

Gateway Public Schools

Meeting of the Board of Trustees

Wednesday, April 19th, 2017 @ 5:00 -7:00 PM

Minutes

Board Members Present:

Therese Arsenault, Beth Berliner, Cynthia Billops, David Booth, Sarah Byrne, Sharon Gillenwater, Lisa Kirkland, Annie Klebahn, Susan Masto, Joyce McMinn, Farley Neuman, Sharon Olken, Will Parish, Mary Plant-Thomas, Jackie Quella, Adina Safer, Eric Sarb, Suzanne Schutte, Laura Spivy, Phil Susser, Valerie Toler, Jennifer Tulley, Julie Wise, Aaron White

Board Members Excused: Allison Thoreson Bhusri, Sapna Boze

Also present: Chris Hero, Danielle Ciccarelli

Call to Order and Approval of Minutes from March 15th, 2017

Beth called the meeting to order at 5:08 pm. She welcomed the Trustees, and thanked everyone for coming. Beth called for a motion to approve the minutes from March 15th. The minutes were approved without issue.

Public Forum

Beth opened the floor for an open forum. No further discussions or motions were introduced.

Welcome and Announcements:

Beth talked about the upcoming high school and middle school career days. The middle school promotion is the evening of 5/25, and high school graduation is 5/27. Board members are welcome! May 15th is the last board meeting of the year. Beth thanked everyone who came to the GHS board visiting day. Beth gave the floor to Sharon Olken for the ED Report

ED Report

Sharon welcomed everyone. She told the board that GMS and GHS received 2017 CA Gold Ribbon School Awards. The California Department of Education awards schools across state that are doing something extraordinary. They ask schools if they have a program that is exemplary in getting results in key areas (closing the achievement gap, for example) Three SF schools won award, including GMS and GHS. The program that GMS presented is helping to improve students' process of learning to close the achievement gap. GHS highlighted their initiative to improve access to AP and honors classes. Sharon introduced Becca Wieder to talk about the high school application and presentation to the committee. Becca thanked everyone for having her here. GHS is proud of the program that they presented to the Gold Ribbon School committee. The GHS program began by rethinking our approach to challenge courses at Gateway. The process helped clarify and support our core beliefs. AP and honors courses allow students to go deep in subject areas that interest them. AP courses are college level courses with high school level support. GHS thought about how students' classes influence how they feel about

themselves as students. Students need to see themselves as an “honors or AP kid.” With more access, more students can think of themselves as students who can achieve at high levels. Taking these courses also increases a student’s competitiveness for college. Looking at the data, the teachers saw that the student body was not reflected in honors courses enrollment. About a third of faculty got together regularly to tackle this problem. We created a framework for informing students, encouraging students, and reducing barriers to access. One of our core beliefs is that diversity is a benefit to learning. They clarified that, initially, students may not have *every* necessary skill to tackle more challenging courses, but we will support them in developing those skills. Making sure that all students are prepared to tackle these classes is our job. We streamlined the application process and offer lots of on-campus support. By eleventh grade, the majority of students are taking at least one honors or AP course. We expanded the number of offerings and changed the culture around these courses. There is no longer a two-tiered system of students who take AP or honors, and those who do not. We have made great gains in expanding access, and we are still trying to improve the process.

Sharon thanked Becca for coming in and sharing with the board.

Sharon gave a quick review of Board Visiting day at high school. Sharon asked those who attended to share their experiences.

Michael praised the work that is going on at the middle school that is preparing kids for their time at the high school.

Sharon gave an update on the search for a new Director of Development. Sharon asked Trustees to get the word out, help us find a person who loves Gateway like we do.

Beth thanked Sharon, and gave the floor to Susan Masto for the Development update.

Development Update

Susan Masto announced that we are at 90% of our goal. There are a bunch of Impact Campaign events coming up in May. Sarah Byrne, Susan Masto and the Parishes will be hosting events in their homes. Gateway at Google is sold out, but please RSVP if you still want to attend and we will find room. It will not be fundraising event, but we are launching a Go-Fund-Me campaign. Susan announced that we have found our Luncheon speaker. James Ryan, dean of Harvard Graduate school of Education has agreed to speak. Thank you to Bettina Steffan, who was our connection.

Committee on Trustees Update

Beth gave the floor to Sharon G. for the Trustees Update. She talked about the Board Match event. About 1,000 people attended, and 175 non-profits. Jackie, Sharon, Danielle and Sharon represented Gateway, talking to people who are interested in serving on a board. We came away with a list of 20 people, and are following up with 7. If you recognize anyone on the list, please let Sharon know. The annual board survey is launching on Monday. The committee will present results at the May board meeting.

Executive Committee Update

Today we are voting on compensation, which makes up the majority of our budget. We have a tradition of approving the compensation portion of the budget so we can offer contracts in May. Part of our tradition is to do our best for our faculty. When the Executive committee met on April 3rd, that was the

context, brought into urgency by a couple of things. A Mother Jones analysis of housing affordability for teachers showed that affordability dropped 25% across the board, but is at a crisis point in SF. Greg Grossman and Jeff Sprague joined in the Executive Committee meeting, and brought a letter, signed by the entire faculty, addressing the crisis. The meeting's focus fit in with conversations that have been going on for a long time at Gateway. The committee came up a long-term plan and immediate plans that will address the teacher salary issue. They recognize that nothing changes until you make a plan. From a hiring and retention perspective, increasing salaries will help us attract and keep teachers. Our teachers want to stay here, our kids love our teachers. Commuting from homes in the East Bay is difficult and hard to do for the long term. Getting a young person to teach in SF is next to impossible. The teachers are what make our schools work.

Sharon said that our job tonight is to take immediate action. Laura mentioned that we need to work on communicating our conversations to teachers. To further the discussion, Beth gave the floor to Chris, for the Finance Update.

Finance Update

Chris asked everyone to read Gateway's plan to utilize the College Readiness Block Grant Plan, which is included in the board packet, and distributed the full 17/18 budget. We are approving 75% of budget tonight, compensation items. He brought everyone's attention to the shaded areas, reviewed revenue and expenses, and presented the potential actions. Laura spoke about sustainability, and funding increases in teacher salary. There is a financial risk of increasing teacher salary, but there is risk if we don't do anything. We could lose valued teachers. As an organization we are very good at managing our expenses, and we rarely tap into our board designated funds. We are a visionary school - donors are attracted to visionary organizations. Laura feels confident that we can raise funds to support our goal of increasing teacher salaries. After some questions and answers, Beth called for a closed session to vote on the budget. The board voted to approve compensation items.

Adjourn Meeting

Sapna adjourned the meeting at 7:00

Signed:


Allison Bhusri, Board Secretary

Date:

5/17/17