



MINUTES for the
Meeting of the Gateway Public Schools Board of Trustees
Wednesday, January 27th, 5:00 - 6:50 PM
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Board Members Present: Therese Arsenault, Beth Berliner, Cynthia Billops, Sapna Boze, Sara Byrne, Dan Carr, Elizabeth Colen, Katie Colley, Sharon Gillenwater, Susan Masto, Harper Matheson, Sharon Olken, Molly Orner, Kevin Rafter, Laura Spivy, Mary Plant-Thomas, Valerie Toler

Board Members Excused: Allison Bhusri, Mark Felton, Dina To, Julie Wise
Also present: Danielle Ciccarelli, Chris Hero, Aaron Watson, Patrick O'Connor

Welcome and Announcements

Susan Masto brought the meeting to order. Susan talked about the upcoming Powerful Learners Conference, on February 6th and the Trivia Thon on Friday February, 17th. The Great Gateway Gathering is March 13th. Gateway's Career Days are March 19th and 22nd. Please consider participating and spreading the word to your network.

Approval of Minutes from November 18th, 2020

Susan asked everyone to review the minutes from November 18, 2020 and note any changes. Katie motioned to approve, and Therese seconded the motion. The November minutes were approved, unanimously, without issue.

Public Forum

Sharon opened the floor for the public forum. No further discussions or motions were introduced.

Mission Moment - Phased Reopening

For the Mission Moment, Aaron Watson shared that we welcomed some students back to campus this week, for the first time since March, 2020. Twelve middle schoolers started on Monday, 1/25, and twelve high school students started Tuesday, 1/26. Having students on campus and being able to connect feels amazing. This is one very small step toward bringing students and staff back in person.

Executive Director's Report

Sharon Olken began her report by exploring the impact of the recent historic events affecting our country, the January 6th insurrection, and the January 20th inauguration. Trustees participated in breakout sessions where they discussed Amanda Gorman's inauguration poem, *The Hill We Climb*. Sharon asked: How do Amanda Gorman's words resonate with you as you think about the past and the future? How do they relate to your commitment to our shared work at Gateway? What are your hopes for this year ahead?

Trustees reconvened and teachers spoke about their experiences discussing the insurrection and the inauguration with students, and allowing students to express themselves. Students are in tune with the power dynamics at play and are engaged. Students have had a range of reactions to current events. Class conversations are respectful and students listen to each other.

Sharon continued with a conversation about the phased reopening. At this point, it seems unlikely that the SFUSD middle or high schools will open this year. Gateway is currently supporting a small group of students in-person for whom distance learning has been very challenging. Gateway is offering free periodic COVID

testing to staff and the Gateway community. We are requiring that staff who work on campus get tested. The date of a vaccine rollout for teachers is uncertain; there is no timeline at this point. Sharon and Aaron discussed some of the challenges of returning to campus. Student transportation poses a challenge for returning. Many families do not have the ability to drive, and are not comfortable with public transportation. Staffing and managing substitutes will be a challenge in the Covid context. Under current conditions, if someone has a sniffle they can not come in to teach or learn. Staff cannot go across cohorts to fill in for absent teachers. There is a lot to learn about going back to in-person instruction and our learning hubs are offering us a great opportunity for that. Most of the learning hub students were excited to be there. We are witnessing what it is like for students to stay 6 feet apart and wear masks all day. Cynthia Billops remarked that the undertaking sounds like starting a whole new school, and she appreciates how Gateway is innovative in a student-centered way. Sharon and Aaron said that we are intent on understanding what works and what doesn't in distance learning. Right now we are in the information gathering stage. This spring we need to have conversations about what we have learned and how it will influence how we do in-person learning in the future. We won't go back to how things were done before, many things will be different.

Development Update

Sharon shared the development slides in lieu of an update.

Trustees Committee

Kevin Rafter informed the board that Susan Masto will step down from her position as GPS Board Co-Chair in June, 2021. He invited trustees to nominate colleagues or self-nominate; the current chairs and the Executive Director will review and identify the most relevant candidate. Kevin shared the co-chair job description. Sharon Gillenwater expressed that serving as co-chair allows you to see many different facets of Gateway and gain a variety of perspectives. Co-chairs get a view into all committees, and have the opportunity to work with Sharon Olken. The job is less hands-on, involves more listening, connecting the dots, getting to know all trustees better. If anyone has questions, please reach out to Sharon G. or Susan.

Kevin continued with updates on the board's diversity initiatives. The Trustees Committee requests that everyone share board recruitment announcements on social media. Posting materials will be emailed to trustees this week. In Feb/March the committee will have one-on-one conversations with trustees about what in our culture is getting in the way of recruiting diverse board members.

Finance Update

Chris Hero began the Finance report with a funding update. Our application for forgiveness of Gateway's \$1.5M Payroll Protection Program loan has been approved by the Small Business Association. There are potential new funding opportunities on the horizon. Gateway will receive federal stimulus funds as part of the bill passed by congress in December. State tax revenues are trending 20% higher than the FY21 state budget planned for. The governor's proposals for the resulting billions in additional school funding guarantees include a one-time school opening grant, a one-time learning loss grant, a reduction in state funding deferrals, reinstating the COLA adjustment for FY21 and FY22. However, these proposals and the details are uncertain.

He continued with an overview of the upcoming FY22 budget process. Our budget planning is an opportunity to leverage our resources to support students and staff through the pandemic, make progress on the teacher salary project, and grow our impact. The challenge is there are a lot of unknowns, such as a lack of clarity

around COVID related funds and the parcel tax, rising employee comp and benefit costs, and long-term budget deficits.

The budget process begins in January and February with information gathering and analysis. We set our baseline in March and will review the first draft with the Finance Committee and the board. We finalize, review and approve personnel line items in April. The budget is then fine-tuned and a final budget is presented to the board for a vote in May.

Adjourn meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 6:53 pm.

Signed:  Date: March 11, 2021
Sapna Boze, Board Secretary