

Approved by the Board of Directors on February 26, 2026

Mission Statement: "ACADEMICS. LEADERSHIP. COMMUNITY."

## George Washington Academy

Thursday January 22, 2026

7:00 p.m.

### Board Meeting Minutes

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

*The Board meeting convened at 7:00 p.m.*

**Board Welcome:** Shannon Greer, President

**Roll Call:** Shannon Greer

**Prayer:** Kevin Peterson

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Chance Manzanares

Board Members Present: Kevin Peterson, Shannon Greer, Brady Pearce, Laura Pressley, Sharna Rowe, Casey Unrein, Laura Snelson, Rachel Richins, Blake Clark, and Shelbi Kelly.

Others Present: Christine Giles, Chance Manzanares, Debbie Kauvaka, Jenna Ayers, Steve Erickson, Spencer Adams, Lisa Riel, Emily Winona.

#### **Strategic Planning**

Laura Snelson led a discussion for the continuation of strategic planning. She had sent out a survey to be completed prior to the meeting. Only 6 board members had completed the survey. She had hoped to have more engagement from not only the board but the admin team as well. Clearer expectations were made and the survey will be sent out again to be completed prior to the next meeting. Laura S. and Sharna and any one else who wishes to meet prior to the meeting to streamline the discussion will meet between now and the February meeting.

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

Rachel made a motion to approve the Minutes from the December 11th, 2025 Board Meeting. Kevin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. All present voted in favor: Kevin Peterson, Shannon Greer, Brady Pearce, Laura Pressley, Sharna Rowe, Casey Unrein, Laura Snelson, Rachel Richins.

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

None

## **Set time for adjournment**

Sharna set time for adjournment at 8:37.

### **Teacher Report:**

Emily wanted to share some wins they received from the faculty and staff. Lexi Toia shared that the RISE testing is happening now. They don't have the data but will soon have it to make adjustments with their team. They just completed the Renaissance unit. Next week they will have Renaissance day where they will do different projects like painting on their back to replicate the Sistine Chapel. These hands-on activities help to cement the knowledge from the unit and ends up being one of the favorite days of the year. Lisa reported that Ms. Cooper had celebrated that she had a 6th grade student in her digital literacy class that struggled with being respectful and following directions. As they worked on the Stop Motion Project she began to see a shift. He collaborated effectively with group members and shifted to a win-win mind set. Their project was the best she has seen in all her years.

### **Administration Report:**

Blake Clark gave the report. He had send out a board update that had a lot of data. Outlined in the update was data for behavior from August to December. There is academic reading data from BOY to MOY. Dips have been minimal. There are many grades that are close to the 80% growth. Kevin asked why there has been an improvement in the trajectory of the test scores. Blake said he believed it was because of the teachers and the instruction. The past few years they have invested a lot in instruction that the teachers have embraced. The report card came out in January, usually it comes out in October. The growth is higher than it has been. ELL went down to developing, Christine and the ELL team have created a plan they will share with the faculty. Looking forward to expansion. They are looking at the feedback from teachers about mathnasium - there was a survey given out. Many teachers want that time back for their students. The way the math center teaches is more of learning by memorization which is different than what is done in the classrooms with the vertical boards. They want to make sure the data is representative of turning into grade level standards. Shannon asked if Mathnasium only had a one year contract, it is. Christine said that Mathnasium made a significant pivot in January so they haven't seen any results yet. Casey asked how skilled they are at teaching math. Christine explained that they teach with a sit and get and memorize platform which conflicts with the way GWA teachers teach. Many students don't enjoy going since they just sit and do work sheets. All reports have been completed.

**Financial Report:** Spencer Adams gave the report. Looking at the budget report as of the end of December. The State Revenue from the forecasted column is trued up. Local revenue can fluctuate a little depending on the actuals as we go through the second half of the year. Federal revenue- IDEA and title funds are still waiting to be uploaded once they are awarded. Expenses are looking great. Most of the major categories are right on track. There are a couple that are trending a little high but really not too bad, especially when we consider the timing of the purchases being the beginning of the year. Looking to finish the year strong. We typically exceed the net income on the forecast column, there is no reason it won't happen again. Rachel asked if Mathnasium is on the budget. It's the third line. Sharna asked about all the colors on the report.

Kevin said that the very bottom is the spend carry over. Laura Snelson asked if grant money goes into the budget report. Spencer explained a few of the colors and line items. The board has the committee minutes to review for more explanation on what the finance committee talks about. Kevin said that the change column is the easiest way to read the report. Reports are not completely done but will be done by the 30th.

### **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** – Laura Pressley, April 24 there will be a school wide birthday party for the 20-year anniversary during the school lunch.
- **Technology Committee** - Nothing to report.
- **LAND Trust Committee** – Nothing to report.
- **PTO Committee** – PTSO this last meeting with students. It was a great opportunity to watch the kids step up. They are trying to figure out if the PTO is part of the school for tax filing purposes or its own. They are looking at getting 3 bids. It should take a few months to get it all figured out but they are working to make it its own entity. The Health and Safety fair is this Saturday.
- **Board Development Committee** – There will be 3 board seats available. If there is someone that has expressed interest or that anyone would like to refer please send names to Shannon.
- **Campus Management Committee** –Nothing to report.

### **Discussion and/or Action Items:**

- Kevin made a motion to accept the Policy 365: E-bike, electric scooter, and other personal wheeled transportation policy as outlined in the board packet. Seconded by Rachel. Kevin asked how many bikes and wheeled vehicles come to school each day. There are about 20 kids now. Some of the vehicles that are being used go faster than the cars. Casey thinks the policy should lead with wheeled transportation policy instead of specifying types at the beginning. Shannon asked if the school has the authority to enforce things like making sure the bike is in a good working position. She said the intent is good but wants to make sure that what is written is actually enforceable. Sharna pointed out that putting in the policy that it is not the schools responsibility to maintain the kids' bikes does not mean they will not help. What do we do if the kids aren't wearing a helmet? Rachel said she believed it was important for the school to have a policy like this to show that the school values safety. Laura P. commented that along with the first priority being the safety of the students it was important to make sure that the liability is shifted. The motion was split 4 to 4. Brady, Laura P, Laura S and Rachel voted yes. Shannon, Sharna, Kevin and Casey voted no. More discussion about the importance of having a policy specifically for legal protection for the school. Brady said he voted yes

because he thought it was more important to have it than not have it and it can always be refined later. His concern is the enforcement of it. He wants to make sure that everyone is on the same page with how to enforce it. Kevin modified his motion. Kevin made a motion to approve the policy as is with expectation that within 60 days the concerns will be amended and brought back to the board. Rachel seconded the motion. Those in favor: Kevin Peterson, Shannon Greer, Brady Pearce, Laura Pressley, Sharna Rowe, Laura Snelson, Rachel Richins. Those opposed: Casey Unrein.

Kevin made a motion to continue the meeting. Brady seconded the motion.

- Brady made a motion to approve the Procedure 126: GWA Trust Land Council Procedures as outlined in the board packet. Casey seconded the motion. Shannon asked if this was a procedure or a policy? She feels that this should be a policy. Kevin said that all the emails from the Land Trust say it's a procedure. Brady suggested calling it "Procedure Policy". Shannon doesn't want to mix up what GWA calls a policy vs a procedure. Kevin asked what if you don't have 6 members? Blake said that you have to have 6 and if you don't, you need to appoint someone. If you have 10 then there needs to be a vote. Shannon wants to make sure that this reflects what we do here at GWA. She understands that some of the things that are required if we want the money need to be put a certain way which is fine and can be discussed. Shannon thinks that this should be a board committee and not an Executive Director responsibility. Brady made a motion to amend the title to be - GWA Trust Land Council Election Procedures Policy. Rachel seconded. Those in favor: Sharna, Kevin, Brady, Laura P, Rachel, Laura S. Those opposed Shannon and Casey. The motion carried.
- Rachel made a motion to approve the Policy 360: Suicide Prevention Policy as outlined in the board packet. Casey seconded the motion. Sharna asked if this was a new policy or replacing something. Shannon explained that this was a policy that was presented in the fall and it was sent back to the committee to make some changes. She asked how often this policy would have been good to have. Blake said that there have been at least 6 this year. Casey clarified that it does give the authority to have any staff member intervene. The motion passed unanimously. All present voted in favor: Kevin Peterson, Shannon Greer, Brady Pearce, Laura Pressley, Sharna Rowe, Casey Unrein, Laura Snelson, Rachel Richins.
- Kevin made a motion to proceed to apply for the CSP Grant. Sharna seconded the motion. Rachel feels like since the admin team wants to move forward that they should. Discussion was had whether or not GWA should apply for the CSP Grant. Many feel like this could be a two year process, where they may not get it the first year but can learn valuable lessons to help them get it the second year. That even if they don't get it this year, the school can get the feedback from the committee. There is concern that money will run out or not be available in the future. The majority of the work for applying for the grant falls on the admin team. Everyone on the team agrees that the work isn't a problem and that it's worth having two million to apply. Once the school decides to apply due to conflict of interest Shannon will have to excuse herself from the board. There is concern that the board is not ready to have her step down based on all of her knowledge of the school and its governance. Christine brought up that she thought since the school wasn't going to be completed until 2028 that GWA was not eligible for the grant. Next

year there will be three opportunities for grants. Blake brought up the importance of succession planning in the next year. Shannon asked that the discussion should start in December. The motion failed unanimously. All present voted against the motion as GWA is not eligible: Kevin Peterson, Shannon Greer, Brady Pearce, Laura Pressley, Sharna Rowe, Casey Unrein, Laura Snelson, Rachel Richins. Rachel made a new motion to discuss the grant in December of 2026. Kevin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. All present voted in favor: Kevin Peterson, Shannon Greer, Brady Pearce, Laura Pressley, Sharna Rowe, Casey Unrein, Laura Snelson, Rachel Richins.

- Kevin made a motion to accept the Borrower's Counsel, Bond and Disclosures Counsel, Underwriter that was outlined in the board packet. Casey seconded the motion. Sharna asked for an abridged version of what the proposal meant. Casey wanted to know it wasn't strictly the cheapest but they were chosen based on how they gave a plan not just a quote. The motion passed unanimously. All present voted in favor: Kevin Peterson, Shannon Greer, Brady Pearce, Laura Pressley, Sharna Rowe, Casey Unrein, Laura Snelson, Rachel Richins.

**Closed Meeting** – Shannon Greer made a motion to go into a closed meeting in accordance with the Utah Open and Public Meetings Act for the purposes of discussing the character competence of an individual. Roll Call vote: Shannon Greer, yes. Casey Unrein, yes. Laura Pressley, yes. Brady Pearce, yes. Kevin Peterson, yes. Rachel Richins, yes. Laura Snelson, yes. Sharna Rowe, yes. The vote was unanimous. The meeting went into a closed session at George Washington Academy Learning Lab.

**Reconvene** — Kevin made a motion to extend the contract with the Executive Director for another year. Brady seconded the motion. The motion passed. Voting in favor: Kevin Peterson, Brady Pearce, Laura Pressley, Rachel Richins, Sharna Rowe and Laura Snelson. Those opposed: Shannon Greer and Casey Unrein. The motion carried.

**Next Meeting:** The next regular Board Meeting will be held on February 26, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 1:10 am.

Written by Shelbi Kelly