

The Genesee Community Charter School
Board of Trustees
Education Governance Council
Final Meeting Minutes
August 12, 2020
Virtual Meeting via Zoom (Due to COVID-19)

Board Members Present: Michele Hannagan, Ryan O'Malley, **Elizabeth Pietrzykowski**, Allison Shultes, **Traci Terrance**, **Jess Wanner**, Annemarie Wess, **Lukas Wilson (Bold: BOT non-voting)**

Board Members Absent: **Ivelisse Gonzalez**, Nolica Murray-Fields, **Cheryl Moeller**, Mark Schiesser, **Tasha Stevens**, Kevin Sutherland (**Bold: BOT non-voting**)

Educational Governance Council Members Present: Becki Mason, Shannon Hillman
Educational Governance Council Members Absent: Maggie Deutschbein

Legal Counsel Present: George DesMarteau

1. Welcome, Call to Order, Agenda Overview

Meeting called to order by Michele Hannagan at: 5:39pm, no quorum present.

Welcome to new members Jessica Wanner, Luke Wilson, Ivelisse Gonzalez (not present), and Tasha Stevens (not present).

2. Greeting

Shannon led the group in a greeting and sharing exercise. Attendees each shared something you've tried to do this summer to maintain a sense of normalcy. Went around the group and shared the fun things we've done and been up to. Some examples are: Camping, meditating, quarantining on the beach, long walks, being outside, lots of trips to the Adirondacks, training puppy, gardening, self-care, summer camps at the RMSC, more reading, and being outside.

3. Teacher Presentation

None (normal for summer meetings with school not in session).

4. Review (Month) Minutes

The Board of Trustees has deferred re-approval of the December 2019, January 2020, and February 2020 meeting minutes until the September 2020 meeting, pending a quorum.

The Board of Trustees needs to re-approve previous meeting minutes including the approval of the contract with Deb Hamner (Breakthrough Leadership), but cannot re-approve at this meeting without a quorum. No changes to the meeting minutes will be made other than revisions to the voting vs. non-voting status for some members at those meetings. Members who were not members of the board at the time of those meetings will abstain from voting on those respective meeting minutes.

5. Finance Review/Budget Review

None (normal for summer meetings with school not in session)

6. Committee Updates

- **Advocacy (Jessica Wanner)**

Discussions & Future Actions: Chris Dolgos & Jess Wanner are co-chairs and have been working together to determine the direction of the Advocacy work for this year with a focus on the impact of the 3-year charter renewal. Also working with them are: Sonia Park (Diverse Charter Schools Coalition of NY) and Deb Hamner (Breakthrough Leadership) to establish goals. The committee also reached out to current members about their continued participation asking them to suggest peers to attend in their place if they would no longer participate. Committee will also put out a call for new members in the school's newsletter, *Currents*.

- **Discipline (Nolica Murray-Fields)**

Code of Conduct: The committee has been working hard this summer to continue the work on the code of conduct that was first started by the 6th graders last school year and presented to the Board at the June 2020 meeting. Committee members, Ivelisse Gonzalez, Jess Nordquist, Nolica Murray-Fields, Lauren Grimm, Alexis Stubbe, Kyle Skovira are currently developing the expectations for behavior across all grade bands. The committee hopes to have the Code of Conduct ready to implement this fall, pilot throughout the winter and finalize by mid-point in the year. This will give them time to get feedback from staff, students, and families on how it is working. This has been a big project, but the committee is excited to get this year's new class of 6th graders on board and continue this student led initiative.

Note: Kyle Skovira is the new hire who has been doing amazing work with teacher professional developments and training this summer, focusing on self-care.

- **Nominating (Annemarie Wess)**

Open Positions for 2020-2021; Approve Elizabeth Pietryzkowski

The Board will have 1 open position as Kevin Sutherland has decided to step away from his board of trustees position. The committee is looking for someone to replace him who can provide similar financial expertise but also support the board in other areas. The committee requests names of potential nominees to be sent to Annemarie for follow up. Kevin will stay on and help with the transition.

The Board of Trustees needs to officially approve Elizabeth Pietryzkowski at the next meeting when we have a quorum, ideally in September.

- **Personnel (Michele Hannagan)**

No Personnel Committee updates reported.

- **Safety (Shannon Hillman)**

No Safety Committee updates reported.

- **Diversity (Shannon Hillman)**

The committee reported on family, racial, and equity discussions that have been held every other week since early June. Between 10 - 15 attendees from the GCCS community, comprising school staff, the school leader, and parents, have attended each meeting. Traci Terrance has been working with Shannon on these conversations. The conversations began because of the national and local unrest in relation to racial justice and equity. The committee felt it was important to start these conversations and support people who want to have these conversations, but don't know how to have them. The discussions can help guide GCCS toward accomplishing the goal of racial equity in the school and across the community. The committee did provide input on the reopening plans through the lens of social-emotional learning and racial equity. The new topic of discussion is how GCCS can support families with their basic needs during uncertain times by keeping a sense of community across multiple cohorts and virtual groups. This work is very much in alignment with the work being done at the board level (i.e., retreat with Deb Hamner/Breakthrough Leadership) and with staff and students and contemporary connections in expedition planning.

Outstanding Business

7. *None*

New Business

8. *Reopening & Safety Plan (Public Comment)*

Reopening Plan:

An Executive Committee meeting was held on July 30, 2020 and the draft of the Reopening plan was voted on and approved prior to being sent to NYS for review.

Plans are on gccschool.org/reopening-plan/, the link to the plan is the first thing seen on the website. The plan is available in different languages. Minor revisions are in progress based on feedback from Governor Cuomo including: the school's response to contract tracing, how GCCS addresses virtual teaching (especially for those who have opted-in to 100% virtual learning), and the response to what happens if there is a positive case in the GCCS community. Shannon shared that she sent a video to families talking through different schedules using the GCCS new Youtube channel. This also includes videos of family town hall meetings including an overview and Q&A. GCCS has gone above and beyond the Governor's requirements of 3 town hall meetings and 1 staff meeting prior to opening. All GCCS meetings have been recorded and released publicly. Staff has met multiple times to review the plan and provide feedback. Additionally, a student focus group met to give input on the plans.

The Board of Trustees discussed the reopening plan and covered topics including: bussing and transportation, staff feedback and concerns, PPE availability, sharing of cohort information to families, plans for special education services.

- Shannon has been in contact with the Head of Transportation for RCSD and has been working to align the transportation plans for K-6 based on the reopening plan and bus schedules have been established.

- Shannon and Becki reported on the general feelings of the staff on reopening. Staff anxiety was high at first but with further explanation of the plans and scheduling, and with input from a parent nurse, they are feeling more confident as they are learning more about the plans and what the school year will look like.
- Staff are required to wear facemasks and GCCS has access to sufficient supply of PPE as needed (i.e. face shields, gloves, etc.).
- Shannon and the reopening task force are working through how to share information about students cohorts with families while maintaining confidentiality.
- Shannon and Maureen are leading the logistical coordination of determining the breakdown of students in each section of the hybrid model and are close to knowing the breakdown of virtual, hybrid, and ELL. Rough numbers as of now: 38 families all virtual; remaining families choosing hybrid; of the ELL population ~50% choosing 4-day option.
- There is an option for families to opt-in to choosing all virtual for 5 days out of the week rather than following the hybrid model. Families need to stay with their commitment until October 9th and can make a switch after that date.
- Board members, staff & parents in attendance shared a lot of positive feedback and support for the excellent work done to create a reopening plan, coordinate it's implementation, and be open to feedback and suggestions.
- Plans for coordinating special education services with RCSD are ongoing. Waiting on confirmation that GCCS will be able to maintain it's two providers but it is looking like that will be the case.

Safety Plan Updates: (Shannon)

The safety plan approval has been deferred to the September 2020 meeting pending quorum, Board of Trustees must review in anticipation of the vote at that meeting.

The Safety Plan must be submitted and approved by NYS by September 1, 2020. The plan is not changing extensively, but the policies/procedures are referenced in the reopening document. George suggests submitting the safety plan to the state with a note that the plan is pending ratification by the board of trustees. GCCS recognizes that the community as a whole has suffered trauma and that sirens and loud noises may be more stressful for students than normal. Staff are discussing drills and practice noise to help kids be prepared for those kinds of situations.

9. Review Bylaws-EGC Section

Revision of the Education Governance Council (EGC) section of the bylaws are being proposed because the GCCS Board of Trustees believes that it is important for the EGC to maintain participation in school management at Board meetings. The bylaws are also being revised to be in compliance with the New York charter law and avoid a conflict of interest.

A discussion on the historical background of the EGC's role in the original charter was had and it was emphasized that a key element of GCCS is that staff are important stakeholders in the management of the school with particular emphasis on educational matters. The proposed revisions acknowledge the importance of the advice and feedback from the faculty. The new bylaw language reflects that staff voices will be heard while retaining the authority of the Board

of Trustees and respecting the original charter of the organization. Conversation was had regarding term length for faculty and the overall feeling of the attending board members was that the term should be 2 years on a rotating basis.

Note: George and Shannon will work to complete edits to the EGC bylaws and will send them out for review and approval in the September meeting pending a quorum.

Open Forum

10. *Future Agenda Topics and/or Public Comment*

7:00pm--Michele Hannagan opened up the meeting to public comment. No public comments were reported.

Meeting Wrap-Up

11. Review Actions and Agreements

Adjournment called by Michele Hannagan at 7:01pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Allison Shultes
Secretary of GCCS Board of Trustees
GCCS Board Minutes/ August 12, 2020