

# Gate City Charter School for the Arts

Board of Trustees Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date:

*“The mission of the GCCSA is to use an arts integrated curriculum ... to produce graduates who excel in both academics and the arts and have the knowledge, creativity and inquisitive nature that foster a life-long love of learning”*

Meeting Date: September 17, 2020

Time: 7:09 PM

Location: Remote Meeting using Google Meetings, NH

## Voting Board Members in Attendance:

Danielle Charest (Chair)

Sarah Thibeault (Secretary)

Neil Mahoney (Parent Rep)

Jenny Hitzeman

## Absent Board Members:

Felicia Doucette (Treasurer)

## Non-Voting Members in Attendance:

Suzanne Wheeler

Astrid Alvarado

Jennifer Blanchette

## Attending Public:

Amanda Hobbs

Mandy Darah

## Public Comments/Public Matters

No public comment

## Approval of Minutes from August 2020

**MOTION** (Neil Mahoney/Sarah Thibeault) Motion to accept minutes at August 2020 Meeting accepted unanimously

## Committee Reports

PTO- Neil Mahoney. The PTO is holding a Boo Thru and Bookfair as fundraisers. In discussion is the yearbook for 2020/2021 school year as well as spirit wear and a mascot contest.

Curriculum Committee- Jennifer Blanchette-see directors report

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H/R Policy Committee-Jenny Hitzeman-Felicia is crunching numbers to work it into the financials.

PR and Community Relations committee- Sarah Thibeault-GCCSA is competing in the Downtown Scarecrow competition, Ms. Ashton will get ideas from students to help decide what to do for the scarecrow.

Grants Committee- We will need a new grant writer

Facilities Committee- Eric Charest- Nothing to report

**MOTION** (Sarah Thibeault/Neil Mahoney) Motion to accept the committee meeting reports was accepted unanimously.

## Finance Committee Meeting

Astrid gave a review of the finance committee meeting minutes from September.

The budget is being updated because of lower enrollment and will be reviewed every 30 days to keep up to date. We are currently working on updating QuickBooks for the 2019 audit. Also looking into a more efficient way to track Special Education.

Next meeting is TBD

**MOTION** (Neil Mahoney/Sarah Thibeault) Motion to accept minutes of the Finance Committee dated was accepted unanimously.

## Old Business

Returning to school 2020/2021- The Task Force did not meet however October 9<sup>th</sup> is the date to access if we can move to hybrid. The task force is working on policies for when students get back into the school.

Budget Approval for 2020/2021 school year will be moved to the October meeting.

Maternity/Paternity policy is still being updated.

Building usage for Special Education will be deferred to the reopening task force.

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## **New Business**

Changes to admissions/enrollment-Discussion of making an addendum to the admissions/enrollment policy for students who left because of COVID-19 to be moved to the top of the waitlist. During the 20/21 school year upon notification, families who leave due to COVID-19 related circumstances will be given priority status on the waitlist if requested.

**MOTION** (Neil Mahoney/Sarah Thibeault) Motion to amend the Admission policy of the 20/21 school year to allow students who left due to COVID-19 related circumstances be prioritized on the admissions waitlist was accepted unanimously.

**MOTION** (Neil Mahoney/Sarah Thibeault) Motion to accept the acceptable use policy was accepted unanimously.

## **Directors Report**

Suzanne Wheeler- All staff went above and beyond preparing for the opening of remote learning. August and the beginning of September was filled with staff vying for the copy machines, making packets, and preparing plans.

The entire staff spent three days at the beginning of September receiving professional development which included many presentations from our own staff. It is amazing what we can learn from each other.

We had a socially distanced picnic lunch out back. It was great to have the new staff meet and talk with each other. Everyone was offered ice cream.

Some of the topics discussed were the many facets of Google taught by Mary Ellen Wessels. Mrs. Beth Ashton talked about social/emotional issues through the arts.

Mrs. Wheeler discussed accommodations and modifications concerning Individual Education Plans. Mrs. Gemma Bates, our guidance counselor, spent time discussing the “Choose Love” program. Whenever this program is discussed, all participants are more than attentive.

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On the last professional development day our own Mrs. Lyn Rae and Mrs. Paige Duval reviewed Sycamore We all learned so much as they went through many parts of Sycamore. We also had a tech tool teaser.

EXCITING NEWS: Mr. Mark Wilson received the first monthly “Unicorn Award”. It is sitting on his desk and he should be very proud of himself. This award is presented to a staff member who has gone above and beyond and stands out among our staff. Mr. Wilson spent a large part of his summer in our school preparing materials and purchasing books for his students.

The Task Committee continues to meet to discuss the safest and best way to educate our students while including social and emotional well-being.

What stands out most is the amazing way our students and staff have embraced remote learning. They seem to have returned with a new energy and as I listen in, I am so proud of our staff and students.

Jennifer Blanchette-

## **Curriculum Needs and Acquisition:**

I continue to assess, research, and acquire curriculum based on existing and emerging curriculum needs.

I have acquired the following programs for the listed levels and subjects of instruction:

I-Ready: Instruction & Assessment Grades K-5 in both Math and Reading

Smart Music: Remote schooling music creation/application K-8

Math Games: Math instruction and placement/data collection grades K-8

Study Sync: ELA instruction, placement, accommodations, and data collection for grades 6-8.

Still to being acquired:

Adobe Student Suite: K-8 Art instruction and administrative applications

Under consideration:

Touch Math Intervention-Title I Intervention K-8 RTI

Curriculum prep: Set up I-Ready classrooms in grades k-5. Provided teachers with updated instructional materials and parent information. Initiated discussions on planning at-home assessment through I-Ready.

Artist-of-the-month will return the first week of October.

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## **Hiring:**

Roger Ward took a position as our 6-8 Science teacher. He has 6 years of experience teaching middle school science and is off to a great start!

## **Teacher Meetings:**

I checked in with each teacher both prior to the start of school and in the days that followed. Additionally, I have had extended meetings with teachers where we have celebrated successes, identified challenges, planned assessment, made schedule adjustments, mapped, and adjusted curriculum, and reviewed and selected resources.

## **PD and Staff Development:**

We had highly successful Flex PD and Structured PD weeks.

Flex PD Week: All teachers and EAs who chose to do so took part in personal PD from a grid of over 30 options. Participants chose PD options centered on their individual needs. Only one UDL PD recommended by the NH DOE was required. Categories included Project Based Learning, assessment, remote learning, technology tools and applications, arts integration, and social-emotional needs. Each participant gained 9 hours of professional development with no budgetary cost to them or the school. The grid will remain “live” as a resource for teachers requiring PD throughout the year.

All EA and teacher PD Week: We gathered remotely but all meetings were synchronous. Topics included Sycamore, student accommodation, EA/teacher collaboration, Google, Pearson/Saves, SEL through Art, Choose Love, essential tech tools. All participants gained 6 hours of formal professional development. Additional hours gained through collaboration.

Upcoming: PBL PD to be delivered following a Wednesday Staff Meeting

## **Unicorn Award:**

Teachers and EAs will have the opportunity to be awarded The Unicorn Award. This award will be given to teachers monthly who exemplify the idea of excellence in teaching and team membership at Gate City. Nomination will be made by the previous month’s recipient. Mark Wilson was this month’s recipient.

## **Academic Enrichment Groups:**

Beginning September 21st, EA’s and teachers will each be offering a club/enrichment activity to students after core instructional time. Activities include yoga, drawing, songwriting, author studies, movement and dance, hiking, literacy time, STEM challenges, improv, history, cooking, knitting, arts & crafts and more. A schedule and sign ups have been sent to parents. These are considered educational extension opportunities. New sessions will begin with each trimester.

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## **Additional Course Offerings:**

Jess Mason is currently offering voice, guitar, and piano lessons for a \$75 fee per trimester.

## **Virtual Open House:**

A virtual Open House was organized and scheduled for the 21st of September beginning at 6pm and continuing through 8:15pm.

## **Scheduling:**

This month has required much time devoted to scheduling. I have assisted teachers in adjusting their daily schedules, created a viable and balanced schedule for Enrichment Activities, and worked with administration and Ms. Fortunato to schedule appropriate EA coverage in all classes while minimizing budgetary impact.

## **Training and PD:**

I have participated in training this month for the Grants Management System, Saavas, Spire, I-Ready, Statewide Assessment System and Title grants.

Astrid Alvarado

## **Current Enrollment**

Our current enrollment number for Day 1 building payment was 144

We currently have 143 enrolled students

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>
K	13
1	19
2	16
3	15
4	20
5	13

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6	16
7	16
8	15

After the start of our Enrichment Activities which are set to begin next week, I would like to have Paige, our enrollment and social media coordinator, to collect testimonials from our current families and teachers along with pictures and photographs of remote learning and enrichment activities to create a small advertisement to promote openings in specific grades.

## **Building Inspections**

Lynn walked through with the Fire Department on Tuesday of this week as well as Food/Kitchen inspections to complete our inspections. The Fire Department will need to come back to reassess if/when kids go back to school. Nothing formal, just a simple walk through. We will need to install magnetic holders in place of the current door wedges that we currently have. Lynn will be reaching out to Greg to discuss who is responsible for this.

Our Health inspection will be completed next week on Thursday Sept. 24th at 9am. Lynn will be walking through with them at this time. They are sending over documents for us to look through so we are aware of what they will specifically be searching for when they come into the building.

## **Building Usage during Remote Learning**

We were able to access Google Voice for Lynn at \$10 per month for her to be able to work remotely during this time. The updated number has been posted onto our website, will be updated on Facebook, and teachers are currently posting them to their Google Classroom to share with families. We have also implemented the [attendance@gccs-nh.org](mailto:attendance@gccs-nh.org) for families to contact when a student will be out of school. So far this has worked well, and families are already using it.

On days where Lynn is not in the Front office, we will be propping the Front Main Door to ensure that packages are still able to be delivered to the building. However, both doors to get into the Great Hall itself will be closed and locked. This also allows for teachers to be able to get into the building and use their key to get into the building as the key fob in the main entrance has been inconsistent with its ability to be utilized.

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## **COVID (Acceptable Use Policy- requires Board Approval)**

On our DOE bi-weekly call, they shared our the School Toolkit, attached here:

<https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/cdcs/covid19/documents/covid-school-toolkit.pdf>

This may be beneficial to the taskforce to review as it has a few flow charts that GCCS may want to consider applying when conversations begin about hybrid. This document also includes sample letters for informing families when positive identified cases have been confirmed.

There has been a request from a staff member that if the change for hybrid is approved, they would like to remain working remotely. Something that the taskforce and Board of Trustees will need to discuss and create a plan for.

## Proposed Acceptable Use Policy

At GCCSA, especially during Remote Learning, technology is a vital tool for learning and communicating who we are, what we value, and how we represent our family, school, and community. Because our technology choices affect ourselves and others, *and because the use of technology is a privilege not a right*, the expectation is that all students will abide by and support this agreement.

**When using technology at home, you are expected to follow these guidelines when interacting with any member of the GCCSA Community.** While we understand that any of us can make a mistake, we believe that living according to these values is critically important. Infractions will be enforced using the GCCSA Student Code of Conduct.

### **Use technology resources responsibly.**

- I will use all technology only for assigned and intended school purposes. I will ask for teacher approval if I am not sure.
- I will use only my GCCSA issued email for school assignments.
- I will keep my passwords to myself.
- I will access only my own assigned account, and/or files. I understand that posing as someone else will result in disciplinary consequences.
- I will only download items from the Internet under an adult's direction.
- I will inform my teacher if I have concerns about the functionality or suitability of the hardware or software I am using.
- I will not give out my identifying information or identifying information of others over the Internet.
- I understand that the technology I use is the property of GCCSA and I am responsible for taking care of it and keeping it in good condition. Tampering with Chromebooks, iPads, Computers, or other technology is

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not permitted. I will not eat or drink near any technology. I understand that I am responsible for any damage to technology that I have contact with.

- I will not damage GCCSA hardware or software, delete any files not belonging to me, use unauthorized software, attempt to bypass school filters, send viruses, or make modifications to system files.

## **Be respectful of others (including cell phone and another electronic device use).**

- Both in school and at home, I will be kind, respectful and responsible with my technology use. I will not participate in harassing<sup>1</sup>, stalking or teasing other people or publicly defaming people by spreading gossip, insults or other unkindness, and/or accessing any social network, website, blog, Wiki, etc. with the purpose of creating, viewing or participating in the humiliation of others.
- If I see a message, comment, image or anything else online that makes me concerned for my safety or the safety of another student (for example, something that could be considered harassment, teasing or a threat), I will bring it to the attention of a trusted adult immediately.
- If I am uncertain whether an activity is permitted or appropriate, I will ask an adult, either guardian or teacher before engaging in that activity.
- I will not make or forward sexually suggestive photographs.
- I will not retrieve material that is obscene, profane, violent, discriminatory or depicts or describes illegal activities.
- I will not create a false identity or steal someone’s password and/or identity.
- I will not use technology in any other inappropriate way.
- I will uphold my classroom’s Choose Love Constitution.

## **Use of Google Applications responsibility.**

- I will only post to my Google Classroom if it is related to the content and subject that I am working on.
- I will keep my conversations related to the topic on Google Meet or Zoom during live classroom sessions and morning meetings.
- I will not change my chat name in Google Hangouts.
- In a shared Google Document, I will only make edits to the work that I have contributed to the assignment.

## **Publish ethically.**

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- I will not plagiarize<sup>2</sup> by representing the work of others as my own. I will cite all use of websites, books, images, media, etc.
- I will not manipulate technology to cheat.
- I will obey copyright and software licensing laws.

## DOE Reporting

The A12G report for the DOE has been completed and certified. This report documents to the DOE the varying positions that are covered by our school such as Business Administrator, Principal, Curriculum Coordinator, COVID Point of Contact, Special Education Coordinator, etc.

The DOE-25 financial report is something I am continuing to work on currently, this is due by 10/1.

## Financials

Felicia & finance committee is looking to update the budget due to our low enrollment numbers for that start of the 2020-2021 school year.

Currently looking at a more efficient way to track our special education revenue. This seems to be an ongoing issue for GCCS historically. While Suzanne creates the bills on a document to submit to local school districts, tracking of the received payment of those funds has been a challenge. Looking to have everything on one document it can be better managed from a financial standpoint.

There are a few items that Felicia will be reaching out to Counting House to change within our financials to be able to keep up to date. When I spoke to Counting House last, we discussed setting up a meeting every 15-30 days to help keep everyone on the same page. There are still a few items I need to reconcile with the books to be able to start the 2019 Audit.

**MOTION** (Sarah Thibeault /Neil Mahoney) Motion to go into non-public RSA 91-A:3, II (a) accepted unanimously

Roll call was taken

**MOTION** (Sarah Thibeault/Neil Mahoney) **Motion** to seal the non-public minutes was accepted unanimously.

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**MOTION** (Sarah Thibeault/Neil Mahoney) **Motion** to adjourn was accepted unanimously.

Next public meeting Thursday October 15, 2020, 7pm

Meeting adjourned 9:58pm