

**GATEWAY HIGH SCHOOL
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, January 14, 2015 @ 5:00 PM**

Board Members Present:

Beth Berliner, Cynthia Billops, David Booth, Sapna Boze, Laura D'Amato Contreras, Amy Joseph, Lisa Kirkland, Annie Klebahn, Susan Masto, Joyce McMinn, Sharon Olken, Will Parish, Jackie Quella, Adina Safer, Suzanne Schutte, Phil Susser, Jennifer Tulley, Aaron White, Julie Wise,

Board Members Excused:

Therese Arsenaault, Allison Thoreson Bhusri, Felix Chinchilla, Sharon Gillenwater, Sue Schultes, Laura Spivy, Valerie Toler

Board Members Not Present:

Deundra Hundon, Briana Zelaya

Also present:

Chris Hero, Anna Heidinger, Danielle Ciccarelli

1) Call to Order, Welcome, and Approval of Minutes from November 19, 2014

Beth Berliner called the meeting to order at 5:08 PM. She called for a motion to approve the minutes. They were approved without issue.

2) Public Forum

Beth then opened the floor for public forum. No further discussions or motions were introduced,

3) Executive Director Report - Welcome Back

Beth turned the floor over to Sharon Olken.

Sharon welcomed everyone to the Board meeting and thanked everyone, especially Beth and Jennifer, for the wonderful holiday party.

Sharon welcomed Danielle Ciccarelli. Danielle is Sharon's new assistant as well as the new Board Assistant. Sharon informed the Board that if anyone needs anything, they may ask Danielle. Sharon is hopeful that having an assistant will make it easier for the Board to communicate with her.

Sharon talked about where we are in the academic year. The middle school began their second semester on January 5th. For the high school students, the second semester started today, January 14th, as the first week after winter vacation was Project Week. Sharon noted that the Board will hear more about it later in the meeting.

Sharon told the Board that Gateway Middle School is heading into charter renewal season. The GPS Board of Trustees will be voting to approve the revised charter at the February meeting. Two days later, it will be submitted to the San Francisco Unified School District. The charter should be approved by the SFUSD within 60 days. Sharon will present the charter renewal schedule to the GPS Board at February's meeting. Joyce McMinn mentioned that it is beneficial that Chris and Sharon consistently represent Gateway Public Schools before the SFUSD Board.

Sharon spoke about a recent newspaper article concerning an increase in the number of charter schools requesting real estate within the SFUSD. As Gateway is not a new charter school, this should not have much bearing on us, but is a backdrop to our charter renewal.

Sharon spoke of another article concerning the Hayes Valley quadruple homicide last weekend. Sadly, a former Gateway High School student was a victim of the shooting. This tragic event

impacts the community, our teachers, and our students and is a reminder of how violence can be difficult for some of our students to get away from.

4) Project Week

Sharon presented the Board with an overview of Project Week at Gateway High School. During Project Week, students participate in one learning activity, such as robotics, animation, cooking, band, etc. She explained that Project Week exists because Gateway believes in helping students find what they are passionate about. This is an opportunity for students to explore activities and interests to which they otherwise may not be exposed. Sharon asked everyone to talk to their neighbor about a time in their education when they learned or experienced something that had a big impact on them.

Sharon read a message from Kory O'Rourke, which explained the purpose of Project Week and what it means to our kids. Sharon presented videos showing the following Project Week classes in action: "Making the Band," "Dorm Room Cooking," and "Robotics."

a) Student and Teacher presentations

Sharon introduced Mr. Lake, the "Robotics" coach, Ms. Sanchez, the "Dorm Room Cooking" teacher, and Mr. Martinez, who taught "Making the Band." She also introduced students Nick and Nathaniel, "Robotics" team members, and Alberto, who participated in "Making the Band."

Mr. Lake, Ms. Sanchez and Mr. Martinez spoke about why they chose the subjects they taught, and how their students spent the week. They spoke about the goals of their courses.

Sharon asked the students to talk about what Project Week means to them. Nick said he likes that the week is truly learning-by-doing. He observed students, who had no prior exposure to working with tools, learning how to solder and use power and hand tools. Nathaniel likes that Project Week gives him experience that he can use in the real world; he learned about electrical and mechanical engineering. Alberto, who is a musician and producer, was excited when he started the course, but he never expected the wonderful reaction of the crowd after their performance. Alberto also spoke about how the musicians felt like family by the end of the week.

The Board had a chance to ask questions. The Board inquired if the teachers felt they could incorporate some of the Project Week teaching techniques into their day-to-day teaching. The response was that it would be possible in some instances, and that it was something to consider.

Sharon thanked the teachers and students for coming and presenting to the Board.

5) Finance

a) Budget: mid-year check-in

Jennifer opened the floor to Chris Hero for the financial update. Chris distributed a Financial Update, and gave an overview of the budget forecast and expenses. GPS is forecasting a surplus, in line with what is normally seen this time of year. The budgeting process for fiscal year 2016 is beginning now, and will continue for the next five months. Chris went over the budget development timeline. Chris asked if there were any questions. Adina complimented Sharon and Chris on the accuracy of their variance.

b) Investment Update:

Chris Hero and Lisa Kirkland presented an overview of our investments: what funds GPS is investing in, and the purpose of the investments. The purpose of investing is to provide a third funding stream for the budget, after state funds and donations. The goal is to build up reserve funds, preventing the need to make drastic cuts if there is a drop in revenue. Chris opened the floor to Lisa Kirkland.

Lisa spoke about the Investment Committee. The investment committee meets 3 times per year and reports to the Finance Committee and to the Board. Lisa explained how the committee

determines allocation. Chris explained how the investments are currently allocated. Capital preservation is as important as making a return.

Chris stated that GPS normally doesn't need to make the draw on investment funds to support the operating budget. We have only drawn once.

Jennifer thanked Chris and Lisa, and gave the floor to Anna to discuss development

6) Development

Anna thanked everyone on the Board for their support. The Development Committee will be setting goals and considering how we are formally showing our appreciation to donors. There is a remarkable level of support for GPS; we don't take it for granted. One of the things Development would like to do is engage trustees in thanking donors, for a personal touch. Anna will send a list of donors to Board members so they can identify those to whom they would be willing to send a personal note. Jennifer mentioned that the Development Committee would be sending out the donor list on a monthly basis.

Anna mentioned that it is time to start thinking about next year's luncheon. She asked Board members to come up with suggestions for next year's speaker.

Jennifer thanked Anna, and gave the floor to Laura D'Amato and Adina Safer, the Faculty Affairs Chairs.

7) Faculty Affairs Update on Activities and Priorities

The Faculty Affairs committee has been working to define the purpose and goals of the Committee. They see value in being an avenue of communication between the staff and the Board. They have been engaging on issues around recruitment and retention and the rising cost of living in San Francisco.

The Faculty Affairs committee is having a community meeting on February 6, at Adina's home. This community event will build on last year's meeting. Annie Klebahn will moderate. They will explore what brought faculty to Gateway and what will keep them there.

In addition to the upcoming meeting, the committee sent out a survey about issues that concern staff. The committee is excited about ways to strategically help staff, in order to aid retention and recruitment.

Jennifer thanked Adina and Laura for their report.

8) Open Forum Discussion

Beth spoke about the need for Board members to have time to talk about anything they would like. This open forum was included in the agenda to provide that opportunity. She opened the floor to Board members who had questions.

Joyce McMinn asked if there would be more details about the staff meeting hosted by Faculty Affairs. She asked if Board members would be able to attend to show their support. Laura replied that invitations have not yet gone out to Board members. They would like to see the faculty response before they send out the Board invitations. Annie Klebahn mentioned the importance of having a balance of faculty and Board members at the meeting.

Adina asked to hear more about Impact Labs. Sharon said that she anticipates a lot of discussion on this in the spring.

David Booth suggested a discussion about how we talk about charter schools. Beth thanked David and said it would be a good agenda item. Members of the Board agree that this is a

complex and nuanced issue. Sharon suggested bringing other voices and opinions to the table. Sharon suggested that the Board find the things that are universally true about charter schools and acknowledged the importance of reading studies on charter schools.

Will Parish would like to talk about the diversity of the faculty. He asked if there is a trend as the years go by. Sharon noted that Gateway tracks and reports the diversity of our faculty and that Gateway has actually become more diverse over time. The issue of diversity relates to the work that the Faculty Affairs committee has been doing. Teachers are in short supply right now. The teacher shortage is statewide.

A questioned was asked if the SFUSD enrollment process affects our student diversity. It was noted that Gateway's enrollment process is separate from the SFUSD enrollment. The SFUSD enrollment process only affects Gateway in that, when there is less choice for SFUSD middle schools, our applications go up.

9) Adjourn Meeting

At 7:01 PM, with no other business to conduct, Beth adjourned the meeting.

Signed: Allison Bhusri
Allison Bhusri, Board Secretary

Date: 4/22/15

