

Gateway Public Schools

Meeting of the Board of Trustees

Wednesday, September 18, 2019 @ 5:00 -6:30PM

Minutes

Board Members Present: Therese Arsenault, Beth Berliner, Allison Bhusri, Sapna Boze, Sara Byrne, Elizabeth Colen, Katie Colley, Annie Klebahn, Susan Masto, Sharon Olken, Molly Orner, Mary Plant-Thomas, Kevin Rafter, Dina To, Valerie Toler, Julie Wise

Board Members Excused: Cynthia Billops, Sharon Gillenwater, Joyce McMinn, Laura Spivy
Also present: Chris Hero, Danielle Ciccarelli, Chanda Lockhart

Welcome, Call to Order, Approval of Minutes from May 15, 2019

Susan Masto called the meeting to order at 5:13 pm.

Announcements

Susan reminded the board that the Matters of the Mind Luncheon, with speaker David Plouffe, is coming up on October 25th. There is a VIP evening the evening before (10/24) at Katie Colley's house. In other announcements:

- The middle school is in need of 6 volunteers for challenge day - October 1.
- Our fundraising goal has been raised, and there is an increase in all buckets including board giving. Giving means whatever is meaningful to you - everyone gives in different ways.
- She continued that we are trying something different this year, and every meeting will have a theme. Tonight's theme is Connecting with Each Other and Gateway's Mission.

Susan discussed goals for board meetings this year:

- Create opportunities for trustees to connect to Gateway's mission, staff and students
- Create opportunities for trustees to connect to each other
- Engage trustees around their expertise and ideas in support of Gateway's mission and priorities
- Agenda Focusers
- Review of minutes: Using the minutes as a mental prompt, talk with a partner about one thing that stood out to you from the last meeting and/or something you hope we return to.
- Mission Moment: Start each meeting with a meaningful mission moment
- Closing Thoughts: Conclude each meeting with an idea whip-around.

Public Forum

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

Approval of Minutes from May 15, 2019

Susan asked everyone to look at the May minutes and use them as a mental prompt. Trustees shared their thoughts and had a brief discussion. Sara moved and Sapna seconded a motion to approve the minutes from May 15, 2019. The minutes were approved unanimously, without issue.

Mission Moment - Sharon Olken asked Julie Wise to share a mission moment. Julie shared that the moment came at graduation this past June. Graduation is the culmination of all the work everyone does getting kids through high school. To see everyone come together to celebrate that moment was very moving and meaningful to her.

Susan gave the floor to Sharon Olken for the Executive Director's Report.

Executive Director's Report

Sharon started with a start-of-school update and asked teacher-trustees to share what they read this summer, what they are working on, and what they are excited about.

Mary Plant-Thomas read *Radium Girls*, by Kate Moore, a book about the women who worked as dial painters, for military purposes, during WWI. The book looks into the advocacy and legal battles that ensued, and the way the women stood up for each other. For Mary, it was a great coming together of advocacy and science. She also read *White Fragility*, by Robin DiAngelo, which talks about how white people interact with discussions about racism. She read it as part of the White Anti-Racist Teachers group (WART). She also did a 28 day journaling activity for white people to think about the part they play in racism.

Mary is excited about her 2nd summer of Hollyhock at Stanford. Last year she spent the whole year learning how to facilitate whole class discussions. This year she can do it from the start, and is sharing resources with her fellow bio teacher. Mary also attended an AP bio conference. She is giving all AP bio students a list of books related to AP bio. One student already read the 6th Extinction; Mary is excited to have conversations with the kids.

Elizabeth Colen is working with Facing History to implement social justice curriculum in the classroom. GMS and GHS are partner schools. Lucy Hilarides and Elizabeth have submitted a proposal to present at a Facing History conference in March. They are both reading *Whistling Vivaldi: How Stereotypes Affect Us and What We Can Do*, by Claude M. Steele, which discusses the construct of stereotype threat. It gets her thinking about how stereotypes affect our interaction with students and how they affect our students' experiences in the classroom. Elizabeth also said that the middle school is implementing *2nd Step Curriculum*, a program rooted in social-emotional learning (SEL). The middle school has a schoolwide goal around social emotional learning. 2nd step has updated their curriculum, and the teachers are excited to see how it goes this year. The middle school had a different curriculum for the past 4 years, and they are invested in this one for the next 3 years. Hoping it will impact students positively.

Molly Orner read *Life of Pi*, by Yann Martel, in preparation for teaching it in Humanities 10. In previous years, Humanities 10 read *Lord of the Flies*, but the humanities planning team wanted a book that fewer students had encountered. This book is a little different in terms of the protagonist and ethics and world religions are incorporated into the story. The students are about half way through, and it is great to be experiencing the book while they are experiencing it. She started the year with a mini-unit on ethics. The other thing she is thinking about is student motivation, and she took an online course about the concept of student motivation built on 5 core beliefs. It overlaps with a lot of what they are talking about in Professional Development. She came back to school with excitement about trying out activities and strategies.

Therese Arsenault read many books, but she talked about *Onward: Cultivating Emotional Resilience in Educators* by Elena Aguilar. Teachers need to be resilient enough to help our students learn and grow and transform a system that is not working for many students. Therese's roll at the middle school has changed and she is now working outside of the classroom as a teacher coach. The book has helped her to think about how you coach for resilience. How do you sustain yourself in a profession longterm? She took a 4 day workshop with the author at Multiversity in the Santa Cruz mountains. It was the most nurturing place she had been for a long time. She is working some of what she has learned into her coaching. This is her bible for the year. She mentioned that she is on the middle school Instructional Planning Team. She is excited about using Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) data in instruction.

Sharon Olken said that, as she listened to the teachers, she heard the priorities of resilience, anti racism, independence, social emotional learning, ethics, analyzing data, etc. She also heard the incredible amount of work teachers did over the summer. These teachers are extraordinary; Gateway teachers are extraordinary. Sharon thanked the teachers for sharing.

Development Update

Chanda presented a powerpoint illustrating the 2019-2020 development strategic plan for getting to \$1.895M by June 30th. She reviewed revenue and goals in all areas, including the luncheon, the annual fund, family and alumni giving, trustee giving and major donors.


Our strategic goals are to increase fundraising 5%, build on engagement for sustainable revenue growth, deepen major donor relationships with Gateway, and see a big increase in foundation grants. Chanda also gave an update on luncheon planning.

Closing Thoughts

Trustees shared words that reflect how they feel about starting the school year. Among the words/phrases were *authenticity, gratitude, refreshed, collaboration, excited, important year, we can do it, commitment, and love.*

Adjourn Meeting

Susan adjourned the meeting at 6:45pm

Signed:  _____ Date: 11/13/19

Sapna Boze, Board Secretary