

Approved by the Board of Directors on February 27, 2025

Mission Statement: "ACADEMICS. LEADERSHIP. COMMUNITY."

George Washington Academy

Thursday, January 23, 2025

7:30 p.m.

Board Meeting Minutes

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

LAND Trust presentation 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: Josh Serrano

Pledge of Allegiance: Austin Reber

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

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

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: Amanda made a motion to approve the December 12, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes as outlined in the board packet. Deborah Seconded. The motion passed unanimously. All present voted in favor: Shannon Greer, Kevin Peterson, Casey Unrein, Laura Pressley, Austin Reber, Deborah Odenwalder, Brady Pearce, Amanda Mortenson and Laura Snelson via zoom.

Public Opportunity to Address the Board:

None

Set time for adjournment Brady set the time for adjournment as 8:29 p.m.

Teacher Reports: Lexi Toia reported on 4th grade. She said they are celebrating the fact that their students grew in their Acadience scores. They went from a 76% on grade level at the beginning of the year to 84% in the middle of the year. Their math fact fluency has grown from 19% of fourth graders on proficiency level to 56% in multiplication facts so they were really happy with their students' growth. A shout out for the 5th grade. They just finished the renaissance section. They will be celebrating that with Renaissance Day next Friday by doing fun activities and dressing up. Activities range from sculpting, invention, modern Mona Lisa painting and taping a piece of paper under their desk to have them paint upside down like they are painting the Sistine Chapel.

Hannah gave a report on kindergarten. She said they celebrated the 100th day of school today with teachers and students dressing up. They will be getting new math data soon but so far they have 40% of students able to identify 30 numbers between 1-100 within a minute which is their end of year goal. Normally at this time of year there are a lot of students who need help with letter sounds. With this group of kindergarten students, the lowest patriot time level, almost all of them have their sounds down so they are working on blending sounds now. This is something that is usually worked on at the end of the year. It's been a fun challenge for the teachers but also fun to see the kids working so hard and learning so much.

Administration Report: Blake Clark gave the report. He started by talking about the MOY (Middle of Year) Acadience scores. Kindergarten went from 72% at the beginning of the year to 76%. First grade went from 50% to 67%. This is the biggest jump they have ever seen. Second grade went from 67% to 78%. Third grade went from 55% to 55% but with an increase of 3 students. He and Christine Giles met with the first, second and third grade teachers to hear about why the first grade was able to achieve a 17% increase. The third grade team said that they were only testing the students who were most at risk, instead they are now going to do regular weekly testing with everyone so they can assess their needs and change their instruction based on those needs. We have worked to create an environment where teachers from different grades can come together and ask questions and seek help from one another instead of feeling competitive. Blake then reviewed the 4-7 grade BOY-MOY scores. Fourth grade went from 76%-84%. Fifth grade went from 84%-85%. Sixth grade went from 84%-87%. Blake said that when you get into the upper grades you usually start seeing the numbers flat lining and that's because they need to read more words per minute and their comprehension needs to increase with their accuracy being at 99%. Amanda asked if they are implementing teaching math with the white boards in the younger grades or just the older ones. Blake said that the curriculum committee are doing a study on a book called Building Thinking Classrooms. A lot of the current research is flipping the model. Currently the teacher will show how to do the work then they give the students time to try it out. This model flips that. The teachers who are on the curriculum committee are the ones trying it and they are having a lot of success with it. Other teachers want to see it. Next week they have instructional rounds which happen two times a year. This is where grades are able to go in for 20 minutes and observe another teacher then they go back to his office and the team collaborates on what can be implemented. Right now the only ones using the vertical boards are

those who wanted to take the risk and the ones who saw that those who took the risk were growing at a higher rate. Blake talked about how math has always been a sit and get where science was always the hands on method. With this the teachers are able to give tasks and the students work in groups of 3-4 to figure out through collaboration how to get the answer. Kevin said, it doesn't matter how you add it or subtract it, it just matters that they get there. They talked about how this allows for students to ask their peers instead of worrying about being the one to ask their teacher and assuming everyone else knows the answer. Blake then said that there is research that shows that it needs to be a wipeable non-permanent board. A lot of the mindset around math is that you don't want to make a mistake, or if you do then you aren't good at math and this changes the paradigm. Amanda said that it sounds like this hits all the learning styles, visual learner, audio learner they're together being stimulated in the way that's going to help them learn as opposed to just purely visually. Blake explained that the teachers are able to walk around with a clipboard and observe the concepts that the kids are getting vs not, its formative assessment happening all the time instead of just the paper/pencil test. They see that the teachers are only talking about 10% of the time. Blake said he never taught this way and that it's incredible to see the high levels of learning that are happening. He invited the board to come to the school to observe with the other teachers next week Tuesday and Wednesday when they are doing the observations. Christine will send out the schedule. Casey asked about the colors on the chart. He asked if you can be a grade level behind and be yellow. Blake explained that that would be the red. Red means they need intense support. Most yellow students need help but are just shortly behind the green. They are working to push the yellow to green. The State has changed the identifiers that they have been using. Basically we reached the carrot and they moved it. Kevin spoke to Casey's question by asking what intervention they are doing for those who are in the yellow and Blake clarified that it was patriot time. They put the kids who are the same color into these different classes and teach them the principles that will help them move up. Shannon asked how often students go down a color. Blake explained that they are usually going back and forth straddling the line. All reports are complete.

Financial Report:

Spencer Adams gave the finance report. The report is as of the end of December, officially halfway through the fiscal year. Overall we are looking great. You can see a lot of yellow and green on many of the major line items. We have received the majority of the state revenue trued up. The State tends to do some small adjustments on a couple line items that they missed in the first wave but for the most part what is seen in the forecast column is what we're going to receive. Spencer explained that the State works based off of estimated numbers the first 5 months then provide the actual funding once they have all the metrics around the first of October. Based on that they either reduce or add a little more revenue. When looking at the ratios, you can see the prior month change, there are a lot of reduction there. The past couple of months we saw a big increase, the finance committee put an emphasis to trim the number especially in the expense column by putting in more realistic numbers. Nothing alarming, we are still in a great position in comparison with our goals. Still in a great position with the slight decrease. We are in great shape going halfway through the year. Kevin said that he really likes the ratio of unrestricted to restricted funds. Shannon asked Spencer to explain the restricted vs unrestricted. Spencer said that in past years there have been a lot of restricted funds that haven't been utilized mostly in SPED or the lunch program. A lot of it now is just being creative especially in the lunch program

how they are using the funds. They have made it a priority in spending those funds. A big part is that they are making sure to utilize the restricted funds before they use the general funds. They took these funds at the end of the year and since many of them say they go to supplies or development they are vague so it was easy to use them up at the end of the year. This year the difference is that they are using this method throughout the year of better utilizing the restricted funds. Deborah clarified that they are using the more specific funds first then the general for the restricted categories. Casey mentioned that they are making sure to have improved documentation too.

Committee Reports (3 min each):

- **Policies Committee** – Nothing to report.
- **Finance Committee** – Nothing to report.
- **Audit Committee** - Nothing to report.
- **Benefits Committee** – Blake said we are going to need to review mental health again to see if we want to continue. We need to look at the usage. Teachers have been saying that they like it. They will review it one more time before they continue. Shannon asked that there be a plan B if plan A doesn't work.
- **Curriculum Committee** – Nothing to report.
- **Outreach Committee** – Nothing to report.
- **Technology Committee** - Nothing to report.
- **LAND Trust Committee** – Nothing to report.
- **PTO Committee** – Volunteer opportunities include the book fair Feb 10-13 and the Art, Glow Show Feb 28 and March 3.
- **Board Development Committee** – Next month will be the Finance report.
- **Campus Management Committee** – Nothing to report.

Discussion and/or Action Items:

- Kevin made a motion to approve the Scissor Lift in the amount of \$6,000 as outlined in the board packet. The second came from Brady. Casey said that we are not taking the cheapest option but we are going with the company we have worked with before and they had a good reputation. He asked if there was a service plan with it. Steve said that they would fix it but that they didn't give an hourly rate. The motion passed unanimously. All present voted in favor: Shannon Greer, Kevin Peterson, Casey Unrein, Laura Pressley, Austin Reber, Deborah Odenwalder, Brady Pearce, Amanda Mortenson, and Laura Snelson via Zoom.
- Casey made a motion to approve the renewal of the CHALK from Power School in the amount of \$6,193.37 as outlined in the board packet. Deborah seconded the motion. Casey said that it did go up 8%. The motion passed unanimously. All present voted in favor: Shannon Greer, Kevin Peterson, Casey Unrein, Laura Pressley, Austin Reber, Deborah Odenwalder, Brady Pearce, Amanda Mortenson, and Laura Snelson via Zoom.
- Deborah made a motion to approve the attached calendar for the 2025-2026 School Year. Kevin seconded the motion. Deborah asked what changes were made. Blake said that the law was that the kindergarteners needed to start the same day but that they went back and

wanted a staggered start so now the kindergarteners will start a week later. The week will be used for evaluations. Another change is that instead of school starting on a Friday its been changed to a Monday. The motion passed unanimously. All present voted in favor: Shannon Greer, Kevin Peterson, Casey Unrein, Laura Pressley, Austin Reber, Deborah Odenwalder, Brady Pearce, Amanda Mortenson, and Laura Snelson via Zoom.

- Amanda made a motion to approve the Civility Policy as outlined in the board packet. Laura Snelson seconded the motion. Blake wanted to give recognition to Michelle Walters at Vista. She spent a few years putting this together, and they just adopted this a few months ago at Vista. He said their Director Justin Velasquez has helped tremendously. Deborah mentioned that this starts right away. Blake said he would be sending it out in the email on the following day. The motion passed unanimously. All present voted in favor: Shannon Greer, Kevin Peterson, Casey Unrein, Laura Pressley, Austin Reber, Deborah Odenwalder, Brady Pearce and Amanda Mortenson and Laura Snelson via zoom.
- Casey motioned to approve the Health and Wellness Policy Update as outlined in the board packet with the following changes to be made. First on the first page where it says GWA may utilize a self-evaluation, change it to “will” utilize. On page 10, under Assessment Resources, It is recommended that the wording is changed to say that GWA will use an assessment tool approved by the Utah State Board of Education about Wellness policy as a guide. This will be on a triennial basis as is required by the USDA. Additional discussion, Casey wanted to ensure the implementation of a written procedure at the request for meal modification was in place. Kevin asked if this was verbatim what was sent to the State. Steve said that it was pretty close, that both committees had reviewed it. Shannon said, as it reads, it states that teachers will provide non-food items as rewards, et cetera, et cetera. This policy is not preventing teachers from having food at parties? Blake confirmed it is not. Shannon then asked about the decorations in the lunchroom. She asked if it was their intent to paint more murals or is it going to be something similar, smaller, simpler? Blake said they already have some posters up when you go through the line to promote healthy eating. Shannon wanted to know who would be leading the Health and Wellness Fair. Blake said Steve and the lunch crew will work together to see what that looks like. Shannon asked that adding additional information in the announcements about eating healthy would still make their morning announcements efficient. Blake said it would just be a random healthy word or phrase. Shannon asked for clarification on page 6, before and after school activities. Does this mean that the school would provide things like soccer or running clubs? Blake said no, it just means that the school does not intend for the kids to move during school and they are promoting and encouraging kids to move their bodies before and after school as well. Laura Snelson asked if there was any charge for the assessment outlined on page 10. Steve said there was no charge. Kevin asked about the newsletter, will it go out in the Patriot update? Blake said it will go out in the Healthy Patriot that the counseling team puts together. The motion passed unanimously. All present voted in favor: Shannon Greer, Kevin Peterson, Casey Unrein, Laura Pressley, Austin Reber, Deborah Odenwalder, Brady Pearce and Amanda Mortenson and Laura Snelson via zoom.
- Kevin made a motion to approve the Time and Effort Standards Policy Update as outlined in the board packet. Deborah seconded the motion. Shannon asked what was redlined from before. Blake said the old one is dissolved and the new one is what’s presented.

Casey clarified key points being the following: to highlight the key points of what time and effort should be in the policy, allow the implementation a bit more definite, audit estimate and other disciplinary percentages determined before the Supreme Court do not qualify as support, Estimates are not a replacement for actuals. With time and effort procedures it had to happen every six months, being signed by the employee is optional now. Reconciliation procedures were also added. Shannon asked if it would be safe to assume that the content is the same but that the implementation are the changes. Casey said there wasn't a separation of duties in the prior policy. Deborah said that she read through the old one before she read this one and that it felt like the old one, it was barely onto a second page and this is almost 3 pages and it felt like it was an expansion of what it was from before. The motion passed unanimously. All present voted in favor: Shannon Greer, Kevin Peterson, Casey Unrein, Laura Pressley, Austin Reber, Deborah Odenwalder, Brady Pearce and Amanda Mortenson and Laura Snelson via zoom.

- Kevin made a motion to approve the Professional Learning Grant not to exceed \$102,000 as outlined in the board packet. Amanda seconded the motion. Casey wanted to know what the specifics for the stipends were going to be. Blake said he is working closely with Spencer now that they have the list of who is going he thinks it will be between \$40,000-\$50,000. Blake also confirmed that they will be using a bus. There are projected 50 going, currently 45 are signed up and 2 will be free. 1 free since GWA is a model school. Blake pointed out that they included 3 quotes for the bus as well as 3 quotes for the hotel. They will be eating at the Cheesecake Factory. Kevin wanted to confirm that everyone understood that what was presented was only the \$55,000 which includes the dinner, hotel, and the Solution Tree Conference. The additional \$50,000 is to be the stipend which will pay for the teachers time while they are there. The board is voting that they not exceed the \$102,000. Blake said that there will only be roughly 39 employees that will need the stipend as it is a work day for several of the others who are going. The motion passed unanimously. All present voted in favor: Shannon Greer, Kevin Peterson, Casey Unrein, Laura Pressley, Austin Reber, Deborah Odenwalder, Brady Pearce and Amanda Mortenson and Laura Snelson via zoom.
- Deborah made a motion to approve the recommended Reading Specialist/Instructional Coach Salary Schedule as outlined in the board packet. Austin seconded the motion. Blake took time to clarify the need for this updated schedule. He said that previously it was just Masters, Masters Degree plus 36. It's changed dramatically even since starting this whole thing where now there's an instructional coaching endorsement, which didn't exist before. A reading endorsement doesn't exist anymore because of letter and a new pathway that they're going. Blake and his team would like the flexibility of being able to hire someone without a master's but still has the necessary endorsements or are working towards those endorsement areas. Shannon asked if we should change the job description rather than the payscale. Blake confirmed that changing the job description is something he can do without the approval of the board but in order to change the description he needs to have a payscale to go with it. Shannon asked what the minimum requirement would be in the role. Blake said a bachelors degree but that he wants the flexibility to either get a masters with an instructional emphasis or a bachelors and go and get an instructional coaching endorsement. Shannon summarized that Blake is simply asking for a second lane, allowing him the opportunity to hire somebody without a masters degree, hoping that they will come to this position with instructional coach experience or a

certification, same thing with reading experience or a certification. The certification won't necessarily put them in lane two, but now you've got a lane one of a bachelors degree that you can pay them on. For this position he is valuing the experience over the education. Kevin asked if they are anticipating getting more people with a bachelors degree and a certificate than getting someone with a masters? Blake said that he would rather have someone that taught the younger grade have the letters and the science of reading than someone that taught sixth grade for 10 years and has a masters degree but they don't understand the prerequisite skills of reading because that's what that position is all about. Casey confirmed that the instructional coach is working one-on-one with teachers 100% of the time. Blake said not that they work with students and interventionists. Sometimes they'll be asked to go to an IEP if the progress or lack of progress they're making in the intervention that is currently operating. Casey asked why it's the same pay schedule. Blake said it's a managerial position which is why it starts out higher, and includes 10 extra days of work and after school programs. This will be effective 2/1/2025. Casey asked how they got the numbers. Blake said that they took the percentage increase from masters to masters plus 36 and Spencer just went backwards. Kevin asked when they anticipated filling the role by. Blake said he didn't know but that they are willing to absorb the role until they can get the right candidate. The motion passed unanimously. All present voted in favor: Shannon Greer, Kevin Peterson, Casey Unrein, Laura Pressley, Austin Reber, Deborah Odenwalder, Brady Pearce and Amanda Mortenson and Laura Snelson via zoom.

GWA Expansion: Shannon thanked everyone who participated in the webinar on Tuesday. It was identified that the State will make an award of a new school, a satellite school, and an expanding school. So each of those categories will have a \$2 million award this year. Moving forward it will be one new school, one replication, and two expansions. Blake had asked if they got the money if they could store stuff. Shannon clarified that if you were awarded the grant in June, you could start spending that money, and you could sit on it as long as you had the grant. If you were awarded the grant, you could say today we're going to buy all of the curriculum, and you got all the justification for that because we know that's what we're going to use. We know can get it and sit on it. Blake clarified that if the school gets the grant that want to use it for one-time use, technology, furniture, desks, things that they need and store it in an off-site location then use it when its ready. Shannon said yes as long as it gets used. The department of education will come to the school with a list of things that should have been purchased and ask to see it. So if it's not there, you would need to pay it back. Shannon reiterated that GWA would most likely not be awarded a grant this year because they are going to say that it will be used in 2027. The grant readers will look at the other schools and see that they are going to use it much sooner. Once we get started on the expansion in August and we do the groundwork and the prep work and all those things we aren't really going to be ready for purchasing books and materials like that until after the next grant cycle starts. She also mentioned that this is something that could be used for a bus. The actual bus and not the maintenance, salary, gas or insurance, just the initial cost. Shannon also said that they would need to have it all lined out, what you want how you're going to spend it, how that's going to tie back to the goals of our school as well as the goals of the grant. All of that can be done beforehand. So as soon as the grant is awarded, should we get it, in June, you can start making those purchases. We will be in a good position to be able

to actually spend the money and then be reimbursed like everything else we do. Kevin said that he believed that would be a mitigating factor to some of these institutions that are wanting to apply for the grants because it's a pass-through grant. They're going to need to have 2 million dollars of liquid cash available, there are schools that need just even for covenants of their bond covenants they may not be able to spend that money to get below those bond covenants because that would be a breach. The hope is that they would spend the money and get reimbursed right away. Shannon said that they have been working with CC Bank to give lines of credit for all of the grantees. Another piece of that is that grantees will receive targeted training with scholar to increase enrollment like marketing and enrollment and all of those things eight sessions ten hours so that's another package to ensure that all of our aware winners have additional supports to make sure they start strong. We wouldn't qualify for the incubator because as we mentioned we wouldn't be hiring new administration, but we could be a site school. Kevin wanted to clarify the timing of the grant. It's 18 months then an additional 24. It's important to use the money before the school year starts, once school starts it becomes restricted funds instead of just unrestricted. It will be a time consuming grant that provides many opportunities. The department of education postponed the next 2 webinars. You won't need to attend any more of the webinars if you aren't going to apply this year.

Sponsorships: Shelbi clarified that her role is to make money for the PTO. Any of the ideas about how to make money should go through the PTO. Shannon said that the fall of 2026 spring of 2027 would be the right time to bring up donations and get the parents charged up for donating.

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 February 27, 2025 at 7:30 p.m.

Adjournment: Kevin made a motion to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 9:12