

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 22, 2021

Time: 7:04 PM

Location: Gate City Charter School for the Arts, 7 Henry Clay Rd, Merrimack, NH

Voting Board Members in Attendance:

Danielle Charest (Chair) -In person

Sarah Thibeault (Secretary)-In person

Rebecca Boutin-Remote

Neil Mahoney (Parent Rep)-In person

Grace Cavallo-Remote

Absent Board Members:

Felicia Doucette (Treasurer)

Non-Voting Members in Attendance:

Astrid Alvarado-remote

Attending Public:

Amanda Mckinna-In person

Jennifer Clemanis-In Person

Catherine Ellison-Remote

Michael Clemons-Remote

Public Comments/Public Matters

Public comment will be allowed during mask policy discussions

Approval of Minutes from June 2021

MOTION (Sarah Thibeault/Rebecca Boutin) Motion to approve the June 2021 Minutes at the August 2021 Meeting was accepted unanimously.

Committee Reports

PTO- Neil Mahoney- No Meeting

Curriculum Committee- Jennifer Blanchette-See Directors Report

H/R Policy Committee- -No Meeting

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PR and Community Relations committee- Sarah Thibeault- No Meeting

Grants Committee- No Meeting

Facilities Committee- Eric Charest- See Directors report

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

Finance Committee Meeting

The PPP loan will be submitted next week. Covid relief bonus for staff was in this last payroll. Thank you everyone

Old Business

Vote for board nominees- **MOTION** (Sarah Thibeault/Neil Mahoney) Motion to delay the vote till the September meeting was accepted unanimously.

New Business

Approval of 2021/2022 School Budget-Discussion of board review of budget by trimester and understanding that adhering to the budget is crucial.

MOTION (Sarah Thibeault/Neil Mahoney) Motion to accept 2021/2022 school budget with amendment of tuition reimbursement added was accepted unanimously.

Mask Policy-

Updated COVID-19 Policy & Procedures for 21-22 School Year

Basic Overview

With newly updated CDC guidance for COVID-19 prevention in K-12 schools along with the guidance of the NH Department of Public Health and Human Services, NH DPHHS, Gate City expects to begin school this Fall in a full, in-person return for the 2021-2022 school year. We are hopeful that our return will be closer to a pre-pandemic return with minimal mitigation measures in place. However, as we are so acutely aware of, there are many factors subject to change that could impact this proposed plan and the procedures put in place to mitigate COVID-19 transmission. Gate City will continue to closely monitor COVID-19 transmission rates and will implement changes as directed by the guidance and conditions around us. **Gate City reserves the right to update these policies as needed and assures prompt communication with families regarding any changes.**

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Remote Instruction

In accordance with NH Executive Order, Gate City will continue to offer a remote program for students and families with medical conditions that impact access to in-person learning. Please contact the administration if you require access to our remote program.

Gate City will maintain the ability to shift to remote instruction for any period necessary. For example, every teacher will have an active Google Classroom. Students and guardians will be asked to familiarize themselves with the online learning tools.

Cleaning Procedures

Staff will maintain cleaning procedures in accordance with CDC and NH DPHHS guidance. Gate City will continue to utilize air purification systems in each classroom and office and maintain these systems in good working order. Filters will be replaced regularly.

Hand Hygiene

Gate City will continue to promote and educate our students on the importance of hand hygiene. Sanitization stations will continue to be made available for students and staff, with regularly scheduled hand washing times for grades K-3.

Masks

During times when transmission rates are low, masks will be **primarily** optional for students and staff. However, there may be times when other mitigation measures, such as maintaining a social distance of 3 feet, are not feasible. In this case, students may be required to wear masks for periods of time during their school day (i.e., group work that requires proximity, lab activities, utilizing shared manipulatives, etc.).

Masks will be optional for students while participating in outdoor activities.

Gate City reserves the right to update these policies as needed and assures prompt communication with families regarding any changes.

Social Distancing

Gate City will maintain 3 ft of social distancing when feasible, per CDC guidelines. When social distancing is not feasible, staff may implement other mitigation strategies to ensure the safety of students and staff. Some of these strategies include utilizing outdoor space and/or mask usage.

Illness & Absences

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Development of any of the symptoms/criteria identified in our screening process will result in the student or faculty being dismissed for the day and the individual will be required to follow quarantine guidelines (see below). Even if development of symptoms presents as mild, GCCS will require the dismissal of the student/faculty member. Exceptions to this requirement may be made given provision of a doctor’s note that documents a previously reported history of condition(s).

Quarantine Guidelines

Students and faculty will be required to quarantine for 10 consecutive days if they answer **YES** to the symptom/criteria outlined in our screening procedure. Students and faculty may bypass the 10 consecutive day quarantine with a 5-day quarantine and a negative COVID-19 test result. Bypass of the 10-day quarantine is dependent on the student or faculty continuing to be free of symptoms. Proper documentation of a negative test must be provided to Gate City Charter School prior to admittance back to school. If a family opts to remain remote for the 10-day quarantine, student(s) must remain free of symptoms for a minimum of 24 hours prior to returning to school. If a student requires dismissal from school, GCCS may require their sibling(s) to also be dismissed and quarantined while pending COVID-19 test result(s).

As always, Gate City is eager to answer any questions and address your concerns. Please do not hesitate to contact us as we continue to navigate this situation together.

Survey results-58 families responded

26 strongly agree with mask policy

21 agree

7 neutral

3 disagree- 2 families would like more restrictions while 1 family wanted less

restrictions.

Art and Music specials will be held in the classroom while Wellness will be held outside as long as weather permits. If transmission spikes in the community or at the school masks will be required at moderate and substantial transmission. The administration will keep caregivers up to date on recommendations as well as transmission.

A Safety committee will be formed consisting of a variety of members, teachers, parents, community, and board members.

Public Comment-

In which communities will the data for transmission come from? Merrimack and Nashua and the surrounding communities.

Will teachers wear masks? Teachers will wear masks if they cannot socially distance of 6 ft.

Is remote schooling an option for the whole school? This will depend on transmission rates.

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Will confirmed cases in classrooms be notified? Yes, all families will be notified if a confirmed case is found within the classroom, so that families can watch for symptoms.

Teachers will oversee implementation of masking when students cannot maintain 3 feet social distance.

MOTION (Sarah Thibeault/Neil Mahoney) Motion to accept 2021/2022 Updated Mask Policy as is was accepted unanimously.

Directors Report

Director's Report

July 2021

Acquired Alma

- Target date to release Alma to families for 8/1.
- Lynn, Paige, & I are working diligently to complete the necessary steps to get our account live
- Each family will have a username/ password which can be their Gmail account to login to the website, they will be able to access their student's records for the school year

Facility Updates

- Meeting is scheduled with Cubicle Solutions to provide us with a quote on 7/26. Hopeful that the process is rather quick once we have a representative come out and look at the proposed changes.
- Broken tent has been thrown out, still looking for the best solution as to where to place the tent we have left on the school premises
- We will be seeking donations to help fund the purchase of 8 foldable plastic picnic tables
- Met with Formax representative to discuss upgrading the current copiers to coincide with our Mac products easier as well as set up a system in which will allow us to scan and email items to a Network folder rather than to our email

Finances

- COVID bonuses went out in this week's payroll period
- Budget meeting was held on 7/7 to review the proposed budget. If approved, [final budget is ready](#) to be uploaded to GCCS website
- PPP loan forgiveness paperwork to be submitted tomorrow afternoon

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Projected Enrollment

Total: 164

Grade	Enrolled for Next Year
K	16
1	18
2	17
3	20
4	16
5	23
6	18
7	19
8	18

Curriculum Renewal/Acquisition

- Mystery Science and Kessler Science have been acquired
- Awaiting invoices from iReady & Savvas
- Plans to acquire Writer’s Workshop K-8

Professional Development

- Teachers are currently enrolled in Greg Tang, Project Based Learning, & Responsive Classroom workshops
- Teachers attended the Arts Integration Workshop last Thursday/ Friday, Administration plans to attend Arts Integration Workshop
- Artist of the Month curriculum in development working collaboratively with Beth Ashton
- Supporting teachers with free PD opportunities through an online padlet program

Remote School Preparation

- Teachers are making final suggestions on the remote contract
- Will be scheduling a remote school required meeting for families who are participating in the program that split between lower grades and upper grades
- There are currently 9 students enrolled in the program

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ESSER Funding

- Submitted plan for COVID-19 to assure compliance with State regulations.
- Starting to request reimbursement for ESSER related items.

Updated Covid Policies & Procedures

- Plans to create COVID newsletter with items that are important to note and remember
- Looking to link the posted PowerPoints from the Department of Education as well as the Nurses calls that are allowed to be posted to the public onto the Gate City website
- Survey Results total of 58 families responded:
 - 26 Strongly Agree
 - 21 Agree
 - 7 Neither Agree nor Disagree
 - 3 Disagree
 - 2 are in favor of more restrictions rather than less
 - Many asked what would qualify as low transmission
 - Differentiate between vaccinated and non-vaccinated students
 - Requesting if masks are required for activities, if those activities are optional to students who do not wear a mask
 - Many asked if there was any reconsideration with AAP recommendation for children over 2 to wear a mask
 - How often proposed policies would be revisited?

Volunteer Plans

- Signed up for a new free app that will help with the management of volunteer opportunities

MOTION (Sarah Thibeault/Neil Mahoney) Motion to continue to offer a remote meeting option was accepted unanimously.

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

Next public meeting Thursday August 19, 2021, 7pm

Meeting adjourned 8:15 pm