-)**

**Motion:** Janet / Justin / Unanimous

**VI. Vote in new member Jamie Mahnken**

**Motion:** Katie / Jessie / Unanimous

**We also spoke about new potential board members, and will be actively engaging in recruitment.**

**VII. 9:20 Principal Report - Elizabeth (5)**

**VIII. 9:25 Faculty Report - Jessie / Katie (10)**

Jessie - Lower School:

- End of year events
- Transitions to next year
- End of year gifts/offerings to students
- Naming ceremony, Pedagogical stories, 5th grade being welcomed into the upper school
- Reviewing DEIJ work

Katie - Upper School:

- Class plays and trips
- Circus
- Guest speakers (family from Afghanistan)
- Rights of passage
- Nurturing spirituality
- 9th grade will be hosting the 8th grade at Robin Hood as a “welcome to High School” event.

**IX. Committee Reports:**

**a. 9:35 Finance Committee Report - Justin (5)**

Will present final budget next meeting

Questions brought by Jessie relaying requests from teachers to know timeline for when they will receive their budgets for school supplies for the following year

Question on clarity related to boost for Waldorf certification (what requirements would be entailed to meet this) vs a Masters Degree.

We were able to hire all Waldorf trained teachers in first round of hirings, but with new hires in the works, we need to clarify what boost is available to Waldorf trained vs non Waldorf trained teachers.

Justin will bring these questions to the Finance Committee.

**b. 9:40 Governance Committee - Janet (10)**

Janet spoke about Board self-review. Everyone agreed they have a wish to serve, but are juggling family and work life. Friends and fundraising were lowest scores. Clarification needed for faculty role on Board. Draft Faculty Board Member Job Description created to address this concern - see below.

**i. 9:50 Community letter from the board for approval - Elizabeth (5)**

Discussed that this should also include a mention of the Board work being done in the areas of Fundraising, Facilities, DEIJ & Student Life / Pedagogical Holding of the School. Elizabeth will revise and send a new draft for review.

**ii. 9:55 Board self-review: acknowledgement Janet (10)**

**iii. 10:05 First reading - draft *faculty board member job description* (10)**

***Move to edits and second reading***

- Some clarification needed on the section reading “are confirmed by the faculty. Ideally, there should be at least one member from K-5 and one member from 6-12”. Process should include a designated time scheduled by the principal for faculty to review and confirmation. Possibly this position should be subject to a yearly review process. Katie recommended this should be included in with April reviews. Document should be reviewed by full faculty prior to Board approval.

**Update on Evaluation Policy**

Janet wanted to acknowledge that the Evaluation policy that was approved by the Board last year, was not updated in the Faculty handbook in error. This will be re-looked at, and any new policies will receive a new vote prior to updating the new Faculty Handbook for next school year.

- iv. **10:15 Leadership Retreat Review - Elizabeth (10)**
  - 1. Report on faculty follow up work
  - 2. 3 working groups forming,
  - 3. call for participation

- c. **10:25 Other committee reports**
  - i. Facilities
  - ii. PIP - update

**X. 10:30 Public Comment**

**Jeronima spoke about Parent Council being dissolved**

Discouraged from fundraising, due to concern it would take away from the school's capital campaign

Maybe set up three larger events throughout the year, rather than a weekly meeting.

Worried about how teachers will be cared for, without a class parent rep.

A meeting may need to be held with the Board to facilitate miscommunication between the Administration and the members of the Parent Council. There is a feeling of disconnect, rather than unity in regards to how to best support the teachers and the school as a whole.

Katie will request this being a Work Week agenda, so the faculty can discuss the best organizational format to include parents.

- XI. 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.**

**10:30 Motion to enter Closed Session:**

- a. **Level Chair Performance Review Final Report - presentation , questions, and recommendations for approval (10)**

**Motion to exit Closed Session: Justin, Janet, Unanimous**

**Motion to seal Closed Session minutes: Justin, Janet, Unanimous**

**10:40 Executive Closed Session (20)**

- a. Follow up on 5/17/23 executive closed session
- b. Status update and action items
- c. HR committee formation update

**Motion to exit Closed Session: Justin / Janet / Unanimous**

**Motion to seal Closed Session minutes: Janet / Justin / Unanimous**

**11:00 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.