

# Gateway Public Schools

## Meeting of the Board of Trustees

Wednesday, March 15, 2017 @ 5:00 -7:00 PM

### Minutes

#### **Board Members Present:**

Therese Arsenault, Beth Berliner, Cynthia Billops, Sapna Boze, Sarah Byrne, Sharon Gillenwater, Susan Masto, Joyce McMinn, Farley Neuman, Sharon Olken, Mary Plant-Thomas, Will Parish, Jackie Quella, Adina Safer, Eric Sarb, Laura Spivy, Jennifer Tulley, Julie Wise

**Board Members Excused:** David Booth, Lisa Kirkland, Annie Klebahn, Suzanne Schutte, Valerie Toler, Aaron White

**Board Members not present:** Allison Thoreson Bhusri, Phil Susser

**Also present:** Anna Heidinger, Chris Hero, Danielle Ciccarelli

#### **Call to Order and Approval of Minutes from February 8, 2017**

Beth welcomed the Trustees, and thanked everyone for coming. Beth called for a motion to approve the minutes from February 9th. Sharon moved to approve the minutes. The minutes were approved without issue.

#### **Public Forum**

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

#### **Welcome**

Beth thanked everyone who attended the GPS auction. Everyone had a great time; it was very well attended and successful. We raised \$60,000. She thanked Julie Wise and expressed gratitude for her hard work.

Board Visiting Day is coming up on April 7th. This is a great opportunity to see teachers in action. Even if you can only pop in for part of it, please come.

Beth introduced Eric Sarb who talked about Career day at the middle school on May 5th. He urged the board to consider volunteering for the event. Mary said that the high school would definitely need more people for the high school Career Day in late April.

Beth opened the floor to Chris Hero for the facilities update.

#### **Facilities Committee Update - STEAM Center**

Chris began by telling the board that the STEAM Center space was an old shower room that we used as a storage space. Two years ago we began thinking about how could use this space. We are so lucky to have all this unused square footage. Gateway received approval from the district to renovate, and how it is now a blank canvas. Last fall, the STEAM committee started brainstorming about how to utilize the space. They looked at other spaces in the bay area, and partnered with Jennifer Tulley to develop plans for how to arrange and divide the space for multiple uses. He turned the floor over to Jennifer to talk about the STEAM Center design.

Jennifer introduced Kate who came to help with her presentation. Jennifer discussed the requirements that they kept in mind while developing the design. It is necessary that the space be flexible for different uses; there will be a classroom mode, an event mode, and the space needs to accommodate varying numbers of people. She thought about how to create different zones and how to define the spaces. The design incorporates movable partitions, carpet tile, white board walls, furniture as architectural elements, stadium seating, soft seating. She thought about how the space could be transformed quickly. The room will accommodate, among other things, robotics/tinkering clubs, classroom space, a woodshop, and a music recording and practice studio. She presented different 3d views of the room, arranged in classroom mode and event mode. Jennifer is thrilled that things are coming together quickly.

Sharon thanked Jennifer for all of her excellent work and expertise. She talked about the "Now What?", which consists of three initial stages:

**Phase one** - demolition, design and equipment. We are almost finished with this stage.

**Phase two** - using space with existing classes. This phase will include figuring out how to transform what we are already doing in a way that doesn't look like normal school. This is when we will start thinking about the future.

**Phase three** - once we learn how to best use the space, we buy things to equip our programs.

The STEAM Center will be a link between the classroom and real world learning. We have amazing donors who are excited to support offerings that support STEM.

This space makes concrete some of the work that we are doing with Gateway Impact Labs. People see a lot of potential when they see this space, and get excited. The space will support both schools. It has sparked many ideas among teachers. Sharon hopes that the learning that goes on in this space will be taken back to the classrooms.

Beth thanked Jennifer and Kate, and gave the floor to Laura for the Finance Update.

### **Finance Update**

Laura brought the board's attention to a first draft of the 2017/2018 budget. This year we are trying to figure out how to reduce our expenses. We have a serious challenge attracting teachers due to the high cost of living in San Francisco. It could be that the city will not have enough teachers to teach students. Chris said that we will start out this year with a deficit of just under \$500,000. While working on the budget, the finance committee will be thinking about how to fix this for next year. We are going to come back with a proposal that will include using some board designated funds. The good news is we take this very seriously, and we want our reserve funds to continue to grow, but their purpose is to help out in situations like this. Chris outlined steps the finance team can take to reduce the deficit.

He also talked about bigger ideas. Can Gateway be a model for helping with the teacher crisis? What would it take to give everyone a meaningful cost of living adjustment? Can we partner with someone to help us solve this challenge? Maybe we can be the one to make some noise around this crisis.

These are some of the interesting questions that came out of the budget discussions.

We have figured out how to deal with our deficit, but we have not determined how to solve the teacher crisis. We need to start that conversation. The Faculty Affairs Committee and the Finance committee can work on it together.

**Development Report**

Beth passed the floor to Anna. We have \$1.6 million fundraising goal, and we are at the \$ 1.1 million mark. The STEAM center provides donors the opportunity to be part of the story. The Gateway Impact Committee is working very hard. In addition to engaging loyal donors, we need to be finding new friends. We have a new event at Google on April 26th, bringing together people who know us well and those who do not know us. The invitation went out today. If you want to come, please respond soon. David Plouffe and Olivia Morgan are the speakers. This event is a "friendraiser". We will announce a crowdfunding campaign. This is another step in building momentum and interest. This is one of our initiatives to help get new people interested in Gateway. In addition, we need to make sure we are appreciating our donors.

**Faculty Affairs - Community Meeting Debrief**

Mary Plant Thomas talked about the Faculty Affairs Community Meeting, an opportunity for teachers to be heard. Twenty three faculty members attended. We started the evening with sharing core values, such as equity, community. Then we moved on to "What does the perfect teaching job look like?" Topics that were raised were; more time for teachers to get their work done; the importance of their impact on students; creating work-life balance; the sense of community at Gateway - teachers feel part of a group of people working toward common goals; the intensity of the teaching profession; equity as something that keeps teachers at Gateway.

Things to think about for the future are: allowing teachers to teach fewer sections; roving subs; sub days; schedule tweaked for more flexibility; housing; teacher recruitment. Advocacy for teacher compensation is something we need to focus on. Teachers suggested advocating for equity. Teachers asked for changing board visiting day. Perhaps trustees shadowing teachers, or trustees becoming more involved in school, volunteering in the classroom. Involvement beyond visiting day. Regarding immigration issues, teachers wanted to know if the board had resources.

FAC is working in six small groups to work on goals, among them, teacher compensation, time flexibility, advocacy, housing.

Mary thanked Julie Wise for hosting the event.

Sapna thanked Mary for her update. Sapna introduced Sharon for the ED report

**Executive Director Report – Objectives Update**

Sharon spoke about the CCSA conference at which she and Chris will present "Grow your core competencies," which will share Gateway's process and approach to growing our impact, and provide a framework for considering future growth. She distributed a handout of a PowerPoint that will be used at their presentation.

The trustees also explored the new GPS websites and discussed what they discovered.

**Adjourn Meeting**

Sapna adjourned the meeting at 7:08

Signed: Allison Bhusri  
Allison Bhusri, Board Secretary

Date: 5/17/17