

GGA Board of Directors Meeting July 27, 2020

Attendees

Karen Venable-Croft
Jason Mellen
Paige Fryer
Shayne Swift

Shalini Benson
Beth Blaufuss
Kevin Bryant
Maureen Colburn
Maura Dunn
Scott Ganske
Elaine Harris
Max Levasseur
Christine Miller
Mary Pendleton
Donna Tymus

Absent: Marilyn Edwards

Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order by Max

Presentation by Karen

This was the first agenda item. Key items of discussion were the teacher orientation, opening plans, and next steps. Some highlights are included below.

Teacher orientation is 3 weeks

Shayne is facilitating
We have an outstanding group of teachers

Concerns of parents are being identified and addressed:

In-person

- Wearing masks for too long
- What if Covid gets worse
- Social distancing is hard to enforce
- Students won't or don't wash their hands properly
- Potential capacity issues
- Lack of PPE or cleaning
- Safety of family

Virtual

- Learning is challenging
- Special education services might be different
- Supervision at home

Opening has been altered to accommodate concerns and follow health guidelines. The plan is to move from starting virtually to on-campus instruction.

Schedule

Hours are 8:15 AM- 3:30 PM- Wednesday is early departure day 8:15 AM- 1 PM.

Student Orientation: Week of August 24th

Virtual learning: Ends October 2nd

Hybrid schedule: October 5- November 30, Tuesdays and Thursdays on campus

School out of session: December 1 to the start of the 2nd trimester; thorough cleaning will be done during this period

Building relationships

Culture Goal: GGA will create a climate fostering belonging and building relationships

Building community starts before the first day of school with Sisterhood Chats and Summer Enrichment (options- digital exchange, reading, sign language; 50% will take place in these activities)

There will be student support services and 5 equally split student cohorts- least restrictive arrangement- advisory, service learning day

Virtual culture features

- Advisory (build relationships, social emotional skills)
- Community meetings (Wednesdays- entire community across cohorts- every student and teacher will have a chance to work together)
- There's a Wellness specialist
- LEADership Academy
- "Office Hours"
- Building social emotional strength

Wellness for teachers is also being addressed. Teachers have planning time during the day and informal learning

On campus- students will stay in place

5 cohorts, 10 students, 6 feet apart, same desk, teachers rotate

Health & Safety

No visitors allowed. All will be asked about symptoms, exposure and will have temperature checks. No temps over 104 degrees.

Training will be provided on how to ride public transportation safely.

Families have a choice and can opt out of on-campus instruction

How to Prevent Burnout with Virtual Learning

- *Synchronous instruction for 50 minutes, take breaks, yoga stretches*
- *Wellness specialist will support the whole school*
- *Brain breaks during synchronous sessions*

Resources

Access to meals, food distribution will be provided

Will provide a backpack program- food provided for when not at school in hybrid model

Genuine Foods is the designated vendor; they are working with other charters district wide.

At the conclusion of Karen's presentation, Paige, Shayne, and Jason left the call.

June Meeting Minutes Approved

June meeting minutes were reviewed. After a minor change recommended by Maureen, Shalini made a motion to approve them. Maureen seconded the motion. They were unanimously approved.

Meeting Schedule

Board is meeting in August vs skipping it given recruiting and other things we want to monitor

4th Mondays of the month

- August 24th
- September 28th
- October- board retreat- 17th or 24th- (this will replace the October meeting)

Calendar invites will go out.

Committee Planning

Each committee should define its overarching goals and how that translates into activities

Max encouraged all the committees to think about their goals. At a later time, will share what the Development Committee has done.

Banking Signatures

Eagle Bank has a process to record signatories- officer transitions resulted in changing seats. Have to formally document those changes in the board.

Eagle Bank needs to see the officer change.

Max motioned to approve signatory changes that need to be recorded with Eagle Bank resulting from the change in offices on the GGA Board. Beth Blaufuss to be taken off as a signatory and Maura Dunn added. Karen Venable-Croft, Jason Mellon and Max Lévasseur should remain on record as signatories for the account. Beth seconded the motion.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Standing Committee Chairs

Christine led this discussion

The governance meeting- discussed scheduling of the retreat- rules of the committees, gaps, summarized into bullet points. Voted on a few committee members. This is the recommended slate for standing committees:

- Maura Dunn to head Finance Committee
- Shalini Benson to head the Risk Committee
- Mary Pendleton to head the Academic Committee
- Christine Miller to continue heading the Governance Committee
- (Originally Maura's role was for a month. Now proposing that this role will be ongoing.)

Applications for these roles were sent to the board

Christine recommended that the board vote on everyone as a slate- everyone that has been nominated.

Christine then motioned that the slate be approved. Maura seconded the motion.

Slate of standing committee chairs was unanimously approved.

In October we should be at full capacity. Other positions do not require a vote.

Risk Update

Made by Shalini- Focused on highest probability risks

Majority have been seen before

Mary led Academic Committee entry

Loss of students is a risk

Training for teachers- guidance from DC Health and OSSE

Learning can be draining

Plan to meet families early on- reassure parents around high quality experience

Professional development must be strong

Planning for at home learning

Building trusting relationships- making sure that's part of the foundation

Track and close

Attendance and re-enrollment; cancelled the PARC measures

Hired an operations associate- will hand out all of the devices

Ordered a device for every student; they have to come pick up the device

For everyone to access the classes and courses, they need to have a device

Karen said devices will arrive the week of August 17th plus mobile hotspots. We started early and are in better shape than many schools in terms of securing the equipment before school starts.

Facilities

Discussion was led by Max.

A lease was signed in early Feb after weeks of negotiations. Core elements were hashed out and there were a few components left.

Since then Calvary and GGA have amicably worked through agreements on parking spaces and office spaces, certificate of occupancy, development plans, and shared space.

The landlord has been inflexible in wanting a deposit account control agreement to secure their financial interest. Calvary wants absolute certainty that they will get paid and are asking for complete control of GGA funds to secure that interest. GGA has been trying to meet Calvary's needs without turning over control. Outstanding elements- getting Calvary paid, paying rent, and using funds for operations.

Money has been set aside for rent reserve of \$150K. Got \$450K credit enhancement from OSSE. Calvary received a special guarantee letter. They want to be first lien on all money from the city. They are asking for things beyond what anyone would ever want or expect. The GGA team and lawyers have tried to communicate that what they are asking for is beyond the normal. (Christine)

Eagle Bank can't meet Calvary's requirement. City First, recommended by title companies, presented an alternate proposal. Would need to transfer the GGA operating account to them and set up a deposit account. Escrow agent at City First would be the objective 3rd party. Calvary would get their money in the first sweep, then the remaining money would go into an operating account. This would not raise eyebrows with OSSE and meet Calvary's concern. The objective 3rd party can act only with approval of both parties and can only be modified if both parties agree.

Time lag between deposit and sweep over should be one day. Any delays would set up a cascade of problems that would exacerbate the situation. In this kind of structure we don't get the money directly.

Finance and facilities committee recommend that negotiation with Calvary be done with these options in order of priority:

- City First proposal is first choice- long term home in our chosen ward.
- If Calvary rejects it, then offer the 1 year lease option
- 3rd choice would be another location

Max proposed Motion 1:

- 1. Approve the account control agreement proposed by City First Bank as currently described in essence for the purpose of completing the leasing arrangement with Calvary Church for the site of GGA and accept the potential future operational and financial risks involved.**

Maureen seconded the motion.

The motion was approved with 9 in favor, 2 opposed (Donna and Maura), and no abstentions.

Max proposed Motion 2 should Calvary not accept the first proposal:

Grant the Executive Director of GGA with support of the Facility Committee (“the GGA Team”) the authority to continue to negotiate on behalf of GGA with Calvary Church for the purpose of completing the remaining aspects of the pending leasing arrangement. The GGA Team will bring back any resulting binding contract(s) to the Board for review and approval before finalizing.

Maura seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.
Goal is to meet with them tomorrow so they need to respond.

Budget

Maura presented the budget and reviewed the budget decisions.
The budget was approved in June but it was revisited and a detailed recruiting plan was prepared.

The recruiting numbers changed which effects the total revenue. The target is 77.
The target for private donations was adjusted to \$30K after discussion with the Development Committee

The Rev 1 budget doesn't include the use of the rent reserve or the enhanced credit facility, but does include federal grants and donations which have been secured

The recruitment plan has been at the core of the plan and potential attrition has been considered.

Maura made a motion that the Board approve the Rev 1 budget as presented based on projected enrollment of 77 students and agreed development targets.

Max seconded the motion.
The budget was unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned.

GGA Board of Directors Meeting August 31, 2020

Attendees

Karen Venable-Croft

Shalini Benson

Beth Blaufuss

Kevin Bryant

Maureen Colburn

Maura Dunn

Marilyn Edwards

Scott Ganske

Elaine Harris

Max Levasseur

Christine Miller

Mary Pendleton

Donna Tymus

Meeting Called to Order

Max called the meeting to order

A quorum was declared.

Vote on New Member- Christine

After everyone shared 5 words describing the past 5 months, Christine presented background on new member candidate, Catalina Talero.

Christine, Maura and Beth participated in the interview process and were consistent in their enthusiastic recommendation that Catalina become a GGA board member. It was noted that she lives in DC.

Christine made a motion to accept Catalina Talero as our final GGA board member.

Maura seconded the motion.

The motion was unanimously accepted and Catalina joined the remainder of the meeting.

Housekeeping- Minutes- Max

A correction was made per Maura

Maura made a motion to accept minutes from the July meeting with changes made from Finance.

Kevin seconded the motion.

The motion was unanimously approved.

OMA- Max, Christine

The Open Meetings Act will be in effect October 1

Our calendar will need to be posted.

There are no changes to the meeting schedule, which will continue to be the 4th Monday of the month. August was different because of the opening of GGA. The next meeting is September 28th and the retreat on October 24th will replace the October meeting.

Christine: OMA is part of some of the work she did last year. She characterized it as a positive-great opportunity to build connections through outward facing opportunities to engage families and students. It provides a direct line of communication. Will help build community and

sisterhood plus enhance our effectiveness as a board. Creates less opportunity for FOIA requests as people can look for themselves.

Transparency is important. The DC Charter Alliance and EdBoard Partners have been doing training on how charters are impacted.

Max recommended that a subcommittee led by Governance (Christine) plus the Board Secretary meet to synthesize OMA requirements and recommend meeting best practices, including how the technology will work.

GGA Opening- Karen

Karen reported that GGA opened with 65 students. Three weren't present.

"The first day and first week were phenomenal."

They did a big welcome recognizing the students- were dismissing them when they encountered a national Zoom connectivity issue. They enacted plan B quickly keeping students and teachers calm. No frustration. Patient.

They also encountered people trying to disrupt the learning environment, which they successfully addressed.

The entire week was spent building community and a sense of belonging. Students understand the specialness of GGA. Conversations and discussions were remarkable- talking about things that matter to them- global warming, Covid-19, goals and aspirations. Anything is possible. A lot of emails were received expressing appreciation for the courage to do GGA and for girls to have this option.

Risk Committee- Shalini

Shalini reported that we're doing an audit now to make sure we're set up for next year. \$3000 was budgeted but the cost is \$18,000.

She is working on risk mitigation across GGA, providing support to Karen and Shane. . Another word for risk is opportunity.

High impact is classified as having an impact in the current year. Low impact is not actively threatening. If risk is done/over, it's marked as closed. The board may rate differently than administration.

Finance- Maura

Quarterly updates recommended. Accrual is slow so quarterly is the best way to go.

GGA is ahead of projections- received more than expected and spent less than expected (secured PPP loan and later starts for staff). Net income- \$416,000. Looking forward to the audit as an opportunity to optimally set structure and avoid ingrained poor best practices.

Board Software- Maura

Critical functionality included:

- Meeting minutes
- Retention schedule
- Agenda management
- Minutes management
- Committee support
- Strategic planning and goal setting
- Actions by month and by quarter

- Tracking
- Calendars
- Recording votes

Looked at two options- Board on Track and Board Effect. Board on Track is favored. Let us know if anyone has used either system- would like to get info on experience

Maura will send list to Governance. Needs will impact software selection.

Recruiting Update

- Mailer went out to 41K households
- 100 lawn signs are on family lawns
- Flyers were posted on grocery store boards
- Social media was deployed with a focus on wards 7 and 8
- Aisha called 227 families in the past couple of weeks (August). Some did not respond. Most declined. Some were still waiting to hear from other schools.
- Was hoping to generate 6 applications. Still contacting.
- One of the no's is now putting in an application
- There were 17 inquiries and 10 applicants in August.
- Seven are in the pipeline for enrollment
- Digital marketing contacts- not all have been contacted. MySchoolDC Lottery is where GGA has its profile. Some conversion is possible.
- Retention is also important. Independent school scholarship came through for one and lost a couple more to a local school.
- Will go up to count day- October 5th.
- Wellness calls matter.

We want to get as close to 90 as possible (77). There was a misunderstanding in MySchoolDC on the matches. Several families thought we didn't choose them vs. them not matching. By the time this was discovered, they already had chosen other schools. The lesson learned is to call every family whether they match or not. Maura suggested giving feedback to MySchoolDC.

68 is the total including those in the pipeline. 61 is the worst case scenario.

21 are in MySchoolDC- will see who has post lottery availability.

There's ebb and flow and no historical data. Continuing to find families. Keeping engaged. Parents want to keep siblings together.

Independent schools and application schools tend to be the first choice and we're second behind that.

Karen's review- Beth, Max

Karen left the meeting and the recording was stopped so that Karen's evaluation could be discussed.

Her appraisal is confidential.

The process was reviewed. Both the appraisal letter and reappointment letter will be sent to Karen. She will receive a bonus and a raise.

Facilities

Documents are being signed. GGA will be at Calvary.

Beth moved for the meeting to be adjourned. Kevin seconded the motion.

