

# 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: January 16, 2020

Time: 7:11 PM

Location: 7 Henry Clay Drive, Merrimack, NH

## Voting Board Members in Attendance:

Danielle Charest (Chair)

Sarah Thibeault (Secretary)

Felicia Doucette (Treasurer)

Neil Mahoney (Parent Rep)

Jack Balcom (Vice Chair)

## Absent Board Members:

Jack Balcom

## Non-Voting Members in Attendance:

Suzanne Wheeler

Betty Mulrey

Astrid Alvarado

## Attending Public:

Mandy Darah

Eric Charest

## Public Comments/Public Matters

No public comment

## Approval of Minutes from November

**MOTION** (Neil/Felicia) Motion to accept the minutes from the meeting was accepted unanimously



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#### Finance Committee Meeting

Felicia gave a review of the finance committee meeting minutes from January 1, 2020. Discussed amending the budget because Free and Reduced lunches was not its own line item but part of the differentiated aid.

**MOTION** (Sarah Thibeault/Neil Mahoney) Motion to amend budget and revisit budget quarterly was accepted unanimously.

Felicia is moving to Amsterdam, March will be her last BOT meeting but she will still help as needed, however we will need to find an in house finance manager .

Next meeting is February 15, 2020

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

#### Committee Reports

PTO- Neil Mahoney The PTO voted to not hold a January community event after such a busy holiday season. Current events being planned are You Make My Heart Glow Dance, February 14, 6-8pm, K-8 family dance. Mom Prom March 14, 7:30-11pm at the Hunt Community Building. Friendship gram bracelets are being sold to be given out on Valentine's Day. Amy Cooper is putting together a bulk spirit wear order through Scholastic Expressions.

#### Curriculum Committee- Betty Mulrey

A shared Google folder has been created containing a compilation of standards driving our curriculum at GCCSA. These were described and discussed.

Key components include:

- (1) enVision Math standards by grade, which are aligned with the Common Core State Standards
- (2) Next Generation Science Standards, by grade
- (3) NH Social Studies Standards. (These are in the process of being revised by the state, and we will update our standards when this is completed.)



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- (4) Common Core State Standards for ELA by grade
- (5) NH State Assessment System vocabulary by grade
- (6) NH ELA Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs) by grade
- (7) NH Math Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs) by grade

The next Curriculum Committee Meeting will be held the third Wednesday in February 2020, time TBD.

## H/R Policy Committee-

PR and Community Relations committee- Sarah Thibeault The website has been finished and looks great, some updating still needs to be done. We are in contact with The Riverwalk Cafe for a potential poetry reading, and Big Kahuna for a potential open mic night.

Grants Committee- Jack Balcom No meeting held

Facilities Committee- Eric Charest- Currently adding cameras to the Great Hall and cafeteria. We have received the equipment for the wireless. The cubicle people came out and fixed the cubicles.

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

## Old Business

We have decided to break into groups for strategic planning.  
We are looking into new ways to recruit new board members.

## New Business

**Middle School Structure-** We discussed a structure in which Kindergarten-3rd Grade would be lower Elementary, 4th and 5th Grade would become upper Elementary and would switch teachers/classrooms between Math and Science and ELA and Humanities. The Middle School would be 6th-8th grade and would change classroom/teachers for Science, Math, ELA/Social Studies. With this structure it would give the middle school longer block periods and opportunities for science labs.



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**MOTION** (Sarah Thibeault/Neil Mahoney) Motion to explore lower Elementary K-3, upper Elementary 4/5 and Middle School 6-8 structure was accepted unanimously.

The Accountability Report was discussed. We talked about the areas that needed improvement but overall it was a positive review.

Neil and Danielle will be conducting Directors Reviews in the next month or two.

## **Directors Report**

### **Suzanne Wheeler**

December and January have been busy with many special education meetings at various Nashua Public Schools. It has been very interesting to hear how all of the case managers and special educators I meet with all have the same feeling about this new model of transporting students to Pennichuck Middle School and Birch Hill Elementary School. They feel it is disruptive to their schedule. The LEA's (the representative of the school district that referred the student to special education services, and pays for them) all have the same mantra, "This is the model for this year." We continue to have parents withholding services for their children as they do not want them to be removed from core subjects wasting time riding a bus. We also have an opposite situation where we recently enrolled a student from Pennichuck who in order to receive his services he must be at Pennichuck at 9:00. In order to accomplish this his mother must transport him both ways and he goes directly there in the morning and misses advisory. This is not in his best interest. Some great news I am thrilled to share is that it has been six weeks since I have received a student incident report. This can be explained by a number of reasons, 1- I have explained to teachers that minor situations should be discussed with the teacher so that the student understands the expectations in the classroom 2- Teachers now understand that students can be sent to me to process and discuss without being written up for minor situations. Another great positive is our bus dismissal improvement. Students were told they were to stand in 4 straight lines quietly. I told them the quietest line would be the first to load their bus. The change was dramatic and impressive and has been consistent the last 2 weeks. On a day when all busses arrive on time, we actually completed bus dismissal in less than 5 minutes! Tomorrow the teaching staff will be heading to Plymouth State University for professional development day. Teachers were able to choose workshops that appeared to be relevant to them. All attendees will be treated to a presentation by Tiger Theatre. We will be able to critique it and determine if it is appropriate and worthwhile to invite them to present at Gate City. Our hope is





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that it will supplement our Choose Love Program. I have completed my observations of all Educational Assistants and will be meeting with them over the next two weeks to discuss strengths and weaknesses.

## Betty Mulrey

We had our first Celebration of Learning on December 12, following which we held a Title Information session for families.

Our all-school "Artist of the Month" initiative is currently featuring Salvador Dali. Student processing of Dali's work is displayed on the walls of the school.

Teachers will attend a final Heineman seminar next Wednesday. This will complete a four session webinar series that will help our teachers with text leveling and comprehension. It will also help teachers become more adept at assessing and teaching to support student comprehension through conferences and small group instruction.

We now have Title math instruction in all middle school grades. We were fortunate to have hired a math Title teacher who has extensive experience in middle school math.

Our midyear round of i-Ready assessment will be January 30 through February 21.

Our select chorus joined the Merrimack Concert Association community chorus and band concert on Saturday December 14 at the Merrimack High School cafeteria. Our students performed two songs and a dance for the Merrimack community.

We had our winter concert on December 18, titled "Just Keep Dreaming." This concert took place at the Nashua Community College Auditorium. Mrs. Ashton has created a display in the front lobby featuring Dreams. There is a large homemade book in the lobby, with each grade contributing a Dreams page to the book.

Our teachers will be attending the Plymouth State University 25th Annual Integrated Arts Conference tomorrow. This is a teacher in-service day for us. The conference is titled "Kindness Counts - Building a Safer, Kinder Classroom Community Through the Arts." The keynote address will "Celebrate the fusion of Social Emotional Learning and the transformative power of the arts." Our art teacher Beth Ashton is putting together an art exhibit from our school which will be exhibited at the Plymouth State Conference. As the musical "Annie" is being presented in conjunction with the Arts conference, our exhibit will revolve around the "Little Orphan Annie" comic strip, and Harold Gray, who wrote and illustrated this.



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Astrid Avarado

## **Upcoming Events**

I participated in a panel for NH Chamber of Commerce Leadership cohort regarding Alternative Education which was hosted at World Academy.

We had our 1st Information Session yesterday (1/15/2020) with 27 attendees.

There are 2 more scheduled for February 12th and March 18th from 6pm-7pm.

Ads have gone out for our Information Sessions in Nashua & Merrimack Patch as well as on our Facebook Page.

National School Choice week is January 26th- February 1st, we are looking to schedule some impromptu celebrations throughout the week.

We are currently scheduling James in the Giant Peach as a whole school field trip in March.

## **Current Enrollment**

Current: 163

We have run ads in Parenting NH, Facebook, and NH Chamber of Commerce- N Magazine.

Our intent to return forms have gone out to families with an expected return date of March 6th. Our Kindergarten lottery has been scheduled for March 27th.

## **Meeting with Counting House**

I met with the new financial agency this past Wednesday to sign paperwork for them to start working on our financial books. We will have a team consisting of a bookkeeper and an administrator that will be working with us from Counting House. I will be meeting with them again on January 21st at their office to review the new payroll system, meet all the members of the team, and finalize expectations from them in regards to our finances.

## **Raise Craze**

I met with Krystal Cameron on Wednesday to start planning our February fundraiser that is aligned with our Social Emotional Learning Curriculum, Choose Love. We will be asking for donations and in return students will complete acts of Kindness. Our fundraising goal is \$800 per class and \$8,000 as a school. We are hoping to have incentives throughout the month to help increase



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participation rates such as emoji keychains, raffles, and potential ice cream or pizza parties.

## **Building Maintenance**

We had Cubicle Solutions come out to complete repairs on 1/6/2020 as part of their repairs they secured our partition walls that were falling apart. They put angle grinders on top of longer sections to help make the walls secure for our Middle School and 3rd/4th Grade partitions.

## **Grant Spending**

We started spending some of the money we received in grant funding this year. To date, we have purchased 10 chromebooks for the middle school and 2 charging carts which Eric has graciously put together for us.

## **Sycamore**

First trimester report cards have come out and we have officially gone all electronic! We will no longer print report cards to send home to families (unless directly asked) as each family has received a specific username and code to login into their account. While there was some troubleshooting involved with this process, we have received positive feedback overall.

## **Updated Policies & Procedures**

We ran into uncharted waters this previous month in regards to enrollment. The issue is regarding grade level placement of homeschooled students within our charter school. How do we as a school determine this? What valid data can we expect or anticipate from these families?

We are sending our handbook acknowledgement to families. While we know that our handbook is in need of a revision, we feel its best to have this on file from current families.

## **Safety Committee**

I have officially established a safety committee for this school year. I plan on having our first official meeting on January 29th at 1:30. We will be reviewing and revising our Emergency procedures as part of this committee.



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

Next public meeting Thursday March 19, 2020 at 7pm

Meeting adjourned 10:14 pm





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Meeting Date: March 19, 2020

Time: 7:03 PM

Location: 7 Henry Clay Drive, Merrimack, NH

#### Voting Board Members in Attendance:

Danielle Charest (Chair)

Sarah Thibeault (Secretary)

Felicia Doucette (Treasurer)

Neil Mahoney (Parent Rep)

Jack Balcom (Vice Chair)

#### Absent Board Members:

#### Non-Voting Members in Attendance:

Suzanne Wheeler

Betty Mulrey

Astrid Alvarado

#### Attending Public:

#### Public Comments/Public Matters

No public comment

#### Approval of Minutes from February

**MOTION** (Neil/Felicia) Motion to accept the minutes from the meeting was accepted unanimously

#### Finance Committee Meeting

Felicia gave a review of the finance committee meeting minutes from March 7, 2020. discussed the remaining 2019/2020 budget and started working on 2020/2021.



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Next meeting is

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

## **Committee Reports**

### PTO- Neil Mahoney.

At the PTO meeting we discussed upcoming events, Scholastic book fair, and Mom Prom happening in March. We discussed how well the You Make My Heart Glow Dance went, and the friendship grams were well received. We began our discussions about Teacher Appreciation and possibly having another catered lunch. We began discussing the end of the year events, Field Day and End of the Year BBQ.

### Curriculum Committee- Betty Mulrey

Please see Director's report

### H/R Policy Committee-

We discussed how quickly we got procedures and policies in place during the current COVID-19

### PR and Community Relations committee- Sarah Thibeault

At our meeting we discussed the upcoming Open Mic Night at Big Kahunas. We also discussed speaking to Kastle about some finishing touches on the website. We also continued discussing our ideas about the Art Auction/Art Show in May.

### Grants Committee- Jack Balcom No meeting held

Marcia needs to get a report for the grant for the Chromebooks to report to TD Bank. Looking for an update for the audit, so we can continue to work on grants.

Facilities Committee- Eric Charest- Building is currently closed due to COVID-19, but cleaners will do a deep clean on or around March 29 and then suspend until we go back to school

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



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## **Old Business**

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## **New Business**

**Remote Learning-** We have successfully switched over to 100% online learning, all teachers are on google classroom. The school signed out chrome books to families in need with a contract to make sure received the laptops back without damage. We had 95% family participation for first day of remote learning, and we started two days early.

## **Directors Report**

Suzanne Wheeler- We are ahead of both Merrimack and Nashua district for remote learning. Briana is servicing all special ed students.

Betty Mulrey- We completed our second i-Ready assessment for grades K-8 in reading and math. ACCESS (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State) testing was given for English Language Learners.

Teachers received training in NHSAS Test Administration on March 6. We had planned for students to do NH state testing in April, and the final round of i-Ready in May. However, things may change due to the current COVID19 situation.

Teachers received training in Remote Learning and Creation of Google Classrooms on March 17. Areas covered included:

- Strategies for best practices in creating remote learning environments and establishing remote learning infrastructures
- Creation and facilitation of Google Classroom, Screencastify, Google Hangouts/Meeting, and expectations for student work in an online format
- 
- Discussion of SEL and how to meet SEL needs remotely
- Differentiation and meeting individual and diverse student needs using remote learning.



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Our teachers have worked hard to set up Google Classrooms for their students. Art and Music have Google Classrooms as well. Students will continue to receive Title and ELL services online.

Mrs. Bates has set up online chat sessions for students who may wish this. She has also put together resources for talking to students about Coronavirus, including SEL resources, online learning/enrichment resources, mental health crisis resources, counselor-approved apps, and a suggested daily schedule particularly suited for middle schoolers during remote learning.

i-Ready gave us licenses at no cost until June for i-Ready instruction in reading and in math geared to individual students. Lexia also has given us licenses at no cost until June, following our successful pilot of their program. Learning A-Z in addition has given us cost-free instruction capability augmenting what we already purchased.

Our Artist of the Month has been Frida Kahlo, a Mexican painter inspired by the culture, nature, and artifacts of Mexico.

Our Celebration of Learning planned for March 26 has been postponed because the school is closed at this time.

Astrid Avarado

## **Current COVID-19 Crisis:**

The school will remain closed while simultaneously we shift to a new mode of instruction, Remote Learning until April 3rd.

We are currently set up for 100% Remote Learning to be completed online. We have handed out Chromebooks and contracts to families who need this resource. We had 95% participation with families coming to pick up the school supplies necessary to make Remote Learning a reality. Families that did not pick up, were notified and instructed to pick up their child's belongings when they could as they were being left in the back-canopy area where the picnic tables are. The families that were not able to pick up supplies were due to transportation issues.

I have created a new webpage that is titled Remote Learning Resources which includes Google Classroom tutorials, and our communication that has been sent out thus far.

Teachers are required to post their assignments by 9am that day. Attendance will be taken based on participation and completion of assignments.

No determination on state testing will be made until April 3rd.

## **Current Enrollment**





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We are maintaining 165. The information session that was scheduled for yesterday is currently postponed and has not been rescheduled as we are unaware how long this mandate will be in effect for.

The Commissioner is currently working on changing the rules to our current lottery that will waive the requirement for a public meeting to be held. Lottery was set to be held on March 27th.

## **Brady & Sullivan**

They have not reached back out with a final number. However, their initial quote was at \$18.50 per square foot.

## **Raise Craze**

A huge thank you to Krystal Cameron who did an amazing job establishing our first Raise Craze fundraiser! The closing ceremonies were phenomenal, and our students were quite eager to be a part of them. There were many prizes and acknowledgements that went out. The total amount raised after fees is \$6,165.72. Gate City was able to keep 93% of the proceeds after multiple donations were done to contribute to our fees.

## **Potential Changes to Building**

The possibility was presented to me regarding potentially adding another 6th grade classroom as we have a large waiting list (roughly 15) for this grade. This would not impact our numbers to go above the 180 limits as we have multiple classrooms below this number. I have reached out to cubicle solutions for potential quotes; however, they have not responded and due to our current status, I have not followed up on the issue.

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

Roll call was taken

**MOTION () Motion** to adjourn was accepted unanimously.

Next public meeting at 7pm

Meeting adjourned pm



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Meeting Date: Thursday April 16, 2020

Time: 7:10 PM

Location: Video conference

#### Voting Board Members in Attendance:

Danielle Charest (Chair)

Sarah Thibeault (Secretary)

Felicia Doucette (Treasurer)

Neil Mahoney (Parent Rep)

Jack Balcom (Vice Chair)

#### Absent Board Members:

#### Non-Voting Members in Attendance:

Suzanne Wheeler

Betty Mulrey

Astrid Alvarado

#### Attending Public:

Mandy Darah

#### Public Comments/Public Matters

No public comment

#### Approval of Minutes from March

**MOTION** (Sarah Thibeault/Jack Balcom) Motion to accept the minutes from the meeting was accepted unanimously

#### Committee Reports

##### PTO- Neil Mahoney:

The PTO held their first remote meeting with great attendance. It was decided that all fundraisers will be put on hold. We are looking into how much money can be carried over to 2020/2021 school year. Mom Prom will be rescheduled till May 31. Teacher Appreciation Week be budgeted \$200 and the Facebook group already created will be used to brainstorm ideas. Field Day and BBQ could possibly be all in one day later in the Summer.



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## Curriculum Committee- Betty Mulrey

Please see Directors Report

## H/R Policy Committee-

## PR and Community Relations committee- Sarah Thibeault

The school held a parade for students to drive thru with their families to see their teachers and a nice article was published in The Telegraph.

## Grants Committee- Jack Balcom

## Facilities Committee- Eric Charest-

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

## Finance Committee Meeting

Felicia gave a review of the finance committee meeting minutes from on April. The audit is still being worked on, with the hopes of finishing 2018/2019 audit by July. The board also discussed asking Lynn Rae to help with finances over the summer.

Next meeting is TBA

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

## Old Business

Remote Learning-Please see directors report

## New Business

Teachers contracts-The board first needs to review the proposed budget for 2020/2021. A special meeting to discuss the proposed 2020/2021 budget will be set up next week.

Addition of a second 6<sup>th</sup> grade-The board discussed the potential of adding a second 6<sup>th</sup> grade class. The school has 15 returning 6<sup>th</sup> grade students, 9 students attended an info night and



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would like to attend GCCSA and 9 students are interested in attending GCCSA but have not attended an info night. We have the potential of having two 18 student classes.

Recognition for volunteers-The board discussed giving an award or plaque to recognize parents that go above and beyond.

### **Directors Report**

#### Suzanne Wheeler-

The staff had two days of training on Google Classroom on March 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> and the next day, March 18<sup>th</sup> we were up and running. As I drop into their group lunches and morning meetings, I am so proud of the amazing way they have adapted to this new model. They have gone above and beyond to reach each student.

During this time, I have attended nine IEP meetings as well as been in constant touch with Brianna. She is doing a fabulous job and we brainstorm strategies to get IEP students motivated and adjust their needs.

I have multiple meetings with the DOE every week to include the commissioner, SPED, and charter schools' discussions. At all meetings there is a chat box to allow for audience questions. Michaelene held the kindergarten lottery live. It appeared to go very well.

Yesterday's parade was a dream come true. I could not tell who enjoyed it more-the students or the staff! There were tears and cheers. It made my month!

We had a great turnout! You can read about it in today's Nashua Telegraph, pages A3 and A5, pictures included!!!

I am so proud to be part of GCCS

#### Betty Mulrey

NH has announced that remote learning will continue for the rest of the school year. GCCSA teachers, students, and families have rallied well behind our new remote learning initiative. We have received valuable feedback from students and families which has enabled us to augment or revise our remote learning practices and strategies on a continuing basis. One example is the use of the "mute" button during virtual classroom meetings! That button is more complicated than you may think! Virtual meetings have been a great way for our students to see each other and to keep up their social classroom connections. Teachers have been available to have individual class sessions with students as well. Our students continue to receive Title and ELL services online. We also continue to use free remote learning licenses from I-Ready, Lexia, Learning A-Z and others.





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The NH Department of Education has been keeping us updated and informed as to what to expect and how to handle it in this unique environment and time. They designed a new site called "NH Learns Remotely" to support community, families, and students. This site has "resources geared to seasoned and new educators as well as information for NH students." The website includes links to instructional sites and lessons, as well as to excellent professional development for teachers. There are many free opportunities for teacher P.D. currently. A graph on this NH site shows 23% of NH with fully implemented remote learning. That percentage would include us! (<http://www.nhlearnsremotely.com/>)

It was announced at a NH state online session that MA student teachers could do practicum hours in NH during this time of remote learning. I am pleased to say that GCCSA is now hosting two practicum students from Merrimack College in our first and second grade online classrooms! This is an excellent experience for these student teachers, and they appreciate this opportunity very much.

Art teacher Beth Ashton worked hard to submit student artwork from GCCSA to the "Drawn to the Music" art and music program on behalf of the New Hampshire Philharmonic Orchestra. All our students' drawings that were submitted were selected for the production! Students acted out and drew scenes inspired by "The Firebird Suite" from 1919. Here is a link to their work: <https://www.artsonia.com/museum/gallery.asp?project=1921073>

"Midyear Progress Reports" will be shared with families this year on April 24. These reports will be in the same format as Trimester 1. We are working now on what the final school year report card should look like, given remote learning challenges as well as a shortened semester. There is currently a wide variation among schools as to the form these final report cards will take.

We have been able to loan Chromebook to students over the past few weeks in a manner that maximizes social distancing. Fortunately, we have Title funds available for purchasing some of our chrome books, and we were able to have some new Title chrome books up and running just as remote learning began.

We mailed in our ACCESS (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State) testing for English Language Learners by the due date, which happened to be the last day we had the school open. Excellent timing there.

NH state testing has been suspended because of the COVID 19 public health emergency and will not take place this semester. The next time it will be administered is being discussed by the state. Schools and families have been given access to ways to use practice state assessment test questions and test resources. Practice tests for students now exist in ELA, math, and science, and they are available on the NHSAS website.



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Astrid Alvarado

## **Current COVID-19 Crisis**

We have received additional information that we will be extending remote learning for the remainder of the school year.

State testing (SAS) has been officially waived for the 2019-2020 school year, which poses additional questions related to our "check-in" with the Department of Education renewal date. Only Catering will be issuing us a refund for the rest of March's lunch orders. I will be working with Lynn to discuss issuing refunds to families who have already paid along with field trips that were scheduled.

Plans are being made as to how we are going to collect Chromebook and library books that were given out to families during this time. I will ask Mandy to compile a list of library books lent out to families.

## **End of Year Calendar**

After going through last year's approved calendar, we had appropriated 52 additional hours to account for snow days over the course of the school year. We had 5 snow days and a 2-hour delay thus far this year. The total amount of hours that equals to is 32 hours. This means we have 20 additional hours scheduled into our calendar over our mandated 990 hours by the Department of Education. This brings the question, that we could potentially end our school year (June 1st) even sooner given that we have an abundance of hours built into our calendar and given our circumstances.

**MOTION** (Neil Mahoney/Jack Balcom) Motion to end the 2019/2020 school year on Monday June 1 was accepted unanimously.

## **Department of Education Renewal Timeline**

Having been in contact with Jane Waterhouse regarding our charter renewal. She stated that our renewal has been extended until April 11th, 2021. We can decide when we are ready to have this meeting. She recommended that we move this to late next fall or early winter.

After re-watching the video from the Department of Education meetings from April & July it seems these are the items, they are looking for us to check in on:

- Years' worth of academic progress with I-Ready data & SAS
- Holes in data collection to be filled in as organizationally & administratively was lacking on staying "on top of it"
- Measuring and measurement of goals in relation to achieving our mission and individual student achievement
- Systemic manner of collecting and housing school data



# 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"*

- Plans for fundraising

## 2020-2021 Enrollment Information

	Returning Students	Unconfirmed	Non-returning	Reason(s)	Waitlisted	Expressed Interest
1st	18	1	1		2	2
2nd	18	1	1	Moving	2	
3rd	15	2			1	2
4th	18	1			3	4
5th	17	2				
6th	15	3	3	ASD	9	9
7th	11	4	2	More opportunity at a typical public school	1	
8th	14				1	1
*Kinder	12	7	1			15
TOTAL # of students	126	14	7	*Not counted under percentages	19	18
Percentage	85%	10%	5%			

We have reached out to our Kindergarten lottery winners, 10 have already confirmed, we have 2 siblings that we are awaiting to hear confirmation and are reaching out to the additional families to get our new Kindergarten class fully enrolled.

## Teacher Contracts

Michaelene, Lynn, & I will be working to create new teacher contracts that have an in-depth scope of practice for our teaching staff. The current, 1-page documents that have been given to staff, is sorely lacking in details and a comprehensive scope of practice. We have just begun this process and will be working on it over the course of the month.



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## **Potential additional 6th Grade**

I have reached out to a company referred to us by Cubicle Solutions for quotes on purchasing partition walls for an additional 6th grade classroom. Have not heard back from them yet but have communicated with them and sent pictures of our current partitions. Once I have their quote, I will reach out to Cubicle solutions for a quote as well and Michaelene is currently looking into how much it would cost to furnish an additional classroom.

## **Car Parade**

I would like to personally thank Krystal Cameron for the wonderful idea to host a car parade at Gate City this past Wednesday.

**MOTION** (Jack Balcom/Neil Mahoney) Motion to adjourn was accepted unanimously.

Next public meeting Thursday May 21 at 7pm

Meeting adjourned 9:00pm





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Meeting Date: May 21, 2020

Time: 7:11 PM

Location: 7 Henry Clay Drive, Merrimack, NH

## Voting Board Members in Attendance:

Danielle Charest (Chair)

Jack Balcom (Vice Chair)

Sarah Thibeault (Secretary)

Felicia Doucette (Treasurer)

Neil Mahoney (Parent Rep)

## Absent Board Members:

## Non-Voting Members in Attendance:

Suzanne Wheeler

Betty Mulrey

Astrid Alvarado

## Attending Public:

Amy Cooper

Mandy Darah

Eric Charest

## Public Comments/Public Matters

No public comment

## Approval of Minutes from April 2020

**MOTION** (Neil/Felicia) Motion to accept the minutes from the meeting was accepted unanimously



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## **Committee Reports**

PTO- Neil Mahoney. The PTO has decided to dog ear \$2000 to use next year for enrichment for the students and also will put aside \$1400 for the teachers/specials to use. The PTO raised \$470 for Teacher Appreciation the initial gift has been purchased but more discussion will happen to decide what to do with the rest of the funds. Mom Prom has tentatively been moved to October 17 dependent on the Hunt Buildings availability as well as In the Mix. Elections were held for the executive board and the original members got voted back in.

Curriculum Committee- Betty Mulrey- Please see directors report

H/R Policy Committee-

PR and Community Relations committee- Sarah Thibeault

Grants Committee- Jack Balcom

Facilities Committee- Eric Charest- The school will need to perform lead testing and air quality survey for the end of June.

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

## **Finance Committee Meeting**

Felicia gave a review of the finance committee meeting minutes from May 15, 2020. Felicia discussed finalizing the budget as well as looking into rent relief from the past few months due to COVID-19. The financials for 2018 are close to being finished.

Next meeting is June 12, 2020 1pm

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

## **Old Business**



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Teacher Contracts- All teachers have had meetings with the directors.

1 Teacher is TBD

1 Teacher is moving

All other teachers are interested in staying.

## New Business

Brady & Sullivan 1 Innovation Way-Recently they spoke to Astrid about an adjusted price that seemed to fit our budget better but realized our operating budget was too high. Astrid is working with them to find a better price by utilizing space better and reducing the classroom size as well as getting rid of unutilized space. Astrid will continue to discuss with Brady & Sullivan and investigate having board members walk the building.

Returning to School 2020/21-We are unsure when we will have guidelines for going back to school. Astrid is putting together a task force committee of teachers, parents, and board members to discuss remote learning, as well as the 3 different scenarios for returning to school in the Fall.

-Fully back into the building, traditional student to teacher learning

-Partial Access to the building some traditional learning as well as some remote learning

-Complete Remote Learning

First Meeting will be Wednesday June 3, 2020

## Directors Report

Suzanne Wheeler-

May has been an extremely busy month. I have had 8 IEP meetings, 1 referral meeting, 1 504 meeting, and 1 transition meeting. In addition to that I have the following Department of Education meeting updates: 2 times a week listening to the commissioner, 1 time a month there is a charter school update, 1 time a week there is a special education meeting, and lastly a covid update meeting.

Our last day of school being June 1<sup>st</sup> has led me to organize a return of materials. On Tuesday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> students with the last name beginning with A-F will be able to drive into the parking lot and staying in their cars return chrome books, white boards, library books, etc....They will then be asked to open their trunks or back seat door and we will put in a bag that contains their desk and locker belongings. They will be unable to receive these if they do not return GCCS materials. On Wednesday, June 3<sup>rd</sup> students with last names ending in G-L will do the same



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process, Thursday, June 4<sup>th</sup> last names M-R are expected, and lastly Friday S-Z. Children will not be allowed out of their cars. Only parents who need to look for an article in our lost and found pile will be allowed out of their cars and they must be masked. The hours will be limited to ten o'clock to two o'clock.

Staff involved these four days are Michaelene, Lynn, Brianna, me and one day Brenda has volunteered. I have requested that no other staff be in the building closing out their rooms on those days to mitigate any personal distancing problems. All the staff involved in the return of materials will be wearing masks.

Astrid and I had zoom meetings with all the educational assistants concerning contracts for next school year. The contract will not change if we work remotely or in the classroom. They were told they would receive letters of intent next week and contracts during the summer. We are waiting to hear back from one EA by next Monday.

The position of Behaviorist has been eliminated for budgetary reasons as well as the fact there would be no need for the position if we go remotely. We made it clear that if a position for an EA opened (which is likely) she would be offered that position. We let go of one EA for several reasons.

Lastly, I have to add that as I "pop" into remote classrooms, I am so proud of all of our staff who are working diligently to make the transition to remote learning as seamless as they can. Proof of this is from parents who have emailed to express their positive feedback on the availability of the teachers to their students.

We all miss the community of being together at GCCS and are hoping for a fall return.

## Betty Mulrey

Our teachers, students, and families continue to valiantly work within our remote learning framework this spring. Virtual class meetings have been an excellent social experience for students, as they are able to see and hear each other on the screen in real time. We continue to receive valuable feedback from students and families on remote learning, which has enabled us to augment or revise our online practices and strategies on a continuing basis.

As our teachers receive this feedback, and as they continue to gain more experience with this mode of teaching and learning, they are in the process of adjusting what they do in order to best meet the needs of students. This includes time expected for assignment completion, number of





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assignments, and a balance of virtual and asynchronous meetings. Teachers are also working together on integrated assignments, such as music and poetry. We are working hard to engage students who have not been turning in assignments. In these cases, teachers have reached out to both students and families to resolve the situation in a positive and workable manner. Online individual sessions with teachers are always available and encouraged.

Given our remote learning challenges as well as a shortened semester, we have altered our third trimester report card. We will grade this final trimester on an "incomplete, pass or excels" scale for overall work in classes (not for specific competencies). As we consider the diverse environments our students and families have regarding their ability to access online learning, this will allow us to address overall participation and growth.

Our students continue to receive Title and ELL services online. We also continue to use free remote learning licenses from i-Ready and Lexia. Both Lexia and i-Ready free licenses will be available for students until the end of July if families wish to use them.

We were able to get Chromebooks loaned to all students who needed them. We have found that this can be particularly important for families with multiple children needing online access at the same time.

The NH Department of Education continues to augment and update their website "NH Learns Remotely" (<http://www.nhlearnsremotely.com>) in order to keep us updated and informed. There are excellent resources on this site for educators, families, and students. Families are encouraged to check it out!

i-Ready scores from the fall and winter this year have been gathered in data form and are available for your review. All grades made gains in the winter in the general category of both reading and math. Scores within the domains in each category differ in the various areas, and teachers are looking at these statistics to see which domains need the most emphasis. Domains for Reading include: Phonological Awareness, Phonics, High-frequency Words, Vocabulary, Comprehension-Literature, and Comprehension-Informational Text. Domains for Math include: Number & Operations, Algebra and Algebraic Thinking, Measurement & Data, and Geometry. Our school's i-Ready scores have taken on new importance, as the NHSAS tests have been delayed due to the COVID-19 situation, and i-Ready scores will be the main way the state can see our progress this year.

Schools and families have been given access by the state to practice state assessment test questions and test resources in ELA, Math, and Science. These practice tests are available on the NHSAS website (<https://nh.portal.airast.org/training-tests.stm>).



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End of year evaluations for teachers are being shared with teachers in an online manner. These evaluations include lesson highlights from the year, areas of commendation, ways in which to grow, and professional development opportunities.

Our GCCSA Standards & Curriculum folder shared this year with teachers, giving standards and resources for all the grades, now has a new addition called "Remote Learning Instructional Resources." This folder includes the areas of "Digital Classroom Environments," "In Support of Wellness," "Instructional Databases," "Online Instruction," and "Professional Development." Information in this folder has been given to us by the state and by each other, as we find resources to share which have worked for us. I invite anyone who has found an excellent resource to share it with me so that I can add it to this folder.

Our remote learning resources and experience this year may very well come in handy given our uncertain situation for the fall and beyond due to the COVID-19 virus.

Astrid Alvarado

## **COVID**

In the starting phases of organizing a committee to discuss Fall re-opening with the various stakeholders of our community. The sole purpose of this committee would be to discuss challenges/ successes of Remote Learning and barriers that we could potentially see in the Fall if we go back to physically or partially.

Some thoughts/ points of discussion to consider include the need to update our facilities cleaning structure, some small classroom sizes that will not allow for social distancing (Art & Music), families deciding to keep their kids at home, etc.

CARES funding is made available to us for purchases that are due to COVID outbreak. Currently uncertain of how much funding we are set to receive. However, we will have to strategically think about what the biggest need for our space is and how to best utilize those funds. For example: curricula, cleaning materials (UV lights), create an additional usable space for smaller classrooms, etc.

## **2020-2021 Student Enrollment**

	Returning Students	Unconfirmed	Non-returning	Reason(s)	Waitlisted	Expressed Interest
1st	18		2		2	2
2nd	19		1	Moving	2	
3rd	17				1	2



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4th	19				3	4
5th	19					
6th	16		4	ASD	9	9
7th	15		2	More opportunity at a typical public school	1	
8th	13		1		2	1
*Kinder	18					14
TOTAL # of students	136		10	*Not counted under percentages	19	18
Percentage	93%	0%	7%			

**CURRENT TOTAL ENROLLMENT FOR 2020/2021 School Year: 171**

## Whole School Community Event

Lydia in 7th Grade brought up to Beth Ashton the idea to host a virtual paint night. We will be hosting this through Google Meet or Zoom on May 29th at 6pm for those who want to participate. Beth is currently creating a list of supplies that we can give to families to gather ahead of time. Announcement will be made on May 25th through Facebook page, email, and text message.

## 8th Grade Graduation

We will be moving forward with an in-person 8th Grade Graduation on June 12th at 7pm. We will have students remain in their vehicles for the graduation. We will rent or see if we can borrow a large screen to play a slideshow, use some kind of amplifying system so students/families can hear us in the parking lot. Students will be delivered their caps and diplomas ahead of time to decorate and bring to graduation.

## Teacher Contract Discussions

Teachers were notified today regarding grade changes for next year. I had multiple discussions surrounding what would be necessary for next year if we went back remotely vs. physically. Tools that they would need to be successful in both aspects and general long-term plans for them personally, the school as a whole, and for their students. We currently have all but one teacher/ full time salary staff for



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

Roll call was taken

**MOTION** (Felicia Doucette/Jack Balcom) **Motion** to adjourn was accepted unanimously.

Next public meeting at July 16, 2020 7pm

Meeting adjourned 9:31 pm





# 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: June 18, 2020

Time: 7:11 PM

Location: 7 Henry Clay Drive, Merrimack, NH

#### Voting Board Members in Attendance:

Danielle Charest (Chair)

Jack Balcom (Vice Chair)

Sarah Thibeault (Secretary)

Neil Mahoney (Parent Rep)

#### Absent Board Members:

Felicia Doucette (Treasurer)

#### Non-Voting Members in Attendance:

Suzanne Wheeler

Betty Mulrey

Astrid Alvarado

#### Attending Public:

Mandy Darah

Krystal Cameron

#### Public Comments/Public Matters

No public comment

#### Approval of Minutes from May 2020

**MOTION** (Neil/Sarah) Motion to accept the minutes from the meeting was accepted unanimously



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## **Committee Reports**

PTO- Neil Mahoney. The PTO has put together a playground beautification group. They are planning to put down mulch and stain the playground equipment. The PTO will dogear \$300 for this project depending on the outcome of what school will look like in the fall.

Curriculum Committee- Betty Mulrey- Please see directors report

H/R Policy Committee-

PR and Community Relations committee- Sarah Thibeault

Grants Committee- Jack Balcom Marcia is hoping to receive the receipts for the Chromebook grants as soon as possible.

Facilities Committee- Eric Charest- We are waiting on recommendations from the DOE to put together a cleaning and sanitizing policy.

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

## **Finance Committee Meeting**

Felicia gave a review of the finance committee meeting minutes from June 12, 2020.

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 committee has had two meetings. First meeting was a discussion about remote learning, what did and did not work. Second meeting was a discussion about Model A, Model B, and Model C. It was also decided at the second meeting to send out a survey to parents to understand which Model they were most comfortable with. There have also been lengthy discussions about accommodating the students and staff while also social



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distancing, each classroom needs to be measured. We are now waiting to hear the guidelines from the DOE and will reach out to other local charter schools as well as Jane Waterhouse.

Teacher Contracts- All teachers are returning

## **New Business**

Brady & Sullivan 1 Innovation Way-Recently they spoke to Astrid about an adjusted price that seemed to fit our budget better but realized our operating budget was too high. Astrid is working with them to find a better price by utilizing space better and reducing the classroom size as well as getting rid of unutilized space. Astrid will continue to discuss with Brady & Sullivan and investigate having board members walk the building.

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- Complete Remote Learning

First Meeting will be Wednesday June 3, 2020

## **Directors Report**

### **Suzanne Wheeler-**

May has been an extremely busy month. I have had 8 IEP meetings, 1 referral meeting, 1 504 meeting, and 1 transition meeting. In addition to that I have the following Department of Education meeting updates: 2 times a week listening to the commissioner, 1 time a month there is a charter school update, 1 time a week there is a special education meeting, and lastly a covid update meeting.

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Astrid Alvarado

## **COVID**

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## Teacher Contract Discussions

Teachers were notified today regarding grade changes for next year. I had multiple discussions surrounding what would be necessary for next year if we went back remotely vs. physically. Tools that they would need to be successful in both aspects and general long-term plans for them personally, the school as a whole, and for their students. We currently have all but one teacher/ full time salary staff for



# 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"*

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

Roll call was taken

**MOTION** (Felicia Doucette/Jack Balcom) **Motion** to adjourn was accepted unanimously.

Next public meeting at July 16, 2020 7pm

Meeting adjourned 9:31 pm





# 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: July 16, 2020

Time: 7:15 PM

Location: 7 Henry Clay Drive, Merrimack, NH

#### Voting Board Members in Attendance:

Danielle Charest (Chair)

Sarah Thibeault (Secretary)

Felicia Doucette (Treasurer)

Neil Mahoney (Parent Rep)

Jenny Hitzeman

#### Absent Board Members:

#### Non-Voting Members in Attendance:

Suzanne Wheeler

Astrid Alvarado

Jennifer Blanchette

#### Attending Public:

Mandy Darah

Megan Philbrook

Nicole Riddell

Eric Charest

#### Public Comments/Public Matters

No public comment

#### Approval of Minutes from June 2020

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



# 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"*

## Committee Reports

PTO- Neil Mahoney. No meeting in July

Curriculum Committee

H/R Policy Committee-

PR and Community Relations committee- Sarah Thibeault-No meeting

Grants Committee- Jack Balcom No meeting

Facilities Committee- Eric Charest-

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

Finance Committee Meeting

Felicia gave a review of the finance committee meeting minutes from July.

The audit is almost done for 2018 but we will need new auditors for 2019. 2019 taxes have been filed and accepted.

Next meeting is TBD

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

## Old Business

Brady Sullivan-The owner of Innovation Way has decided to not pursue anymore negotiations with GCCSA, however a building at 410 Amherst St in Nashua is available.

Returning to School 2020/2021- The Task Force discussed two different models at the last meeting.

Hybrid model A/B groups M/T, TH/F W remote learning and deep clean the school.

-masks required when traveling throughout the school

-temps before school



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-lunch and specials in classroom

-mild symptoms stay home

Phased reopening

Remote learning for all students, while offering in person outings and project-based learning.

-accessed every 4 weeks

-if safe start hybrid model

-access every 4 weeks

Remote learning will be available for all families

The task force also discussed the possibility of looping, which means the teachers will stay with their students from last year and teach their grade for the current school year. Also starting the school year, a bit later. A survey for families will be emailed tonight to get an idea of which model they feel most comfortable with. The surveys will be due before the next task force meeting July 22.

The board will hold a special meeting July 24 at 5pm to vote on which school reopening model to start the school year with.

**MOTION** (Jenny Hitzeman/Neil Mahoney) to change the first day of school to Wednesday September 9, 2020 was accepted unanimously

## **New Business**

Grants for upcoming school year- Discussion on how to get more grants and researching grants will be discussed at August 2020 meeting.

Update to maternity/paternity policy is currently being updated by Jenny Hitzeman. Finance committee will have to review the financials before a decision can be made as to how long maternity/paternity leave can pay 80% of salary.

Astrid Alvarado and Erin W will be grandfathered in with 6 weeks at 80% of salary.

## **Directors Report**

### **Suzanne Wheeler-**

In July we have held 2 task force meetings about how to return to school. I have obtained Merrimack School Districts Power Point presentation on their return and sent it to Danielle as well as my co directors.



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I have met with a parent and student over a personal issue and this is being handled by the Nashua Police Department. The mother was grateful for the meeting. The commissioner has presented 3 times this month and I was able to ask a question in the chat room. It is obvious that there is no way to accommodate all ideas and some are more appropriate for certain regions while others are not. The DOE charter school leaders' meetings led by Jane Waterhouse has met twice this month with Jane stating that these will be lessening as we come to a decision concerning reopening. The DOE special education meeting has been held once this month. The interview committee comprised of two teachers, administration, and the Board of Trustees interviewed a candidate for Curriculum Director, and I am pleased to say that it was very professional and thorough. Mrs. Jennifer Blanchette was named the new Director of Curriculum and we very much look forward to working with her. I have interviewed three candidates for substitute teachers, educational assistants, and a teacher. I was impressed with all of them. As with all things the unknown can cause anxiety and I strongly feel that we need to make a decision on how we intend to open our school so that we can have the time we need for professional development and be the very best we can be.

Astrid Alvarado

## **Re-entry for Fall Meetings**

### **Changes in Staff**

As many of you know, Michaelene submitted her resignation on June 30th of last month. I have been working closely with Lynn to delegate current responsibilities in order to ensure there will be as minimal disruption to our end of year. Lynn has accepted to take on more responsibilities that were left from this vacant position. We have decided that we will be looking at hiring the addition of a Data Management and Social Media Coordinator. This position will encompass the DOE reports that need to be completed according to the schedule, enrollment for new and prospective students, and posting to our social media accounts to help increase our social media presence.

### **Sycamore**

We will be participating in a series of several online workshops and tutorials to help administration utilize Sycamore to the best of its ability. We will be learning how to set-up the account for parent portal(s), cafeteria usage, etc. This will prove to be an invaluable tool moving forward.





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## **2020-2021 Enrollment**

Suzanne has graciously offered to contact our new families to ensure they would like to continue to be enrolled at Gate City Charter School. This will give us a better idea of where the holes are and which classrooms we need to continue to pursue filling.

## **DOE Reporting**

Student Safety Report has been filed.

Indoor Air Quality will be completed by the end of month.

## **Building Usage**

Everything is set up with the YMCA to utilize our space when it is raining.

I met with Michael Gratton on behalf of Civil Air Patrol to discuss the potential use of our building for their regularly scheduled meetings. They have their own insurance policy for their program.

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

Roll call was taken

**MOTION** (Jenny Hitzeman/Neil Mahoney) **Motion** to adjourn was accepted unanimously.

Next public meeting at August 20, 2020 7pm

Meeting adjourned 9:22 pm



# 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: August 20, 2020

Time: 7:05 PM

Location: Remote Meeting using Google Meetings, NH

#### Voting Board Members in Attendance:

Danielle Charest (Chair)

Sarah Thibeault (Secretary)

Felicia Doucette (Treasurer)

Neil Mahoney (Parent Rep)

Jenny Hitzeman

#### Absent Board Members:

#### Non-Voting Members in Attendance:

Suzanne Wheeler

Astrid Alvarado

Jennifer Blanchette

#### Attending Public:

#### Public Comments/Public Matters

No public comment

#### Approval of Minutes from June 2020

**MOTION** (Neil Mahoney/Jenny Hitzemen) Motion to accept minutes at June 2020 Meeting accepted unanimously

#### Approval of Minutes from July 2020

**MOTION** (Neil Mahoney/Jenny Hitzemen) Motion to accept minutes at July 2020 Meeting accepted unanimously



# Gate City Charter School for the Arts

Board of Trustees Meeting

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Meeting Date:

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## **Committee Reports**

PTO- Neil Mahoney. No meeting in August

Curriculum Committee- Jennifer Blanchette-see directors report

H/R Policy Committee-Jenny Hitzemen-No meeting

PR and Community Relations committee- Sarah Thibeault-No meeting

Grants Committee- No meeting

Facilities Committee- Eric Charest- Eric Charest is working on getting the Chromebooks updated and the webcams installed.

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

## **Finance Committee Meeting**

Felicia gave a review of the finance committee meeting minutes from August.

The 2018 audit has been finished and sent to the state. 2019 needs to be reconciled next but we will need to find new auditors.

Next meeting is TBD

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

## **Old Business**

Brady Sullivan- we are no longer working with Brady Sullivan and will have to revisit finding a new building later.

Approve budget for 2020/2021- moved to next meeting



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Grants for upcoming school year-we will revisit this item after the 2019 audit is finished.

Update to maternity/paternity policy-we are waiting for the finance committee to review the budget.

Returning to school 2020/2021-The board discussed remote learning policies brought forth from the opening task force. We amended the attendance policy to read all live classes require participation.

**MOTION** (Neil Mahoney/Jenny Hitzemen) Motion to accept the attendance policy allowing for spelling and grammatical corrections accepted unanimously.

## **New Business**

Building usage for Special Education-Brianna would like to meet with children in the building, the board discussed different options, landing on outside meet and greets to start the year to give time to continue working on building usage policies and cleaning protocol.

Cares Act utilization-The school has \$31,000 in Cares Acts funding that has not be already been allocated in the budget. As followed are the needs for remote curriculum based on remote and hybrid learning.

i-ready- \$30/student-\$7200

Lexia-\$2320

Study Sync-\$45/student

Adobe software-\$2500/year includes up to 100 licenses

Google voice for staff working from home \$40/month includes:

1 line for teachers

1 line for administrators

1 line for enrollment

1 line for Lynn Rae (office)

Less than half of the \$31,000 will be spent for remote learning but more funds will need to be utilized if/when we start hybrid learning.

## **Directors Report**

Suzanne Wheeler-





# Gate City Charter School for the Arts

## Board of Trustees Meeting

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August has been prepping month and policy month. Researching close by vicinity districts and how they are returning to school and what their policies are has been very interesting and mind boggling as it changes from day to day. Merrimack is returning using the hybrid model with one teacher from each grade level using the remote model. There has been no mandate on masks as of yesterday although they had a meeting last night. Nashua is using the remote model until they recess in in October and have stated a specific date to do this. Mask requirements are still unknown. Hudson is going back at 100% with a choice to go remote. At one elementary school 96 students chose remote. They also will have a teacher at grade level to teach remotely.

On August 7th, the DOE offered workshops on topics related to the Covid virus. They varied on specific areas including special education.

The administrative team has chosen a day and time to meet weekly. This will assure that we are all on the same page.

On August 5<sup>th</sup> Sycamore training was held for the administrative team. Task Force Meetings have been held on Wednesdays to discuss expectations for students, parents, and teachers. It was very worthwhile to break into small cohorts to accomplish this. I met with Nicole, Julia and Sarah on Monday, August 10<sup>th</sup>. Previously I had researched other districts to compare their expectations.

We continue to meet with the Commissioner and NH administrators every Wednesday. Lynn picked up 95 cloth face masks at the DMV yesterday as the commissioner announced the dates for pick up.

I have been in communication with the Nashua school district to plan for meetings with all Nashua students who have an I.E.P. By law all the I.E.P.s will need to be amended to adjust how delivery of services will take place. Although the total amount of time will stay the same, the daily amounts will change because as of now their special education teacher will only be working with Gate City students two days a week. I have suggested they change this method and was told they would consider it.

Manchester meetings will take place in the next two weeks as every I.E. P. must be reviewed. I am waiting for other districts to set meeting dates with me. I am waiting for other districts to set up meetings with me.

Tomorrow all teachers and EA's will attend a picnic lunch in the back-parking lot. New staff will be introduced, and EA's will be given additional information concerning what grade they are assigned to as well as the looping process. All I.E.P. binders have been updated and will be



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distributed to the teachers. The accommodation and modification pages will be distributed to the EA's.

Professional Days for the staff will be held on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup>. On Thursday, September 3<sup>rd</sup> parents have been notified to pick up chrome books and all virtual school supplies that teachers will have ready for students. Two times are being offered to accommodate parents (10-12 and 4-6). There will be an alternate pick up day on Tuesday, September 8<sup>th</sup> on the chance that some people were on vacation.

On our agenda this evening is the topic of building usage. There are a few teachers that plan on teaching remotely from their classrooms I feel very strongly about this and after talking with Julia today she added more positive reasons why she feels this is so important for her kids. Brianna stressed the importance of working 1:1 with some of her students and how she would approach the parents to give them a choice.

I am looking forward to September 9<sup>th</sup>. I just wish I could welcome all students back in person!

Jennifer Blanchette-

## **Curriculum Needs and Acquisition**

During the past month I evaluated and researched our immediate curriculum needs for remote learning.

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

Savvas- All school Math

Kesler Science- Middle School Science

Writer's Workshop-4th & 5th Grade Writing

Spire Reading Intervention-Title I Intervention K-8 RTI

Mystery Science-All School Science Curriculum/Supplemental

Typing Club-Tech Education 5th Grade

Social Studies 4&5 Grade SS Curriculum-4&5th Grade

Still being acquired:

I-Ready: Instruction & Assessment Grades K-5 and 6-8 Assessment

SmartMusic: Remote schooling music creation/application K-8

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

Being considered:



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StudySync(as an alternative to Lexia for its better data, assessment, and accommodations):  
Grades 6-8

## **Teacher Meetings:**

I have met with each teacher in the past 4 weeks. Topics for each discussion were:

1. Teacher concerns and questions
2. Reflection on Spring remote learning
3. Current Curriculum Used
4. Curriculum/Material Needs
5. Training/PD/resources needed
6. Remediation/assessment
7. Teacher and Curriculum Director expectations

## **PD Planning and Development:**

After an assessment of PD needs, I have developed the following beginning of school PD plan:

August 21st: Teachers and EAs initial meeting and luncheon (remote or socially distanced outside at the school).

August 25-28: Flex PD during which teachers will take part in personal pd from a grid of over 30 options I have compiled. Teachers will choose PD options centered on their individual needs. All options have been previewed. Categories include Project Based Learning, assessment, remote learning, technology tools and applications, arts integration, and social-emotional needs. Each teacher will earn PD hours by filling out reflection forms. Each teacher is expected to take part in approximately 3 hours of PD each flex day with a reflection meeting taking place on Friday.

September 1-3: All EA and teacher PD remote but synchronous. Topics include Sycamore, student accommodation, EA/teacher collaboration, Google, Pearson/Savvas, SEL through Art, Choose Love, teacher/student/parent expectations, essential tech tools.

## **Schedule and Instructional Approach Changes:**

Collaborated with teachers to develop a more structured, consistent schedule for fall and to shift remote instructional approach to live learning and live individualized and group instruction.

## **Enrichment Elective Groups:**

EA's and teachers will each be offering a club/enrichment activity to students after core instructional time at all grade levels (while not all groups are appropriate for every age, every age will have groups to join). Activities include Legos, songwriting, empowerment, dinosaur club, intuitive art, Storytime, writing, history club and many more. This element is key to creating an engaging, dynamic, robust remote learning environment. It will strengthen our



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community by bringing students at various grade levels together. Our groups will meet virtually, at locations, at schools outside and a mix. Policies are underway to address concerns regarding building use, masks, and liability.

## **Hiring:**

Brianne Fleury has taken a position as our Title I instructor. She has recently graduated from Rivier with a teaching certificate and a licensure.

Unfortunately, our new hire for middle school science decided to accept employment elsewhere. I am still on the hunt. Send your teacher friends our way!

## **Training Galore:**

I have taken part in approximately 70+ hours of PD this month to preview potential PD for teachers and gain insight into helping our students and teachers succeed emotionally and academically in the remote environment.

Additionally, I have attended training for I-Ready, Title I & II, Curriculum Assessment, Sycamore, Kesler Science and Equitable Learning

**In Process:** Grant training/DOE training

Astrid Alvarado

## **Financials**

2018 Audit has been officially completed and sent to the State

Counting House has been able to link our bank account with our QuickBooks account to ease tracking usage of funds. Rather than having to manually import them we can simply assign them to the correct GL number.

Still in the process of needing to reconcile a few accounts on QuickBooks to make sure they are allocated to the proper GL account number. Once this is completed, we will get started on our 2019 Audit which will hopefully be a much smoother transaction than 2018 with Counting House on staff.

We need to find new Auditors, as Melanson has decided that they are no longer willing to work with GCCS.





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## Changes in Staff

I am excited to announce that we have hired an enrollment & social media coordinator to our staff. Paige Duval comes to us with experience in event coordinating, drafting of advertisements and social media content.

Marsha Bottino, our previous grant writer has written to us determining that she will no longer be working with the school. This was due to insufficient information being funneled to her in a timely manner. We will need to look for a new grant writer.

## 2020-2021 Enrollment

Enrollment has taken a dip this past month. We have several families who have moved, returning to their home district, or moving to VLACs or alternative online education opportunities.

We will be starting to follow up with families who choose to withdraw from GCCS to further clarify any misconceptions that we are able to. I have followed up with 1 family to start, who are thinking it over and will get back to me soon.

Grade	Current Student Class Size	Waitlist
Kinder	18	22
1st	19	6
2nd	18	5
3rd	19	7
4th	19	10
5th	16	5
6th	19	17
7th	16	1
8th	15	1
<b>TOTAL # of students</b>	<b>159</b>	

## DOE Reporting

Our annual accountability report is due to the State by the end of this month. There are a few Board related questions that I will need responses to for the previous school year.



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They are as follows: Have there been any changes in the membership of the Board of Trustees since the last annual report? If so, explain.

Have there been any changes to the Trustee's methods of operations since the last annual report? If so, explain

Have there been any changes to the Trustee's by-laws since the last annual report? If so, explain.

Have there been any recusals made by a member of the Board of Trustees, under RSA 194-B:5,VII? If so, explain.

Emergency Operations Plan is also due at the end of this month. This will be reviewed and submitted to the State.

The DOE-25 which is the financial document that is required by the State is also due at the end of this month. This will not be able to be completed, we will ask for an extension to finish updating our QuickBooks system to get the most accurate reporting numbers, as possible.

## **Title Programs**

In order to begin Title planning of funds, the Board will need to sign off on a list of General Program assurances that states we are abiding by Federal rules and regulations as well as have the proper policies that are needed for Federal funds, that are outlined in the document linked. <https://www.education.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt326/files/inline-documents/2020-04/charter-school-general-assurances-fy21.pdf>

**MOTION** (Jenny Hitzeman/Neil Mahoney) **Motion** to adjourn was accepted unanimously.

Next public meeting on September 17, 2020 7pm

Meeting adjourned 9:04pm



# Gate City Charter School for the Arts

Board of Trustees Meeting

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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.



# 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"*

#### **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

Grade	Number of Students
K	13
1	19
2	16
3	15
4	20
5	13





# Gate City Charter School for the Arts

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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



# 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: October 15, 2020

Time: 7:06 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:

Kris O'Keefe

Eric Charest

## Public Comments/Public Matters

Recording the meetings was discussed

## Approval of Minutes from September 2020

Postponed till the November Meeting

## Committee Reports

PTO- Neil Mahoney. The PTO is holding a Boo Thru on Halloween 1pm-3pm, this is a community event as well as a fundraiser. The bookfair will be held outside. Our first restaurant night will be at Blaze Pizza. Unfortunately, the Mom Prom has been canceled and everyone will be refunded.

Curriculum Committee- Jennifer Blanchette-see directors report

H/R Policy Committee-Jenny Hitzeman-Maternity/paternity policy is still awaiting info from finance committee



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PR and Community Relations committee- Sarah Thibeault-GCCSA students decided on a dragon scarecrow and Ms. Ashton is busy working on it.

Grants Committee- See Curriculum Director report

Facilities Committee- Eric Charest- Eric fixed a speaker. PTO donated a ring doorbell to the school. HVAC is on our floor and pulls in fresh air.

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

## Finance Committee Meeting

Neil and Danielle gave a review of the finance committee meeting minutes from October. The budget is still being updated. We are reaching out to local charter schools to see who they use for auditors.

**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 met and has recommended to stay remote till January, most colleges are doing the same.

**MOTION** (Neil Mahoney/Sarah Thibeault) Motion to continue remote learning until after the Holiday break (1/19) was accepted with a vote of 3:1.

We then discussed going hybrid in January. A follow-up survey will be presented to the teachers before implementing a hybrid schedule. Also, keeping a close eye on the positivity rates and infection numbers to keep our students and safe before returning to school.

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

Maternity/Paternity policy should be ready to be voted on at the November meeting.



# Gate City Charter School for the Arts

Board of Trustees Meeting

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## **New Business**

## **Directors Report**

Suzanne Wheeler- The law states that all IEP's must be reviewed in the first 30 school days. Therefore, October has been a month of meetings. There has been one evaluation meeting, seven IEP meetings, and four referrals meetings. We have been waiting since last March for three of the referral meetings as a full team is necessary and the districts that were closed could not do them. Also, we could not do any evaluations as a school psychologist has to administer them in person and this was not possible. I hope these schools stay open until these are done so that our students can receive the services they need.

A problem with a new Nashua student receiving ancillary services caused a set of parents upset. Although I sat in on the meeting as did the classroom teacher the mother became very agitated and the decision was made to plan another meeting for the following week. Before that next meeting, the parents emailed me to ask if I thought GCCS was appropriate for the student. Both the classroom teacher and I (after a few observations) felt the student was being appropriate and engaged and I let the mother know that. I also stated that right now he is working from home and I pointed out that the structure would be different when the school reopened. At the next meeting, parents made the decision to pull speech and language services so that the IEP will have to be amended by Nashua and the student will remain at GCCS.

Parents who have requested a date for parent conferences (only a few) I have answered that they can contact the teacher for a virtual conference at any time.

I am very impressed with the teachers going above and beyond to give our students rigorous content and then have tutorials and meetings with students who require reinforcement after the end of the school day.

Jennifer Blanchette-

## **Curriculum Needs and Acquisition:**

### **In Progress:**

Touch Math K-8 RTI curriculum to be used in Special Education and Title 1 instruction. This will vertically align our intervention curriculum and provide data-proven instruction to improve math proficiency. This will be paid for through the Title 1A Grant, using \$4,900 of grant funds.





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## **Artist-of-the-Month:**

1. Successful first community meeting was held.
2. Staff "judging" building knowledge and cohesiveness.
3. Materials have been dispersed digitally to all classroom teachers for this month's artist.

## **Still to be acquired:**

Adobe Student Suite: K-8 Art instruction and administrative applications. NOTE: This program will be most beneficial when we return to in-person instruction due to tech limitations. This will be postponed until a return to school.

## **Title Grants:**

Title 1A, Title II, and Title IV grants have been drafted.

Title IA has been submitted and is now in the revision process.

Title 1A funds have been allotted in the amount of \$63,771.98

## **Title 1:**

1. Parent permissions have been sent for initial participants.
2. Evaluations are underway.
3. i-Ready scores and student performance will be used to inform future student enrollment.

## **I-Ready Testing:**

1. Testing is underway for grades K-5.
2. Students are testing from home.
3. Families were supplied with assistive materials.

## **State Testing:**

1. State interim testing will be from grades 4-8 in math and ELA beginning on November 2nd.
2. I became a certified remote test administrator.
3. I have taken remote training in test administration and assignment.
4. It will be administered as a link rather than through a formal process.

## **Recruitment:**

1. 4 new students this month with 4 additional pending
2. Worked with Enrollment Coordinator to respond to potential student guardian questions regarding curriculum.



# Gate City Charter School for the Arts

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## **Teacher Certification:**

I am currently working with several teachers to develop plans for certification, alt certification and/or renewal.

## **Teacher PD:**

1. Instructional uses for i-ready
2. VTS for the classroom

## **Teacher Meetings:**

I am meeting with each teacher to develop yearly goals.

## **Training and PD:**

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

## **Academic Enrichment Groups:**

Beginning September 21st, EA's and teachers have been offering a club/enrichment activity to students. There has been a very positive response from the community and instructors.

Astrid Alvarado

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

Next public meeting Thursday November 19, 2020, 7pm

Meeting adjourned 9:15pm



# 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: November 19, 2020

Time: 7:06 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)

Jenny Hitzeman

#### Non-Voting Members in Attendance:

Suzanne Wheeler

Astrid Alvarado

Jennifer Blanchette

#### Attending Public:

Eric Charest

#### Public Comments/Public Matters

#### Approval of Minutes from September 2020

**MOTION** (Sarah Thibeault/Neil Mahoney) Motion to accept the September minutes was accepted unanimously.

#### Approval of Minutes from October 2020

**MOTION** (Sarah Thibeault/Neil Mahoney) Motion to accept the October minutes was accepted unanimously.

#### Committee Reports

PTO- Neil Mahoney. Blaze Pizza Fundraiser raised \$75. The Boo Thru was a huge hit and will be added to the budget next year, it brought in \$112 profit. The Fall Book Fair was not very successful, and hopefully the Spring Book Fair can utilize the inside.



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Curriculum Committee- Jennifer Blanchette-see directors report

H/R Policy Committee-Jenny Hitzeman-Maternity/paternity policy is still awaiting info from finance committee

PR and Community Relations committee- Sarah Thibeault- The first meeting was held on remotely November 12, we had more than Astrid and me in attendance. Paige Duval, Lynn Rae, Jennifer Blanchette, and Mandy Darah came to the meeting with a lot of ideas. Presently we are looking into creating an art gallery/ auction in the Spring as well as a poetry reading outside.

Grants Committee- See Curriculum Director report

Facilities Committee- Eric Charest- Eric fixed a speaker. PTO donated a ring doorbell to the school. HVAC is on our floor and pulls in fresh air.

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

## Finance Committee Meeting

Working with Counting House to finish the audit for 2018 and 2019.

**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 is recommending a hybrid model of 1 day a week, 2-3 classes in the building at a time. There was discussion regarding the in-person day and whether it should be full day. A concern that continued to come up was the students who chose to stay remote and screen time, if the in-person day was full day. Also, mask policies and lunch policies were discussed for in-person days, concerning full day or half day. The task force should discuss a phased in plan with no set dates, and then send out a survey to parents. The task force should also have a timeline and color-coded chart/matrix stating where the school stands as on each phase of the model. This could be posted on the website for parents to view. Next Task Force meeting is November 30, 4:30pm.





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

Maternity/Paternity policy should be ready to be voted on at the December meeting.

## **New Business**

Charter Renewal-We will begin meeting after the New Year to start working on getting all our information together, subcommittees will be created to insure getting everything done in a timely matter. A date will be set at the December meeting.

Allocating Cares Act Funds- The school has \$30,000 that needs to be allocated by December 30, 2020 and \$30,000 that the school needs to allocate by June 2021. Discussion on keeping some funds for when the school decides to go in person, for extra cleaning supplies and deep cleaning and a part-time nurse.

## **Directors Report**

### **Suzanne Wheeler-**

Although November is a short month there has been a lot of business to attend to.

The administrators were anxious to hear what the commissioner would discuss concerning Thanksgiving and COVID-19, but without notice the meeting never took place.

I would like to request that we send a survey out to parents for additional information concerning a one-day hybrid return to school in January. Basically, it would just ask for a yes or no reply that with precautions in place (and we would be specific about what those are) would you send your student to school. I ran this by two principals and was told that is exactly what they are doing.

Our task force meetings discuss what would need to be done to open and it is a daunting task as many of the members have not been coming to the meetings. Therefore, looking at the COVID-19 data it would behoove us to have additional information to have ballpark number of parents who would send their students to school understanding that with more than one child they would need to commute more than one day a week.

November has included many meetings in addition to task force, commissioners meeting, nurses meeting, administrators meeting, teacher's meetings, and homeless liaison meetings.

We have lost a 1:1 educational assistant as the parent requested that the EA work with him in the building. As we are not allowing children in the building her request was denied and she asked her home district to send him to Compass where he could have a 1:1 but use Gate City curriculum and remain a Gate City student. The law states that if one child with an IEP is allowed education



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in the building then all IEP students would have to be allowed in also. The schools that are allowing this is for their intensive need students only.

Many days I have had two to three meetings with Manchester and Nashua to decide if compensatory services are justified. These are team meetings which include parents. Bedford will now be added as we have a student that has moved into that district.

I am working on the invoicing for the month in November. Lynn informed me today that Felicia has requested a new format for invoicing that I will need to look at with Lynn.

School pictures were taken today in a new way, using a tent outside with appointments made in advance.

I wish all of you a safe and Happy Thanksgiving.

Jennifer Blanchette-

## **Curriculum Acquired:**

Touch Math K-8 RTI curriculum to be used in Special Education and Title 1 instruction. This will vertically align our intervention curriculum and provide data-proven instruction to improve math proficiency. This will be paid for through the Title 1A Grant, using \$5,193 of grant funds.

## **Artist-of-the-Month & Writer-of-the-Month:**

1. Successful 2nd community meeting was held.
2. November will mark the renewed addition of Writer-of-the-Month

## **Title Grants:**

Title IV A used in funding our guidance program has been approved in the amount of \$10,000.

## **Title 1:**

1. Selected for an audit of our 2019-20 year.
2. Progress reports and data collection sheets designed

**In Progress:** Gathering data to begin Title 1 math

## **EL:**

Joined a weekly PLC group run by state experts and practitioners to gain more insight and training concerning delivering EL services.

## **I-Ready Testing:**

1. Testing was completed for grades K-5.



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2. Instructional I-Ready curriculum is being used grades K-5.

**In Progress:** Acquiring I-Ready Testing for middle school for mid-year assessments.

**State Testing:**

1. State interim testing took place in grades 4-8 in math and ELA beginning on November 2nd and ending yesterday.

**In Progress:** Evaluating data and completion rates

**Report Cards:**

1. Edited and adjusted for remote Trimester 1
2. Adjusted ELA/SS standards to Humanities
3. Due 9th for review

**In Progress:** training teachers

**Re-Chartering Taskforce:**

1. Surveyed teachers to evaluate interest in a re-chartering taskforce.
2. We have several teachers and staff interested.
3. Working to build a clear task list and plan.

**Teacher Certification:**

I am currently working with several teachers to develop plans for certification, alt certification and/or renewal.

**Teacher PD:**

1. TouchMath for Title 1/Special Education
2. Reading A-Z/Raz Kids free PD live meetings
3. State Testing TA Certification for teachers Grades 4-8

**Teacher Evaluations/Sample lessons:**

Teachers will be asked to submit a video of their remote teaching along with a lesson plan which includes:

1. Relevant Standards
2. Objective/Goal/Guiding Question
3. Instruction
4. Learning Activity/Arts Integration



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5. Check for understanding

6. Teacher reflection on the Lesson

## **Training and PD:**

I have participated in training this month for the PBL, EL, Reading A-Z, Statewide and Title grants.

## **Academic Enrichment Groups:**

These groups continue to thrive. The last in-person meetings will take place November 24th. They will move to remote until Christmas Break and then session 1 of electives will be done.

Astrid Alvarado

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

Next public meeting Thursday December 17, 2020, 7pm

Meeting adjourned 8:54pm





# 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: December 17, 2020

Time: 7:06 PM

Location: Remote Meeting using Google Meetings, NH

## Voting Board Members in Attendance:

Danielle Charest (Chair)

Sarah Thibeault (Secretary)

Neil Mahoney (Parent Rep)

## Absent Board Members:

Felicia Doucette (Treasurer)

Jenny Hitzeman

## Non-Voting Members in Attendance:

Suzanne Wheeler

Astrid Alvarado

Jennifer Blanchette

## Attending Public:

## Public Comments/Public Matters

## Approval of Minutes from November 2020

**MOTION** (Sarah Thibeault/Neil Mahoney) Motion to accept the October minutes was accepted unanimously.

## Committee Reports

PTO- Neil Mahoney-No December

Curriculum Committee- Jennifer Blanchette-see directors report

H/R Policy Committee-Jenny Hitzeman-Maternity/paternity policy is still awaiting info from finance committee

PR and Community Relations committee- Sarah Thibeault- The committee discussed social media and how to use the Facebook page to inform more people of all that GCCSA has to offer.



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We will advertise school class openings and information sessions using Facebook ads. Also being discussed a Charter School myth buster PSA on Facebook as well.

Grants Committee- See Curriculum Director report

Facilities Committee- Eric Charest-

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

Finance Committee Meeting

No December Meeting

## Old Business

Returning to school 2020/2021- January 19 was set as a target date to re-open however the task force would like to meet early January to check the Covid-19 numbers and positivity rate and decide if it is safe to be back in the school. The color-coded matrix has been shared with the parents/caregivers to keep communication as transparent as possible. At the next Task Force meeting discussions should be had about length of time to prepare to go back into the building 2-3 weeks. Next Task Force meeting will be January 4 at 4:30pm

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

Maternity/Paternity policy should be ready to be voted on at the January meeting.

## New Business

Charter Renewal-Meeting will be held January 4, 5pm in the meantime a google document will be started to divide the tasks.

## Directors Report

Suzanne Wheeler-

Although December is a short month, we have accomplished many services. We have completed 10 504 and IEP meetings. Bedford NH has been added to our Gate City Family and they wrote us an e mail stating that we are flexible and easy to work with.



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We are teaching students remotely who are living in another country as well as one in Virginia. One of our students will be attending the Compass School starting this week, but for the use of a 1:1 para educator. The student will remain a student at Gate City Charter School for the Arts. During my weekly DOE Nurses call it was announced that the COVID-19 Update #27 (Quarantine Guidance Update) has been changed from 14 days quarantine to 10 days any questions can be answered by calling 603-271-4496. Ask for a public health staff member. There is a health alert message planned for later this week. As of 12/6/2020 Vaccine planning for Pfizer is due December 14<sup>th</sup> and Moderna for December 21<sup>st</sup>. As the numbers of COVID-19 climb in our area more schools have pivoted to remote learning. We are doing a phenomenal job and our teachers continue to give so much of themselves to make all students grow and learn academically and socially.

Some legal information was worked out with Manchester and Londonderry as a student is living with family members out of her home school district, but Manchester allowed her to stay as a Manchester student.

Although many parents are becoming frustrated, we need to understand what a big change this is for them also. I am proud that our teachers are so patient and Continue to communicate so closely with them.

Jennifer Blanchette-

## **Curriculum Acquired:**

Fundations materials purchased.

CATCH Wellness Curriculum (Wellness begins January 4th)

## **IN PROGRESS:**

I-Ready for data in 6-8

Touch Math Placement Tests

## **Artist-of-the-Month**

1. Successful 3rd community meeting was held.

## **Electives:**

1. 2nd round remote beginning on January 19th. All remote.
2. Teacher survey
3. Outside invitation being considered.

## **Title Grants:**

Title II used in funding has been approved in the amount of \$10,528. This assists in paying my salary and is centered around learning community development.



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## **Title1:**

1. Audit preparation in 18 areas of performance. Collected and organized program data from the last 4 years of program operation.
2. Composed program guidelines/plans/evaluations in the following areas:
  - a. Right-to-know.
  - b. Foster Care
  - c. Family Engagement
  - d. Building Capacity
  - e. Targeted Assistance planning
  - f. Program evaluation
  - g. Teacher/Student Evaluation
  - h. Complaint Procedure
  - i. ELL Parent notification
  - j. ELL Program Plan
  - k. Cohort Data retention/graduation
  - l. Needs Assessment
  - m. Student Qualification

## **In Progress:**

-Title I Math is set to begin in January. Currently we are screening students using test results and teacher feedback.

-Progress reports in Title I for reading students in January

## **EL:**

1. ACCESS testing for EL students upcoming.
2. Investigating EL support staff permissions
3. State report for ELL certified.

## **State Testing:**

1. Results provided to teachers.
2. Will be held March-June.

**In Progress:** Waiting for data relative to other school.

## **Report Cards:**

1. Reviewed and delivered.

## **Re-Chartering Taskforce:**

1. Working to build a clear task list and plan.





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Astrid Alvarado

## Current Enrollment

We currently have 141 enrolled students. Currently working on our virtual information sessions for new enrollment.

Grade	Number of Students
K	11
1	19
2	18
3	13
4	19
5	14
6	16
7	16
8	15

## DOE Reporting:

DOE-25 report is almost finished and will be sent off to our Board chair by the latest early next week. This report is overdue currently. In large part due to the constant cross referencing that needs to occur each time this report is due. It would be in Gate City's best interest to align its budget with this report for ease of use. In general, Gate City tends to have too many line items that are in essence speaking to the same idea which makes this report challenging to complete.

## Building Issues with Updating for Hybrid:



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After speaking with the maintenance team for the building, it seems Gate City is unable to purchase and install the HEPA MERV-13 (or higher) filters that are recommended by the CDC. The air duct system that is installed in the building will not provide enough power to be able to blow air through the recommended filters. In addition to this, the air flow system within the building is minimal. The only 2 exhausts that are currently working in the building are those that are in the bathrooms, which means that our air system does not bring in "fresh air" often. The maintenance team did suggest we utilize the exhaust system that is in the kitchen to help circulate the air more frequently; however, this would only truly benefit the kitchen and cafeteria area. This would need to be serviced which the maintenance team for the building offered to look at for Gate City.

## Updates to COVID related items:

The following went out to families in the December newsletter:

LEVEL	MODALITY	TARGET % in Building
RED	Remote Learning & No staff in the building	0%
ORANGE	Only staff allowed use of the building	10%
YELLOW	Primarily Remote Learning, 1 day a week in-person learning (ALL GRADES)	60%
GREEN	2 days per week in-person learning (ALL GRADES)	85%
BLUE	Near normal operations	99%



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## CRITERIA TO CONSIDER IN ORDER OF PRIORITY

\*Board and taskforce recommendations and decisions take precedence

SOURCES	TYPES OF DATA
GOVERNMENT DECREES	Federal, Governor, or DHHS decrees
LOCAL DATA	County COVID positivity rate, case counts, level of community transmission etc.
RESOURCE AVAILABILITY	Staffing availability (including hiring of School Nurse), bus/ after school program availability,
FACILITY READINESS	Purchase and installation of Personal Protective Equipment, protective barrier equipment, and disinfectant/ cleaning supplies

In addition to the criteria, I have started the beginnings of developing a cleaning policy and protocol for our hybrid model when GCCS decides to go back to school. A discussion began at the staff meeting this past Wednesday regarding the logistics of cleaning individual classrooms throughout the day when students are required to spend most of their time in the classroom. This will be something I will continue to work on at the start of the new year.

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

Next public meeting Thursday January 21, 2021, 7pm

Meeting adjourned 8:22 pm

