

Approved by the Board of Directors on May 15, 2025

Mission Statement: "ACADEMICS. LEADERSHIP. COMMUNITY."

## George Washington Academy

Thursday, April 24, 2025

7:30 p.m.

### Board Meeting Agenda

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

*Legislative Update Training will be held at 5:00 p.m. Monday April 28, 2025.*

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

**Board Welcome:** Kevin Peterson, CFO

**Roll Call:** Kevin Peterson, CFO

**Prayer:** Amanda Mortenson

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Blake Clark

Board Members Present: Amanda Mortenson, Kevin Peterson, Casey Unrein, Brady Pearce, Laura Pressley, Deborah Odenwalder, Blake Clark and Laura Snelson via Zoom.

Board Members Not Present: Shannon Greer.

Others Present: Lexi Toia, Debbie Kauvaka, Chance Manzanares, Christine Giles, Steven Erickson, Spencer Adams, Jamee Adams, Jena Ayers, Hannah Gillespie, Shelbi Kelly.

#### **Reviewed GWA Year Goals:**

- Expanding student Leadership opportunities for ALL students
- Ensure ALL students are learning at High Levels
- Focus on Employee Mental Health with Better and Quicker Access

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

- Deborah Made a motion to approve the Minutes from the March 27th, 2025 Board Meeting as outlined in the Board Packet. Amanda seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. All present voted in favor: Kevin Peterson, Laura Pressley, Casey Unrein, Brady Pearce, Amanda Mortenson, Deborah Odenwalder. Laura Snelson was not present for the vote.

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

None

### **Set time for adjournment**

Blake set time for adjournment as 8:45.

### **Teacher Reports:**

Hannah Gillespie reported on 3rd grade. She said that the unit 9 CKLA test score averages were all over 80% or higher. The Acadience math progress monitoring scores have increased significantly due to their diligence, and they are looking forward to seeing the EOY scores which are just around the corner. Colonial Day is on May 9, they have a lot of fun activities and rotations that are planned.

Lexi Toia reported on 2nd grade. They said they are working hard, continuing their momentum right up until the end of the school year. They've grown so much in their ability to master the state standards, they're feeling very comfortable with where they are scoring in their progress monitoring. They said they are using data to drive their instruction and trying hard to keep learning fun. They had a field trip today. They went to the annual Cotton Days that is put on by the Daughters and Sons of Utah Pioneers. It went very well with their area of study of westward expansion and it extended the students' learning to understand the settling of our community during the 1800's.

### **Administration Report:**

Blake Clark, Executive Director gave the report. The current enrollment for 25/26 is 1,056 students with a wait list of 152. If the expansion were done they would be able to have two more kindergarten classes, one first, one second and one third grade. Blake said they've received quite a few district teacher applicants, but they don't currently have an opening. Yesterday they hired a part-time art teacher. Cassandra Wood, the current teacher, was only here temporarily. Shauna Mahoney who has been teaching for six years at Sunset Elementary, took a break and is now coming back. The next page of the Board Update are the science scores, this is just a rough draft as they only finished today and there are still kids that need to finish. There are two numbers, GWA scores as well as the State Average. It's looking good. Three of the four grades hit 70% and fourth grade was really close with 67% in the area of science. He said that he would be sharing math scores at the next board meeting. They are excited to see the impact of the vertical boards and if they've had an effect on the scores. In November, he will present the ELA scores because the State will be holding them until the fall. The State is coming next week to kind of do an assessment audit of the school. Making sure all forms are filled out and training was given appropriately to teachers to proctor the assessments. They will then meet with them and discuss their opinions of data not being shared immediately so they can make goals for next year.

### **Financial Report:**

Spencer Adams gave the financial report. The budget report is as of the end of March. Everything up to this point is looking great. At this point we basically know all the revenue we are going to get. It's hard to know exactly since a big portion of the federal funds depends on how many meals are served during lunch, so it's not a set amount. We will need to wait and see what it's going to be. It shouldn't change a lot. There is a lot of yellow in the expenses. There is

some green which signifies we are doing better than what we anticipated. We have adjusted the forecast down to what we think it should be realistically. Spencer continued to say, he was optimistic that even though the ratios are looking great and are based on the forecast column, it's going to end up being better than it's showing right now. They will wait and continue to monitor each of the line items over the last quarter of the year. Everything is indicating that we're going to finish the year strong just like we have in years past. They've already started working on next year's budget with the legislative session being done. He said, we know what those numbers are looking like so we are basing it off of that. We'll just wait to see the enrollment numbers, how those finish up the year and also the October 1 count beginning of next year. Kevin asked when they anticipate a true up on the federal funds. Spencer said, the difference between the federal funds and the state funds is we do need to spend those first. They are also managed through Utah Grants, the state's website portal that they take applications, they approve applications, they take reimbursements. So everything is processed through that. Spencer said he would anticipate if not on April 1, then the June allotment. They are trying to get those in as quickly as possible just to be meeting the mad rush at the end of the year. Spencer also wanted to point out that there is a little bit of lag between when it gets submitted and approved at the state and then shows up on the allotment. If it does trickle into say the July allotment or sometimes it even goes into the August one it still is recognized as revenue for this year. The biggest benefit as far as getting it in this fiscal year is just that it counts towards our cash when we're looking at the day's cash on hand. Spencer said we're well above what our bond covenants want us to be at and also S&P, what they expect us to be at. Reports are completed.

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

- **Policies Committee** – Nothing to report.
- **Finance Committee** – The 2026 budget is out. They will be reviewing it and letting everyone know about it.
- **Audit Committee** - Nothing to report.
- **Benefits Committee** – Jenna will be the new Chair, Regina is stepping down after 13 years. Today they got a quote back from Talk Space, it will go in next month's packet. They did not increase the price.
- **Curriculum Committee** – Nothing to report.
- **Outreach Committee** – Nothing to report.
- **Technology Committee** - Nothing to report.
- **LAND Trust Committee** – They will be voting on some of the fruits of the land trust.
- **PTO Committee** – Pto elections for 25/26 will be finalized this Friday but will still have the secretary position vacant. Movie night is Friday. Wild Robot is the movie with popcorn, pizza and cookies. The PTO is finalizing dinner plans for the Legacy Project dinner, April 30. Staff appreciation week they got a masseuse scheduled and lunch is being finalized. Thursday Sakura donated 30 sushi rolls.
- **Board Development Committee** – Meeting on Monday beginning at 4:30.
- **Campus Management Committee** – Nothing to report.

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

- Amanda made a motion to approve the bid for Access Points for updated WiFi in the amount of \$26,226.67. Casey seconded the motion. Casey asked if they will be charging labor under their other portions of their contracts. Steven said no just what is in there. Kevin asked if since this is a five-year license and support agreement, do we need to spread that out over multiple years or just pay for it all now. Steven said we usually just pay it all now. Blake asked about the warranty, Steven confirmed that there was a 5-year warranty on it. All present voted in favor: Amanda Morenson, Kevin Peterson, Casey Unrein, Brady Pearce, Laura Pressley, Deborah Odenwalder, Laura Snelson via Zoom.
- Amanda made a motion to approve the request for the purchase of the 120 Chromebooks from ProTech in the amount of \$30,000 as outlined in the board packet. Deborah seconded the motion. Casey asked if we can recycle the management consoles. Steven said no, each device needs a new one. Casey asked if the bid was put out as, “how many can you give me for \$30,000”. Steven confirmed that it was. They couldn’t afford to buy as many as they normally buy, but he looked through everything and is confident that this is all that is needed. All present voted in favor: Amanda Morenson, Kevin Peterson, Casey Unrein, Brady Pearce, Laura Pressley, Deborah Odenwalder, Laura Snelson via Zoom.
- Casey made a motion to approve the bid from STS for \$8,799.31 for eight machines. Amanda seconded the motion. Casey asked if these were new and top of the line. There is one i7 the other seven are all i5’s. Jessica gets the i7 because she has a very important job and currently has the oldest computer. All present voted in favor: Amanda Morenson, Kevin Peterson, Casey Unrein, Brady Pearce, Laura Pressley, Deborah Odenwalder, Laura Snelson via Zoom.
- Casey made a motion to approve the 2025-2026 Independent Contractor Agreements for occupational therapists, speech language pathologists, physical therapists, and psychologists. Brady seconded the motion. Blake said that the only one that increased was the occupational therapists. They asked for \$115 an hour, they met them in the middle at \$110. Kevin asked if the max of 50 hours a month was enough, Blake said yes. Laura P asked if the psychologist was local, Blake said he was not but that they have really liked the detail and the results he gives in the assessments. Amanda asked what the age of the students that the OT works with. Blake said that it ranges, some are life skills students, there are a few outside of life skills that have OT in their IP. Casey asked if any of them would get close to \$100,000. Blake said no, they aren’t close. Kevin asked if we were still paying for Ryans travel. Blake confirmed that yes we are, and that they are booking his hotel and deciding where he stays. Kevin asked if the premiums were normal, Blake confirmed that it’s what they have been in the past. All present voted in favor: Amanda Morenson, Kevin Peterson, Casey Unrein, Brady Pearce, Laura Pressley, Deborah Odenwalder, Laura Snelson via Zoom.
- Amanda made a motion to approve the Land Trust Edits as outlined in the Board Packet. Second was made by Deborah. Blake made a comment that it's very possible in the next few months that they're going to make an amendment to these already because we didn't think that the professional development funds, they thought it would be a one time thing, we have those again next year. He said they don't need those funds coming out of this anymore. Its possible as we meet with the land trust that we would move that money to one of the other goals. In his opinion, he would say the teacher assistant one since they're adding two more teacher assistants. Kevin said maybe it could go towards more

computers. The auditing is getting very complicated, Blake asked that we look at how funds are used to simplify. All present voted in favor: Amanda Morenson, Kevin Peterson, Casey Unrein, Brady Pearce, Laura Pressley, Deborah Odenwalder, Laura Snelson via Zoom.

- Deborah made a motion to approve the FY26 Proposed Salary Schedule as outlined in the Board Packet. Brady seconded the motion. Kevin asked Spencer to give an update everyone on the WPU increase and the 6% salary schedule looks like and why. Spencer said that the WPU that increased 4%, local replacement was about 9%. The salary schedules they're 6% increase for each step. The biggest reason, in addition to the increases to the state funding, is just more competitive with the surrounding area. Kevin asked if it was sustainable, Spencer said yes. Kevin wanted everyone to know that the finance committee would never do anything that wasn't sustainable. Blake said that everyone's letter of employment, they can see the two prices distinctly different. So as long as the state's willing to give it, it will be passed on. All present voted in favor: Amanda Morenson, Kevin Peterson, Casey Unrein, Brady Pearce, Laura Pressley, Deborah Odenwalder, Laura Snelson via Zoom.
- Amanda made a motion for TOUCHMATH Supplemental Curriculum in the amount of \$16,182.00 as outlined in the Board Packet. Laura P seconded the motion. Blake said that this is all coming out of the SPED curriculum line item. Deborah asked if we have used TouchMath before. Christine said no. She explained that it's a multi-sensory approach to mathematics. The program that was purchased years ago just is not giving the neurodiverse students an opportunity to really master foundational math skills. After listening to different presentations on programs we felt like this was the program that could give us exactly what we needed. It was a pretty good price compared to other programs. This will help address the unique needs of our kids both in the severe classroom and the mild-moderate classrooms. Amanda asked when the virtual training will be, Christine said in August before school starts. Deborah asked if this was only one year. Christine said yes, next year will be cheaper since we can reuse some of the materials. Casey asked if it was a per-student charge. Christine said it's per teacher license. They will be covered for next year, even with the growing SPED population. This is supplemental material. It's not replacing, but we just have found our math curriculum that was purchased a few years ago by a former SPED director, although it was good at the time, the students are not improving much from it. So we need to add a multi-sensory approach where we're taking abstract math to be very, very concrete. Through a different approach of instruction and materials in front of them. Casey asked if this goes through the curriculum committee. It does not. Kevin asked if we need to lock in the price for next year. Christine will ask, but what they are getting now should carry them through next year. Laura S asked how many classes there are in SPED. Christine said 4 Special Ed Classes. Our percentage for the SPED population is around 13%. Blake said that eight years ago it was 3%. Christine said that the goal is to get these students to as close to on grade level as possible. All present voted in favor: Amanda Morenson, Kevin Peterson, Casey Unrein, Brady Pearce, Laura Pressley, Deborah Odenwalder, Laura Snelson via Zoom.
- The matrix that was used to evaluate the different contractors was handed out. The different contractors were Big D, Hughes, Mathis, One West and Westland, each sent in a proposal. The different criteria were 1- Team Identification. 2- Point of contact

information. 3- Resumes for key personnel. 4- Design & Construction management experience. 5- Management approach to design & construction. 6- Design/Build-C M Fee. Brady made a motion to have Hughes be the Contractor for the school expansion. Amanda seconded the motion. Blake said that once the board approves the contractor they will contact them to award them the RFP. Then they will submit a contract to us. We will meet with the attorney that was approved in the last board meeting to review the contract. Once we meet with the attorney we will bring it to the next board meeting to sign. It was also discussed that the completion date should be Fall of 2027. Brady talked about Hughes' packet being very thought out and well presented. They had the most impressive management team, particularly their local people. The packet reflected that they had paid attention when we talked to them about what we were looking for and what our needs are, they reflected it back in their packet. Hughes has experience with a lot of schools and charter schools and even helped with the remodel after the original build. Part of the contract is they need to suggest designers for us to use, which they did in their packet. In the next two weeks, they'll select with our input that and the architect. They also said that they would make sure to take care of the parking lot and carpool first to keep it flowing during the construction. Hughes is the contractor that has their own patent for their concrete. They also said that they would keep the two buildings with a matching aesthetic. All present voted in favor: Amanda Morenson, Kevin Peterson, Casey Unrein, Brady Pearce, Laura Pressley, Deborah Odenwalder, Laura Snelson via Zoom.

**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 May 15, 2025 at 7:30 p.m.

**Adjournment:** Amanda made a motion to adjourn at 8:33.

Written by Shelbi Kelly.