



A Special Announcement from the Executive Director

*Below is a letter from Sharon Olken, followed by a
note from the co-chairs of Gateway's Board of
Trustees.*

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Dear Gateway Community,

After more than twenty incredible and meaningful years at Gateway, I have decided that next school year will be my last as executive director. Gateway will always be my community, my family, and my most important work. But after my wife's recurrence of cancer in 2019, I realize that it is time for me to shift my priorities.

I am so proud to be part of the Gateway community. Each day, I am inspired by the brilliance and diversity of our students, the trust and wisdom of our families, the commitment and creativity of our staff, and the dedication and support of our board, friends, and partners.

As we begin this transition, I am confident in the leadership of Gateway at all levels, and I am excited about the direction we are heading. The pandemic has reinforced the importance of our shared work and the strength of our community. And, while change can be hard, it is a great opportunity for new ideas, experiences and skill sets. I am sharing my decision now – with three semesters before my departure in June 2023 – to ensure we have time for a thoughtful, broad, and inclusive search for our next executive director.

In the meantime, what matters most to me is that Gateway continues to be a place that balances the heart and the head, seeks to elevate the voices and perspectives of all, and models the importance of kindness, connection, and learning.

And now, there is much great work to do. Let's get back to it!

Warmly,

Sharon Olken

p.s. So as not to worry you, after intensive treatment, Nancy is cancer-free now. Hurray for good health. Additionally in case you were wondering, I am not immediately seeking new professional endeavors. Instead, I am excited to slow down, spend time with family and

friends, and pursue personal creative projects. And, of course, I will never stop dreaming big.

From Gateway's Board of Trustees

Dear Community,

Gateway's Board of Trustees is incredibly proud of Sharon's work to create a successful and thriving school community. It will be difficult to say goodbye to such a terrific leader, educator and friend.

Sharon Olken has been a beloved fixture and compassionate leader of our Gateway community for 22 years. First as a Gateway High teacher, then principal and, for the past decade, the executive director of Gateway Public Schools. She has led our community through the opening of Gateway Middle; launching a massive effort to increase teacher salaries; creating a professional development platform for teachers, Gateway Impact; navigating many charter renewals; and graduating more than 2,000 students from our schools.

Always thoughtful, Sharon's early announcement of her plans gives Gateway ample time to conduct a robust and thoughtful search process to hire the best possible candidate. In the coming months, the Board of Trustees will secure an executive search firm and form an internal search committee to begin recruiting and interviewing potential candidates. While it is the job of the Board to hire the next executive director, we intend to do this in partnership with GPS staff and with community input as a key part of our process.

Included below is an overview of our anticipated timeline for the hiring process.

For now, we look forward to our remaining 18 months with Sharon actively leading Gateway, and focusing on strategic priorities to provide a smooth transition for our next executive director. The Board of Trustees will share updates on the search process with faculty, staff,

families and our broader community each step of the way.

In Community,

Sharon Gillenwater and Kevin Rafter
Co-Chairs, Board of Trustees

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEARCH

and Sharon Olken Transition Timeline

CURRENT SCHOOL YEAR QUARTER 3

JANUARY TO MARCH 2022

- Sharon's community announcement
- Form Gateway's search committee
- Hire executive search firm
- Community update from the Board



CURRENT SCHOOL YEAR QUARTER 4

APRIL TO JUNE 2022

- Stakeholder meetings and surveys to inform job description
- Community update from the Board
- Executive Director job posted

SUMMER 2022

SEARCH FIRM AND GATEWAY
SEARCH COMMITTEE WORK

- Outreach and networking
- Building candidate pool



2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR SEMESTER 1

AUGUST TO DECEMBER 2022
SEARCH BEGINS

- Outreach and networking
- Search firm assesses candidates and shares with search committee
- Interview process designed with key stakeholder groups
- On-campus interview process for top candidates
- Community updates from the Board

SUMMER 2023

- New Executive Director begins work
- Sharon transitions to advisory role

SEMESTER 2

JANUARY TO FEBRUARY 2023

Active search continues

MARCH 2023

Finalist period

APRIL TO MAY 2023

New Executive Director hired and introduced to the community

All timeframes are projected and will adjust as needed

AS OF JANUARY 20, 2022

Thank you for Dreaming Big with us every step of the way. Sharon guided us through

growth, uncertainty and resilience, and we look forward to Gateway's next great adventure.

Dream Big with Us!

We value your feedback at PowerGym, and want you to have the best experience possible.

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