

Approved by the Board of Directors on September 26, 2024

Mission Statement: "ACADEMICS. LEADERSHIP. COMMUNITY."

## George Washington Academy

Thursday, August 22, 2024

7:30 p.m.

### Board Meeting Minutes

**Location:** George Washington Academy  
2277 South 3000 East  
St. George, Utah  
Learning Lab

The meeting will also be available through Zoom. Anyone interested in participating via Zoom conferencing can email Shannon Greer at [sgreer@gwacademy.org](mailto:sgreer@gwacademy.org) for call-in information.

*The OPMA training was held at 7:00 p.m. prior to the Board Meeting.*

*The Board meeting convened at 7:30 p.m.*

**Board Welcome:** Shannon Greer, President

**Roll Call:** Shannon Greer, President

**Prayer:** TBD

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Casey Unrein

Board Members Present: Shannon Greer, Blake Clark, Amanda Mortenson, Deborah Odenwalder, Laura Pressley, Austin Reber, Casey Unrein

Board Members Not Present: Laura Snelson, Brady Pearce, Kevin Peterson

Others Present: Spencer Adams, Hannah Gillespie, Christine Giles, Chance Manzanares, Steven Erickson, Debora Kauvaka, Lexie Toia, Josh Serrano, Jenna Ayers, and Shelbi Kelly.

#### **Approval of Minutes:**

Amanda made a motion to approve the July 18, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes as outlined in the Board Packet. Deborah seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. All present voted in favor: Shannon Greer, Amanda Mortenson, Deborah Odenwalder, Laura Pressley, Austin Reber, and Casey Unrein.

#### **Public Opportunity to Address the Board:**

None

**Set time for adjournment**

Blake set time for adjournment at 8:10.

**Teacher Reports:** Lexi Toia and Hannah Gillespie, Teacher Representatives

Hannah Gillespie, a kindergarten teacher reported that the kindergarten team really appreciated the fact that the first week of school the kindergarteners were able to get out early. They were able to practice carpool and expectations at carpool. They thought it was crucial to making the transition to carpooling with everyone else. The kindergarteners had their BOY (beginning of year) reading assessment and the kindergarteners are doing very well.

Lexi Toia reported that the fifth graders have taken the diagnostic assessment on IXL to help see where their students are coming in on language arts and math. This will help the team decide where each student will go during the patriot time.

Hannah talked about the success of back to school night with just the parents. Allowing the teachers to give their attention to the parents and talk to them about things like carpool and lunch. Then having the kids come a separate day was a little crazy but it was great. Having the two separate events was a lot of success.

Lexi talked more about back to meet the teachers and the booth that was set up in the 5th grade hall for Give Me Liberty. Last year they announced the event late and didn't have much participation. This year there was a booth set up just for Give Me Liberty and it's been fun to see the students really excited about it and actually outside at recess practicing and memorizing things already. They are all really excited about it.

Hanna talked about math training with Mike Flynn. A useful training stepping away from I do, you do, we do and encouraging kids to have productive struggles. Lexi had her doubts about the framework at the beginning but after going through the training and having support from Jenna it's been like a lightbulb moment and it's been great seeing kids more engaged. They are working together, problem solving, the teacher facilitates the conversation but then they work together to get the answers. This framework has been really great so far.

**Administration Report:** Blake Clark, Executive Director

Blake Clark, the Executive Director gave the Board Update - overtime hours are zero. Enrollment is 1,012. This is expected to be the total on October 1st. Debbie is giving a few tours the next few weeks. Grade level reading assessment results are - Kindergarten 77% of kids reading at grade level which is 8% higher than last year. First grade is 61% reading at grade level which is 10% lower than last year. It's interesting to see that the first graders at the end of last year were 95% reading at grade level but dropped off a significant amount over the summer. We need to somehow incentivize utilizing the reading software over the summer. Second grade is at 74% reading at grade level, which is 8% higher than last year. In third grade they have 67% reading at grade level which is 14% less than last year. Amanda asked if we track how many kids

are new and how many kids are returning. Blake confirmed they do. Fourth grade is coming in at 78% reading at grade level which is 4% lower than last year. Fifth grade is starting at 83% reading at grade level which is 9% higher than last year. In sixth grade we are at 84% which is 10% lower than last year. Seventh graders don't take this assessment but they take IXL. Blake is questioning why for instance the fifth graders are testing at 83% are reading on level but their RISE assessment last year was in the 50's. some

The teachers have huge 3-ring binders to help them with this new framework for the new way they will be teaching math, reading, and science. Blake, Christine and Jenna met with a company called Classroom Mosaic. It's an app on their phones or computer that is a cheap option to give advanced and unbiased feedback. The teachers are able to get the feedback right away and have liked it, it's not just about saying good job but what they can do better. Casey wanted to know how it's not biased. Blake said, they aligned the format to be mission focused - around academics, community and leadership. It's having the observer look for specific "look for" behaviors. Were certain things observed? Before they looked to see if the kids were engaged. Just because the kid is sitting forward doesn't mean they are engaged. They will continue to use this and collect more data to share in the next meeting. Shannon clarified that the unbiased part comes from everyone having the same questions to answer. Since the feedback can be immediate they are better able to coach and work with the teachers to make sure they are using the framework and supporting. All the team leads will be evaluated using this method.

Casey wanted to know how they were doing with tardies. 99% of students have been on time. It's not very accurate the first 2 weeks, but they will be tracked and reported on next week. Teachers don't take roll until 8:27. Casey would like to add to from the charter goals the exceeding portion of the matrix to the Admin report.

Amanda wanted to know if they track the kids who did pre-school or upstart. Christine confirmed that they do not ask anymore. Hannah said they can tell which kindergartner has had previous schooling. Some teachers have parents fill out a form but not all have that question on it. Amanda said that last year the 1st graders struggled with reading but it looks like they are doing better. Are we continuing with that same format for the current first graders. Last year they made that pivot mid year last year. Blake confirmed that they are using the same format from day one this year.

Shannon took time to thank Mr Clark and everyone for the way they have handled the carpool. The city liaison came and said if there are 10 students who cross the street they will put up crosswalk signs and signs saying there is a school. There were 68 people that crossed the road so signs will be forthcoming. Carpool is getting better everyday.

Shannon paused as the adjournment time was approaching. Amanda made a motion to continue the board meeting. The motion passed unanimously with everyone who was present. (Shannon Greer, Amanda Mortenson, Deborah Odenwalder, Laura Pressley, Austin Reber, Casey Unrein) Amanda proposed a new adjournment time of 8:45.

**Financial Report:** Spencer Adams we are officially in the new fiscal year. Not a whole lot to look at it only captures July. It's been a busy month, especially for Jessica. Most of the areas

here are in yellow. A couple of line items here that are turning ahead of schedule, these are normal beginning of school things like supplies, technology, furniture. Nothing abnormal. Also not abnormal to see no funds in the federal revenue. Those come at the end of the fiscal year. After one month things are looking good. Ratios are still looking great. Once the October 1 date comes we will see a true up on the allotment. Then we will see what those revenue numbers will look like for the rest of the year. Overall looking good at this point. Casey made a comment - we managed to save more than we expected last year.

### **Committee Reports (3 min each):**

- **Policies Committee** – Nothing to report.
- **Finance Committee** – Nothing to report.
- **Audit Committee** - Nothing to report.
- **Benefits Committee** – Nothing to report.
- **Curriculum Committee** – Nothing to report.
- **Outreach Committee** – Nothing to report.
- **Technology Committee** - Nothing to report.
- **LAND Trust Committee** – Nothing to report.
- **PTO Committee** – Almost double the amount of parents to sign up for Remind. They are hoping to get more involvement. Shannon asked if they were on the Remind app last year did they get automatically signed up for this year. Josh said that they did have an automatic renewal involvement. Blake said that it's been so helpful to have the PTO instagram be unified with everything that's been going on by saying things like "GWA we've got your back". It's been very helpful.
- **Board Development Committee** – Updated after our board retreat and modified.
- **Campus Management Committee** – Nothing to report.

**GWA Expansion:** Laura Pressley said they already met once and that Blake has worked to get a lot of what needed to be done finished already. The outreach committee will be meeting again on September 4 to go over a final edit to go over everything for a final edit. Shannon said that she would follow up with Kevin about the finance delegation of the expansion. Casey said they have a meeting set up with David Robertson who will be guiding them. Amanda will be the 4th person to be in the meeting. That meeting will be on September 5th. On the 6th they will be meeting with 3 architects. The expectation from this meeting with the architects is that they will come to us with some ideas based on what we have told them we want. It will be a conversation about what they can do for us. Then they will go and talk about it and give us a proposal if we decide to go with them.

**Sponsorships:** Shelbi said that \$43,600 was raised from sponsors this year. 10 sponsors from last year chose not to donate this year. 2 went up a tier and 2 went down a tier. There were 17 brand new sponsors. Shannon wanted to know where these new sponsors were coming. Several were parents of students, others just wanted their name on our fence. The next step is to maintain a relationship with these sponsors. Shelbi will be sending thank you's and emailing the sponsors to get them ready for the fall festival so they can have a good experience. Banners will be made and hung up by September 1. The PTO instagram will take time to highlight each sponsor individually and intentionally on their instagram. All money raised would go towards the PTO.

In the future she wants to have an opportunity for families to buy a brick for the new school at \$100 donation or something similar. Casey mentioned the unique position this is to not just talk to stakeholders but to the board. He recommended I talk to each board member individually about their position and how they can help with raising funds. Amanda brought up we are coming up on 20 year anniversary, that is something we can use to promote ourselves to businesses. Deborah brought up other flexes we have that can help encourage businesses to support us.

**Discussion and/or Action Items:**

- Deborah made a motion to approve the additional materials for the SPIRE curriculum in the amount of \$9,511.32 as outlined in the Board Packet. Amanda seconded the motion. Casey appreciated the honesty and humility in the proposal of the fact that it was a misunderstanding. He asked to clarify the misunderstanding. What's the percentage of SPED students? Blake said it was about 7%. The number goes based on parents who want their children tested or teachers can have a student tested. Then the school psychologist comes and they get diagnosed. Christine said that one of the Reps that worked with them from SPIRE was from Canada. He sent them forms to fill out and that he would give them the recommendation. He did that and gave them what he thought they needed. The trainer came this year and said they didn't have everything they should. They felt like they were misled and they are now trying to fix it. The motion passed unanimously. All present voted in favor: Shannon Greer, Amanda Mortenson, Deborah Odenwalder, Laura Pressley, Austin Reber, Casey Unrein.
- Casey made a motion to approve the Go Guardian Yearly Renewal in the amount of \$9,963 as outlined in the Board Packet. Laura Pressley seconded the motion. Casey gave a quick analysis, it's up 4.3% the prior year it went up 7.6% so it's a little high. The Motion passed unanimously. All present voted in favor: Shannon Greer, Amanda Mortenson, Deborah Odenwalder, Laura Pressley, Austin Reber, Casey Unrein.

**Board Member Oath of Office** Amanda Mortenson, Casey Unrein and Shannon Greer took the Oath of Office and became members of the GWA Board.

**Closed Meeting** – None

**Reconvene** — Take all appropriate action in relation to closed session items.

**Next Meeting:** The next regular Board Meeting will be held on September 26 at 7:30 p.m.

**Adjournment:** Meeting was adjourned at 8:40.