

# **Gateway Public Schools**

## **Meeting of the Board of Trustees Wednesday, February 8th, 5:00 -7:00 PM Minutes**

### **Board Members Present:**

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

### **Board Members Excused:** Beth Berliner, Joyce McMinn, Will Parish

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

### **Call to Order, Approval of Minutes from January 11, 2017**

Sapna welcomed the Trustees, and thanked everyone for coming. She called for a motion to approve the minutes from January 11, 2017. The minutes were approved without issue.

### **Public Forum**

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

### **Announcements**

Sapna continued with a number of announcements.

- The Faculty Affairs Committee had a successful and inspiring community meeting on February 3rd. It was well attended and it was great to see a lot of you there. She was reminded how dedicated and passionate our teachers are. Sapna gave a shoutout and thank you to Julie Wise for hosting the event at her home and cooking amazing food for the guests.
- We recently had a great orientation for our new trustees. Sharon Gillenwater, Chair of the Trustees Committee, put together a new orientation presentation. Sapna encouraged everyone to take a look at it when it is uploaded to the board intranet.
- There is a Gateway event at Google on April 26th. More information is forthcoming, but please save the date.
- Sapna plugged the GPS Auction which will be on March 11th. She urged everyone to come and to visit the online auction when it goes live on March 1st.
- Sapna announced that Susan Kase has decided to roll off the board. We would like to thank her for her amazing job as audit chair and for being a valuable member of the board. We will miss having her as a trustee, but we will still see her around Gateway.

Sapna gave the floor to Chris Hero and Laura Spivy for the Financial Update.

### **Financial update**

a. Approval of 2016 Tax Return - Laura Spivy explained that every year we submit tax form 990, which is a public disclosure by those receiving public funding. The form asks for information about top donors, investments, expenses, etc. Laura reviewed the document and recommended that the board approve it. Sharon moved to approve and Suzanne Schutte seconded. The board unanimously approved tax form 990.

b. Budget Update for 16/17 and 17/18 - Chris reviewed the process of creating next year's budget, which is ongoing until the summer. We are in the information gathering stage through February, trying to understand variables that affect our revenue and expenses, such as cash needs, fundraising, and working with the SFUSD. The finance team is consulting with principals and other school leaders to see how we can invest in our teachers and support our strategic initiatives. In March we will have a draft budget. This will not be a balanced document, but a strawman, or baseline, budget. In April the board will be presented with the balanced budget and proposals for personnel items. This is when the board approves personnel line items so we can get contracts out to teachers in April and early May. In May, the board approves the final budget. The state releases their budget in June, and this could have an impact on our budget.

Our revenue is flat, but we will have increases in salary, health benefits, etc. We anticipate a deficit, but we have been in this situation before and have been able to reach our financial obligations.

Laura Spivy commented that Chris and Chad are very creative in how they manage our expenses. We always budget to the most conservative projections. The governor is trying to mitigate the volatility that we have seen in the past. There are many variables statewide and across the nation which could affect our situation. Sharon talked about working through a deficit in the past. We asked ourselves how can we make it work without cutting the things that matter to us, and realized that we have many intellectual and financial resources.

Sapna passed the floor to Annie Klebahn and Mary Plant-Thomas for the Faculty Affairs Committee update.

#### **Faculty Affairs Committee**

a. Update on Community Meeting - Annie told the board that the community meeting had a record turnout of thirty four people, and ten more faculty members than last year. She thanked Julie for hosting and cooking. There was an even mix between middle and high school faculty, which made for a rich evening. Teachers from the two schools do not have many chances to interact. There were fewer veteran teachers in attendance this year, but, other than age, it was pretty wide ranging and there was a diversity of thought. The biggest topic was the importance of community. Equity for our students was also a main topic and a core value. Having to share rooms and a lack of space for things like planning, can make the job more difficult. There was agreement that being a teacher is intense and there is never enough time. There was talk of trying different approaches to scheduling. Many teachers commented that the small things, like teacher appreciation lunches, and larger things, like the responsiveness of the organization and sense of community and shared purpose, make Gateway a special place to work. Many teachers have worked at other schools with difficult staff. Mary read some quotes to give the trustees an idea of the evening's conversation. Mary noted that it means alot to the faculty to have a place to be heard. Sapna thanked Annie and Mary. We will dive deeper into this next month. Sapna passed the floor to Anna for the development presentation.

### **Development Report**

a. Opportunities for Innovation – Brainstorm and Discussion - Anna spoke about the remarkable culture and values at gateway. We have experienced a lot of success with our fundraising model but we are looking for new ideas. To help us brainstorm innovation, Anna would like everyone to ponder:

1. What are Gateway stories worth telling?
2. What are touchpoints and events that will make people fall in love with Gateway?
3. Partnership Wish list

Anna asked everyone to split up into small groups. Sharon asked each small group to pick their favorite three things, and pick someone to share with the larger group.

#### **Group 1**

Stories: We can tell more stories about how Gateway has had an impact on families. Have students who have gone to college talk to juniors and seniors. Follow students beyond Gateway for a continuum of stories.

#### **Group 2**

Stories: Our students' stories as examples of equity.

Touchpoints: Discuss data and numbers to show the diversity of our school. Our mission is so important given the current political climate. Gateway is on the forefront of addressing the issues of our times.

#### **Group 3**

Stories: Create videos on a more regular basis. Videos with shorter messages, a "We love our Teachers" video series, for example. We can try engaging seniors in telling the stories. Student created videos, student voices. Hear about Gateway from the kids.

Touchpoints: strength in diversity that we have at the school. Spotlight on grads. Monthly spotlight.

Partnerships: Partnerships with big tech companies making an impact on city.

#### **Group 4**

Stories: alumni stories, feature alumni who have made a choice to come back here to teach. Videos about what it means to be a teacher at gateway.

Touchpoints - community service day at high school in partnership with businesses so they can get to know our kids. Have more people from businesses do community service here.

Partnership - advocacy organizations for teachers, immigrants rights, etc.

#### **Group 5**

Stories - Show the journeys of transformation from 6th grade through 12th.

Touchpoints - tour of the day - discussions of the day, 8th grade socratic seminar, watch kids being engaged, portfolio reviews.

Partnership wishlist - Project Open Hand.

Anna and Sapna thanked everyone for their participation and ideas.

### **Impact Campaign Committee Update**

Sapna presented a PowerPoint and update on what the Impact Campaign Committee is working on and where we have been. She outlined the team and announced that Sara is the new member of the Committee. The big picture goal 3.6M. We have raised more than half of our goal. This year's goal is \$700,000, and so far we have raised \$110,000.

The campaign supports the 21st century model, teaching and learning, and Gateway Impact labs. GIL helps us broaden our reach and share what we do so we can touch more students.

Anna and the team have done a lot of brainstorming about who potential donors can be. We are looking at large donors and smaller gifts through crowdsourcing, institutional donors and foundations as well as individuals. If anyone has any ideas, please let the committee know. Laura went over the gift numbers, which show how much our donors love what we are doing.

How do we reach out? The campaign is planning small group dinners, one-on-one meetings with donors, such as meetings and tours. Sharon and Anna are amazing. Sharon knows our history, our goals, our values and can engage our donors in conversation.

This is an exciting campaign that will take us to the next level. A lot of work has gone into this campaign and everyone has worked hard. Sapna appreciates what the board has done, and would love to hear any ideas or input.

Eric asked if people can earmark donations. Sharon said yes. We hope we know what a potential donor's area of interest is, as it helps the conversation. On a practical level, we hope gifts do not have strings attached, but most donors know not to restrict their gifts.

Farley asked about the duration of the campaign. It started in 2014, and is a 5 year campaign.

Sapna gave the floor to Sharon for the E.D. report.

### **Executive Director Report**

Sharon thanked everyone for helping to brainstorm. Our Trustees are our ambassadors, and we value their input. She talked about our fundraising, and the different avenues for fundraising. Thank you to those on the subcommittee who are working on this.

a. Vote on Safe School Zones Resolution - Sharon distributed copies of Gateway's Safe School Zone Resolution. This is our way of saying that we will do our part to keep our community and kids safe. Gateway decided to write the resolution because of the current political climate. Students are already protected in California public schools. There are laws in place that state we are not allowed to inquire about immigration status. This is true in the city also. Students and their families are afraid that they or their loved ones may be deported. At Gateway, and at schools across this city and state, we recognize our responsibility to our children. It is kind of a symbolic gesture but it says to our families that we are committed to supporting and protecting them. We had our attorneys approve the resolution so that we could see if we are putting ourselves in jeopardy. The answer is we don't know, but with that in mind, we learned from our attorneys that the law is on our side, and there is strength in numbers. We are putting ourselves on more solid ground with our values. This is on our students' minds. We will continue to be a place where we do not ask for information or give out information about families. We will provide information to families to help them. It is procedural and explains what we will do. It does not change what we would have done before the resolution. Sharon gave everyone a few minutes to read the resolution.

Eric motioned to approve, the motion was seconded and the resolution was approved without issue. Eric announced that the 7th grade team is preparing for a career fair. We would love to have trustees come and talk with our students about their jobs and careers. Mary Plant-Thomas mentioned that there is a career at the high school, also.

**Adjourn Meeting**

Sapna adjourned the meeting at 7:06pm

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Allison Bhusri, Board Secretary

Date: \_\_\_\_\_