

Granite State Arts Academy

Charter School Application

Submitted by:

The Friends of Granite State Arts Academy

Original Submission Date: February 9, 2012

Revised: August 7, 2013

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Table of Contents

a.	Educational mission	3
b.	Governance and organizational structure and plan	3
c.	Methods by which trustees and their terms are determined	4
d.	General description and location of facilities	5
e.	Pupil demographics	6
f. & g.	Curriculum and academic goals	6-7
h.	Achievement and assessments	12
i.	High school graduation requirements	13
j.	Staffing overview	13
k.	Personnel compensation plans	14
l.	Pupil transportation plan	14
m.	Statement of assurances related to non-discrimination	15
n.	Special Education coordination method	15
o.	Admission procedures	16
p.	Philosophy of pupil governance and discipline	17
q.	Administering fiscal accounts and reporting	18
r.	Annual budget, including all sources of funding	18
s.	School calendar arrangement	19
t.	Evidence of adequate insurance coverage	19
u.	Consultants and friends of the charter	19
v.	Philosophy of parent involvement	19
w.	Information dissemination	20
x.	A global hold-harmless clause	20
y.	Severability provisions and statement of assurance	21
z.	Provision for dissolution of the charter	21
aa.	Information related to conversion of a public school	21
bb.	Cessation of the school	21
cc.	Proposed contract with local schools	22
dd.	Proposed accountability plan	22
	Appendix A: Founding parent biographies	23
	Appendix B: Proposed Budget	28
	Appendix C: Draft Bylaws of the Board of Trustees	28
	Appendix D: School Day Schedule	30
	Appendix E: Letters of Support/ Community Survey Feedback	31

(a) Educational mission

Granite State Arts Academy (hereafter referred to as “GSAA,” or “the School”) nurtures creative thinkers, active citizens, and independent learners with a curriculum that integrates the arts and academics.

Our Vision is a high school that is dedicated to the arts. It will appeal to a broad cross section of students who are looking to discover the joy and transformational power of the arts and those interested in pursuing the arts in a professional setting. Our academic courses will strive to instill a sincere lifelong desire to learn.

Students will explore real world problems, simultaneously developing cross-curriculum skills while working in small collaborative groups. During their time at GSAA students will attend art classes each day and will study at least two of the following studies: Dance, Music, Theater, and Visual Arts. This will allow for personalized learning, creating conditions where students’ talents can flourish. This positive approach to educating will empower students to dream and create everyday.

(b) Governance and organizational structure and plan

A Board of Trustees (referred to as “the Board”) will govern the School. The Board will establish governing policies, and will hire initial administrative staff that will oversee the School’s growth plan. The Board will also establish and oversee standing committees and sub-committees including but not limited to the following: Building and Maintenance, Curriculum, Finance, Fund Raising, Governance, Marketing/Community Relations, and Personnel.

The Board has a statutory responsibility to report progress and achievement of the School’s stated goals to the State Department of Education. The Board will meet once a month, and encourage parent involvement both at GSAA meetings and through parent/teacher communications.

See Appendix A for biographical descriptions of founding Board members.

(c) Methods by which Trustees and their terms are determined

The initial Board will be drawn from and appointed by the Friends of Granite State Arts Academy. A formal transition and induction will take place before the school begins to operate.

The Board will consist of a minimum of nine members and a maximum of fifteen that will include the following:

- 2-3 members drawn from the school administration or professional educators
- 2-3 parents of former, current or anticipated students of the school
- 2-3 members drawn from the professional arts community
- 1-3 members from the business community
- 2-3 members from the college or university community

Terms of Trustees will be staggered, five-year terms. Approximately one half of the initial Trustees will be appointed for two, three, or four-year terms to initiate staggered terms to foster governance stability. Terms can be renewed by nomination and majority vote of the Board.

The Board may appoint a Trustee to fill a vacancy to complete a term according to established term timelines.

The Board, once operating, will select and appoint future Trustees, define future board terms, and establish policies for board governance and filling vacancies.

Board members are expected to attend meetings regularly, and will be subject to replacement if absences reach 50% or more of meetings in a six month period.

For purposes of conducting business, the Board will follow New Hampshire Right to Know Law, RSA 91-A. For purposes of lawful meetings, a quorum is defined as a majority of Trustees physically present or participating through video or voice communication systems. Records and minutes of meetings will be kept in accordance with statutory guidelines.

(d) General description and proposed or potential location of facilities to be used, if such information is available

It is our hope to locate an existing building within the district that is appropriate for the school and would suit our arts needs. We have sourced possible locations and hope to be located at 14 Rt. 111 in Derry.

The board has toured several properties. Our recent decision to locate the school in the Derry/Salem area led us to tour a building in the Brookstone Properties on Rte. 111. This 12,500 square foot building is perfectly suited to our needs and while it is located in Derry, it sits at the junction of three towns: Salem, Derry and Atkinson. These towns are currently not sufficiently served by a charter which makes the location is very promising.

A probable layout of the space might look like the following:

- 8-10 classrooms
- 2 art rooms (1 for sculpture, 1 for printmaking/ painting/ sketching)
- 1 dance studio
- 4 small music rehearsal rooms
- 1 large music performance / chorus room
- 1 recording studio
- 1 theater black box with ample seating (also to be used as the cafeteria*)
- Guidance office
- Administration offices
- Nurse's office
- Quiet space / SPED space
- Receptionist area

The black box theater space would double as a small cafeteria to serve students in shifts with food being prepared by agreement with the function facility located on the property.

Outdoor activities would meet the school P.E requirement. The area around the building is very open and would allow for snowshoeing, basketball, flag football, volleyball, jogging, etc. In addition the facility has a golf course and driving range that we hope to contract to use, as well as a large pond that could lend itself to ice-skating.

(e) Maximum number, grade or age levels, and as applicable, other information about pupils to be served

GSAA will serve grades 9-12 with a maximum number of 40 pupils per grade. The School proposes to open with grades 9 through 12. To accommodate this, GSAA will offer an extended orientation period. We will utilize staff and parental volunteers to assist in the opening to assure a smoother opening day.

(f) Curriculum

GSAA will operate on a two-semester system. Students will work individually and in cooperative groups on culminating projects that are showcased at the end of each semester. Students will work on a block schedule and shall be exposed to core academic classes that meet state mandates during a four-hour period and a two and half -hour intensive study of the arts. The faculty will preferably have a background in at least one of the arts as well as degrees in education. The staff will teach in both the morning and the afternoon sessions. The school will foster this marriage by integrating academics and arts. In this way, teachers will be better able to tie culminating art projects into cross-disciplinary academics.

Academic classes are broken into three categories: Humanities (Language Arts and Social Studies), Sciences (Math and Science) and Enrichment (Health/Safety, Physical Education, Foreign Language).

Students will be exposed to a minimum of two of the four (Dance, Theater, Music, Visual Arts) art disciplines during their time at GSAA. The school year is divided into two semesters. Each semester students will dedicate their time focusing on one of the four arts. Each student's culminating project will be showcased at the completion of a semester. This will be a regular school-wide event.

Upon graduation, students will have developed and presented a portfolio of their accomplishments. The curriculum of GSAA supports problem-solving through creative expression.

Honors: Each graduating class will have two course tracks. The 01 course track requires more coursework and provides the students with the opportunity for taking a course with honors. Taking a course at the honors level requires that a student be able to think, write, and discuss critically, complete all required assignments on-time, actively

participate in class discussions, read and comprehend above grade level, complete a variety of analytical, expository, and creative writings, and work independently.

Advanced Placement Courses: GSAA will offer Juniors and Seniors Advanced Placement courses designed to prepare students to take Advanced Placement exams each Spring. These courses will be rigorous, covering more challenging material. Students that successfully complete AP courses will be prepared for, and are strongly encouraged to sit for the Advanced Placement exams. These exams are administered by the College Board Organization and will be offered for a fee. A qualifying score on AP exams may result in a college credit.

(g) Academic and other learning goals and objectives

The School is set up to provide an arts-integrated curriculum. There will be a strong focus on skill development and real-world application. Expectations for students will be clearly defined by educators through the use of specific performance-based rubrics. The school will employ project-based learning and portfolio-based assessments. Problem-solving through creative expression is a primary goal of the School.

Community involvement and charitable work will be integrated throughout the culture of the School. Students will be expected to develop critical thinking skills by volunteering and contributing in meaningful ways to organizations and causes beyond GSAA. A foundation of continual civic engagement will be a key component in the culture of the School.

The GSAA curriculum will be designed to develop knowledge and skills in reading, writing, and critical thinking through the study of the language arts, sciences, mathematics, foreign language, technology, and health. Aside from these traditional academic pursuits, students at GSAA will study one of the four arts in each quarter. Upon graduating from the School, students need to have spent at least half of the eight semesters on one art of focus, while exploring a minimum of two arts total.

Guidance counseling will be offered to assist in the selection and pursuit of these schools including financial aid advice.

Overview of the Academic Program for Core Classes:

LANGUAGE ARTS: Reading, Writing, and Literature

Goals:

- Acquisition of fluent word reading and comprehension skills.
- Acquisition of an extensive and advanced vocabulary
- Acquisition of spelling, creative and expository writing skills
- Acquisition of speaking skills and expression
- Students will demonstrate mastery of selected concepts, vocabulary, and skills of each unit in order to pass on to the next year of study.

Students will have ample opportunity to practice and reinforce writing skills to develop style and creativity through prose, poetry, composition, and essay. Students will be exposed to a rich array of quality literature, and develop skills to comprehend and interpret prose and poetry of different genres.

Course Outline

9-01: Freshman Language Arts

9-02: Freshman Language Arts

10-01: Sophomore Language Arts

10-02: Sophomore Language Arts

11-01: Advanced Placement Literature

11-02: Creative Writing

12-01: Advanced Placement English Language & Composition

12-02: Exploring Non-fiction Writing

*Honor option available on all 01 courses and required for AP courses

MATHEMATICS: Pre-Algebra, Algebra, Geometry, Pre-calculus, and Calculus

Goals:

- Acquisition of fluency with math facts
- Acquisition of math reasoning and estimation skills
- Application of math skills to real life scenarios
- Acquisition of new concepts representing challenging international standards
- Students will demonstrate mastery of selected concepts, vocabulary, and skills of each unit in order to pass on to the next year of study.

Students will master new mathematical skills and concepts and the application of those concepts in real world scenarios. Math instruction will involve whole class and small-group presentations addressing ability and strengths at all levels.

GSAA's math program will follow standards produced by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics and the NH Curriculum Frameworks.

Course Outline

9-01: Algebra

9-02: Pre-Algebra

10-01: Geometry

10-02: Algebra

11-01: Pre-Calculus

11-02: Geometry

12-01: Advanced Placement Calculus

12-02: Pre-calculus

*Honor option available on all 01 courses and required for AP courses

SCIENCE: Physical, Biology, Chemistry, and Physics

Goals:

- Acquisition of science concepts in a broad array of science areas
- Understanding of science in our lives and surroundings
- Students will demonstrate mastery of selected concepts, vocabulary, and skills of each unit in order to pass on to the next year of study.

The science curriculum will follow the general guidelines with an emphasis on experiential learning and the scientific process. Scientific methods and process skills will be the basis of hands-on experiences in lab and field activities. Topics will be examined using real-life practical applications, to encourage connection and understanding of our world, with increasing sophistication each year or each grade level.

Course Outline:

9-01: Physical Science

9-02: Physical Science

10-01: Biology

10-02: Biology

11-01: AP Chemistry*

11-02: Chemistry

12-01: AP Physics*

12-02: Physics

*Honor option available on all 01 courses and required for AP courses

SOCIAL SCIENCES: Cultural Studies, History, Geography, and Selected Electives

Goals:

- Gain understanding of the world in a geographical sense
- Gain understanding of cultures/civilizations, past and present
- Students will demonstrate mastery of selected concepts, vocabulary, and skills of each unit in order to pass on to the next year of study

Students will explore topics in history and geography, gaining an understanding of their diverse physical and cultural world. The curriculum of Social Sciences will be supported by independent and cooperative projects that foster critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Methods of proper research with an emphasis on reading and writing through persuasive essays will be at the core of Social Science learning. There will also be an emphasis placed on current events and their relationship with events throughout history.

Course Outline:

9-01: Global Studies

9-02: Global Studies

10-01: Current World Issues

10-02: Current World Issues

11-01: AP US History

11-02: US History

12-01: AP US Government

12-02: Cultural Studies and Anthropology

*Honor option available on all 01 courses and required for AP courses

FOREIGN LANGUAGE: Students will be offered courses through the Virtual Learning Academy in Spanish, French and Latin.

Goals:

- Acquisition of introductory through advanced level conversational skills
- Exposure to and better understanding of culture and countries where the target language is spoken

- Students will demonstrate mastery of selected concepts, vocabulary, and skills of each unit in order to pass on to the next year of study.

The School's curriculum will institute an alternative, independent study with a world language teacher as a guide. Students will practice conversational skills in the language of focus, developing facility with vocabulary words and phrases. Students will be introduced to cultural awareness and sequentially more complex vocabulary and grammar skills. This type of study has proven to be highly effective at other area charter schools, for example, Great Bay e-learning charter school in Exeter, NH.

TECHNOLOGY: To be integrated throughout the complete curriculum

- Understanding of effective Internet research practices (utilizing SEO and tag words), demonstration of an ability to discern reliable information.
- Demonstration of mastery of selected concepts, vocabulary, and skills of each unit in order to pass on to the next year of study.
- Ability to design a blog, website. Facebook safety, how to deal with cyber bullies, how to be a good social media friend, etc.

Students will be introduced to various forms of multimedia software and equipment.

HEALTH/FITNESS: Physical Education, Wellness, and Selected Electives

Goals:

- Exposure to varied health and fitness topics
- Students will demonstrate mastery of selected concepts and skills of each unit in order to pass on to the next year of study.

THE ARTS:

Dance: The Dance department will offer classical ballet, contemporary hip hop, jazz etc. Classes will teach technique, characterization, versatility, dedication, poise and grace, the emotional connection, professionalism, accepting criticism, being fit and strong and maintaining a healthy attitude in mind and body.

Music: The Music department will be focused on a contemporary approach that will resonate with the students. This will include courses in Audio Recording, Contemporary Theory, Songwriting, Arranging, Live Sound and Stage Performance. This combines the art of music with the technology in use today such as

software use in the audio recording and composition and stage technology for performance.

Theater: The Theater department will offer instruction in lighting (utilizing mathematical formulas to support the use of various lights), sound (utilizing modern technology), movement, blocking, script writing (utilizing writing skills learned), classical and modern plays (literature), and will incorporate a student driven production in the Junior and Senior year (creative thinking). Upper classmen will assist with lower classmen productions.

Visual Arts: The Visual Arts department will offer a variety of instruction including sculpture, sketching, painting in all mediums, and printmaking. Ceramics will be added in the future. Field trips to area museums will allow for a discussion in modern and classical artists. Field trips to visually interesting spaces (whether an estuary or a crumbling building) will be a part of the sketch segment. Workshops with visiting artists to be an important part of the learning experience.

(h) Achievement tests /assessment to be used to measure pupil academic and other goal achievement including, but not limited to, objective and age-appropriate measures of literacy and numeracy skills, including spelling, reading, expository writing, history, geography, science, and mathematics

1.) GSAA students will be assessed in each of the core academic skill areas by a combination of ongoing curriculum-related assessments, including annual and longitudinal portfolios, and standardized tests, including the New England Common Assessment Program, Smarter Balance.

2.) For all content areas, each student will keep a portfolio of their work, which will be used to discuss and review what has been covered and learned during the school year. Each piece of work in a student's portfolio will be presented as evidence of growth toward mastery of a specific achievement benchmark reported in quarterly progress reports.

3.) A Personal Learning Plan (PLP) will be incorporated as teachers see fit. For example: In Language Arts students may opt to select their own choice of literature or author to study in depth; in Social Studies, their own current event to investigate, and research,

and report on; in Science their own advanced area of study to hypothesize on and investigate. Progress on goals in their PLP will be reported in quarterly progress reports.

(i) For schools offering high school grade levels, graduation requirements sufficient to ensure that the school has provided an adequate education for its pupils

In accordance with SAU 10 graduation requirements, students must earn 80 credits in order to graduate.

This includes the minimum of:

- **Health** (Fitness, Hygiene/Safety, Nutrition): 6 Credits
- **Humanities** (Economics, Geography, Government, History, Language Arts, World Languages): 28 credits
- **Sciences** (Biology, Chemistry, Math, Physics): 20 credits
- **Arts** (Dance, Music, Theater, Visual Arts): GSAA will require students to participate in two classes of art each day per quarter — earning 6 credits per quarter, these classes will be in the same area of art, per quarter. For example, students in Visual Arts will participate in drawing or students in Dance will take ballet and hip hop, etc. Two classes daily will be the standard. The student will earn three credits per class, thus six credits per quarter.

Prior to graduation, students will present a final portfolio of their accomplishments in their chosen area of arts focus. This will be done at the end of the last quarter of their last year.

(j) Staffing overview, including qualifications sought for professionals and paraprofessionals

The School will employ one full-time teacher in each core curriculum classroom. There will be one full-time art teacher per course. Assistant services for both core curriculum and art classes will be provided by interns from local colleges, volunteers, or teachers in training.

No less than 50% of teachers employed by the school will have New Hampshire teaching certificates as required by New Hampshire Charter School statute. Because of our

rigorous curriculum, the School anticipates hiring highly qualified teachers with significant experience, education in the arts, and strong liberal arts backgrounds. In addition, we will seek adults who have prior experience working with adolescents, and are strong ethical role models.

Teaching assistants/volunteers will meet certain criteria. They will be very supportive with adolescents, will serve as strong ethical role models, and will embody curiosity and enthusiasm for learning. Our goal is to retain teaching assistants who are working toward becoming classroom teachers, and who have significant interest in continuing in arts education.

(k) Personnel compensation plan including provisions for leaves and other benefits, if any

Teaching Staff will work 185 days, following the local SAU calendar. There will be an allowance for fifteen sick days, and five personal days, all paid. There will be a “sick bank” which allows teachers to donate days to others so they can take the benefit if necessary.

The Teaching Staff and Educational Staff will work on an annual contractual plan, with options for pay with twenty-two pay periods or twenty-six pay periods as desired.

Personal health insurance will be provided on an 80/20 plan, with options to add family members at the staff member’s expense. Dental plans will be included. Exact plan will be determined.

Administration will work year round, with paid vacations.

(l) Pupil transportation plan, including reasonable provision from the charter school's own resources for transportation of pupils residing outside the district in which the charter school is physically located

The School will be located along bus routes that will accommodate transportation of some students. As the school is expected to be located in Derry, it sits at the junction of three towns: Derry, Atkinson and Salem. Centralized drop off and pick up spots will be designated in the towns to simplify transport and in conversation with the company it

was stated that the extended day will actually allow for easier scheduling. It is anticipated that three buses will be needed.

Out-of-district students would have to source their own transportation via carpool / ride share etc.

(m) Statement of assurances related to nondiscrimination according to relevant state and federal laws

Granite State Arts Academy celebrates differences in its students, staff, and community. The school will not discriminate in offering access to its educational programs and activities or with respect to employment terms and conditions on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. This policy is consistent with state and federal laws.

(n) Method of coordinating with a pupil's local education agency (LEA) responsible for matters pertaining to any required special education programs or services including method of compliance with all federal and state laws pertaining to educationally disabled pupils

The Granite State Arts Academy will comply with all federal and state special education laws and rules applicable to a New Hampshire charter school setting.

Charter Public Schools and Special Education:

Under New Hampshire's charter school statute, RSA 194-B: 11, III, the local school district continues to be responsible for special education decision-making for any identified student who seeks attendance at a charter school. Decision making for special education services needed and student placement stays with the local school district. In an individualized program with tutorial support, students otherwise requiring special education may be more independent of special education services.

(o) **Admission procedures**

GSAA will actively recruit a diverse population of students who understand and value the School's mission. Admission shall be open to any resident in the state of New Hampshire. In order to ensure that students support the School's mission, the following procedure has been outlined:

- 1.) **Committee.** A Recruitment and Admissions Committee, appointed by the Board, will establish admission procedures and will direct recruitment of the students.
- 2.) **Application Packet.** The School will provide an application packet that will detail information about the School's instructional philosophy, and outline a summary of the School's student-related policies.
- 3.) **Informational Meetings.** The School will hold Town Hall-style information meetings where prospective students, parents, and guardians can gain valuable information about GSAA and ask questions.
- 4.) **Submit Application.** The application packet must be completed and submitted to the chair of the Recruitment Committee. The School is looking for a committed desire to learn. Applications will be filed in numerical order as they are submitted. When/if the 10% limitation of the school districts' applications are met, the remaining applicants from that district will be filed as lottery selection.
- 5.) **Application Review.** Recruitment Committee will review applications for completeness.
- 6.) **Notification.** Recruitment Committee will notify candidate of status and information about openings, special education as needed, and lottery.
- 7.) **Lottery.** In the event that there are more applicants than spaces available, a lottery will be conducted. Remaining students shall be placed on a waiting list.
- 8.) **Orientation.** Admitted students and parents/guardians will confirm interest, and the School will hold group orientations to ensure an understanding of mission, goals, objectives, expectations in citizenship, leadership, and community involvement, and to answer questions.
- 9.) **Re-enrollment.** Students who are admitted to the School are automatically re-enrolled for the following year, provided they are in good standing at the School. A letter of intent to return will be required from GSAA families prior to the end of the school year. Any open spaces will be filled by consulting the waiting list.

(p) Philosophy of pupil governance and discipline, and age-appropriate due process procedures to be used for disciplinary matters including suspension and expulsion

The School places significant value on respect and integrity in the school community; as such, GSAA's community conduct policies will reflect these two principles. The expectations outlined in the School's conduct policies are meant to foster a positive and productive learning environment.

- 1.) All community members will be expected to show respect for School rules, and those designated to administer them.
- 2.) All community members will be expected to show respect for the rights of others. Further, those members shall be expected to display cooperative citizenship.
- 3.) Community members are expected to show respect for School and personal property. Pride in one's work and exemplary personal standards of honesty, decency, courtesy, and wholesome attitudes are also assumed in every community member.
- 4.) Respect for individual worth is the obligation of the School community. Diligence and a desire to benefit from the opportunity provided by the School is the obligation of the student.

School conduct policies and disciplinary procedures will be explicated in GSAA's parent/student handbook. A contract between School families and staff that outlines community expectations will be signed yearly. Ongoing disrespect and disruption of learning will not be tolerated; interventions may include verbal and/or written warnings, parental contact, conferences with staff/administration, peer mediation, written and/or verbal reflection, loss of privileges, and restitution. Although the School's disciplinary policies are designed to teach acceptable behavior, there may be extreme circumstances that warrant punitive measures such as detention, and in-school suspension with Guidance Counselor meetings to find the source of the problem. If a student poses a danger to others, expulsion may become necessary.

It is understood that the School's trustees and administration will establish detailed code of conduct policies. It is also expected that each classroom will create and implement additional norms as needed.

The School will set suspension and expulsion procedures in accordance with state and federal laws.

(q) Method of administering fiscal accounts and reporting, including a provision requiring fiscal audits and reports to be performed by an independent certified public accountant

The School will follow New Hampshire public school accounting guidelines and will put in place internal accounting controls necessary to safeguard its assets. An annual financial report will be provided with an audit by an independent, certified public accountant.

The Board will appoint a Treasurer and an Assistant Treasurer to provide necessary monitoring of financial management, including conflict of interest for Board members and faculty. There shall be two signatures required for each check written to ensure integrity within the management of funds. A discretionary fund shall be established, and the School's assigned program coordinator and the Treasurer will have check writing authority for this account. The Board will establish the maximum cap for discretionary expenditures.

Each individual with check writing authority will be covered by a fidelity bond in accordance with guidelines of New Hampshire Department of Revenue Administration.

Granite State Arts Academy will comply with all requirements specified in the law pertaining to reporting requirements (RSA 194-B: 101-V). This list includes: annual report, annual financial audit and report, program audit, and participation during the annual school budget process.

The Board will form an audit committee each fiscal year to oversee selection of the independent auditor and the completion of the annual audit of the School's internal controls. The audit will be conducted in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles applicable to the School.

(r) Annual budget, including all sources of funding

See Appendix B

(s) School calendar arrangement and the number and duration of days pupils are to be served pursuant to RSA 194-B:8, III

In accordance with RSA 194-B:8, the School will follow a 180-day school calendar. It is intended to follow the 180-day school calendar of SAU16 to best coordinate transportation services. Scheduling is anticipated to include a four-hour period in the morning for core academics with three hours of intensive arts study in the afternoon. The start hour will be based on the bus route transportation schedule of the local SAU. The School will employ an extended school day to allow for the arts.

(t) Provision for providing continuing evidence of adequate insurance coverage

The School, in accordance with RSA 194-B:1, III, will be a "Chartered Public School," that is subject to the same protections as any public school under RSA 507 (b) which provides for Limited General Liability for the charter school and its agents.

GSAA will obtain, and keep current, policies of each form of insurance required for the operation of a Chartered Public School. All formal documents related to the maintenance of insurance (including the insurance policies and evidence of continuing insurance) will be kept on file within the business offices of the School.

(u) Identity of consultants to be used for various services, if known

The following consultants will be retained:

- 1.) A Facility Engineer will be retained to oversee any issues that may arise.
- 2.) An Educational Attorney will be retained for any legal issues.
- 3.) An independent auditor will be retained as required.

(v) Philosophy of parent involvement and related plans and procedures

It is GSAA's goal to allow the students to create their own identity, and to grow and develop their craft as individuals. Therefore, the School chooses to limit parent involvement during the school day. We do, however, wish to involve parents in administrative roles, fundraising, gallery events, musicals, etc. There will be many

opportunities for parental involvement; we believe it to be a crucial element in the success of the School.

(w) A plan to develop and disseminate information to assist parents and pupils with decision-making about their choice of school

The marketing committee will oversee a plan to develop detailed descriptions of the philosophies, the core curriculum, and the arts education programs of the School. These descriptions are being developed and assembled in this Charter and in the School's marketing plan, with the intent to inform parents and pupils about all aspects of the School and its expectations for its students and their families. Information will also be published and disseminated in the form of marketing literature (brochures, postings, and an interactive website) as well as through public events held periodically throughout the local area.

All of these channels will encourage an informed conversation between prospective students, parents, and individuals associated with the School, including administrators, faculty, affiliated artists, School alumni, and the School's current students and parents. This information will guide pupils and their families as they decide whether the Granite State Arts Academy is the most appropriate choice of high schools.

(x) A global hold-harmless clause, which states:

The School, its successors and assigns, covenants and agrees at all times to indemnify and hold harmless the SAU, any other school district which sends its students to the School, and their school boards, officers, directors, agents, employees, all funding districts and sources, and their successors and assigns, (the "indemnified parties") from any and all claims, demands, actions and causes of action, whether in law or in equity, and all damages, costs, losses, and expenses, including but not limited to reasonable attorneys' fees and legal costs, for any action or inaction of the School, its board, officers, employees, agents, representatives, contractors, guests and invitees, or pupils.

(y) Severability provisions and statement of assurance that any provision of the charter school contract found by competent authority to be contrary to applicable law, rule, or regulation shall not be enforceable.

If the provision of the charter agreement is determined to be unenforceable or invalid for any reason, the remainder of the charter agreement shall remain in effect unless otherwise terminated by one or both of the parties in accordance with the terms contained herein.

(z) Provision for dissolution of the charter school including disposition of its assets or amendment of its program plan

In the event the School should cease operations for whatever reason, including the non-renewal or revocation of its Charter, the Board of Trustees shall consult with its attorney and also the Department of Education to assure that contractual and financial obligations are met and that technical assistance is sought.

The planned sale and distribution of any assets shall assure first that any financial obligations of the school are met and that the public schools are offered any remaining property in proportion to their financial support of the School over the history of the School.

(aa) In the case of the conversion of a public school to a charter conversion school, provision for alternative arrangements for pupils who choose not to attend and teachers who choose not to teach at the charter school

N/A

(bb) A plan for the education of the school's pupils after the charter school may cease operation

In the event that the School shall cease operation for any reason, GSAA will endeavor to ensure a successful transition for our students. The School's Administrator, in a timely

manner, will develop a student transfer process and advise all parents, students, and personnel of the process to be followed, as outlined below.

- 1.) Families will be informed of the dissolution of the School.
- 2.) A parent committee will assist in exploring options for students.
- 3.) Parent/guardian will provide a written release of information.
- 4.) The receiving school for each student will be notified and files forwarded.
- 5.) New schools will be advised that School personnel are available for consultation.
- 6.) Information, including all appropriate student records, will be mailed to each home.

(cc) In addition to an application, each charter school applicant, in consultation with the local school board, shall prepare a proposed contract. The contract shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following elements

N/A

(dd) An outline of the proposed accountability plan which clarifies expectations for evaluating the school's program and which contains an acknowledgement that a full accountability plan shall be developed and ready to implement prior to the date of opening

GSAA will provide annual reports to the New Hampshire State Department of Education, addressing progress and fidelity to the School's mission. Data will be gathered from GSAA's students, parents, faculty and staff, and alumni. This data will track the School's educational impact, parental involvement, outreach methodology, and will include an overall analysis of GSAA's goals. The School will also update the Department about its student enrollment, graduation and college matriculation rates, financial operations, and governance on an annual basis.

This reporting will address the following questions:

- 1.) Is the School using public funds responsibly?
- 2.) Are students attaining the School's expected levels of knowledge and skills?
- 3.) Does the School continue to be sustainable?
- 4.) What areas represent strengths for the School, and what areas pose challenges?

Our accountability plan will be fully developed prior to the date of opening.

Appendix A: Founder Members Biographies

Wendie Leweck

Chair

Marketing committee member

Building committee member

Wendie owns Exeter-based Spotlight Publicity, a boutique publicity firm, which specializes in working with authors and other artists. Wendie holds a Bachelor's degree in Organizational Business Management from Daniel Webster College, and a degree in Design from the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising (Los Angeles, CA). She has recently graduated from Southern New Hampshire University with an MFA in Fine Arts, Fiction. She has penned two novels and is an internationally published writer, having written articles for Antiques and Collecting Magazine, Millionaire Magazine, LA Splash (Online Entertainment News) Focus Magazine (e-magazine), and numerous other publications.

Wendie studied theater at the Los Angeles County High School for the Arts. The experience left an indelible memory that learning could be a joyful, exciting journey. Seeing a need for more diverse arts in schools locally, Wendie sought to recreate that energy and build a charter-based high school focused on the arts.

Wendie has volunteered for many years for numerous local, national, and international charities including Service Link NH, a state-wide charitable organization for seniors; Great Bay Services NH for disabled adults; the Los Angeles County High School for the Arts Program to Sustain the Arts; the World Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals; Mustard Seed Organization International, and the Exeter Theater Company. She lives in Exeter, with her husband and two boys, ages ten and fifteen, all whom are musicians.

Don Erdbrink
Vice Chair
Building committee member

Don was born in Baltimore and studied three years of Classical Guitar, Voice and Theory before transferring to the Berklee College of Music in Boston. He holds a Bachelors degree in Music and Performance. Don has a life long interest in history and has studied many periods including Medieval History, World War II and has a strong overall understanding of Music History.

Don performed successfully in many bands over the years, mostly on the East Coast. Don has taught privately, performed for radio commercials, and worked as a studio musician. He has worked as warm up act for The Fixx, Jonathan Edwards and Chubby Checker just to name a few. His catalog of recordings includes 10 CDs, 6 in a Vocal Rock vein and 4 in a (totally different) New Age style. Don's music has been aired on radio stations through out New England and he has enjoyed steady CDs sales both domestically and internationally.

After 20 years of performance, Don accepted a job at Muzak, a Business Music company that provides music to many businesses. In his twelve years at Muzak Don worked as a Client Relations Field Representative, then as a Regional Manager and finally as National Client Relations Manager, managing a \$2,500,000 monthly base of business over one fourth of the US. Under his leadership at Muzak the company developed standardized national "best practices", as well as the development of a data base interface to better service cross territorial and national clients. The model he developed is still in use at the company.

Currently Don works as a free-lance musician, directing a contemporary choir at the Exeter Congregational Church in Exeter and has started Daesongs Publishing, a local company assisting local musicians to get recorded and promote their music. Don regularly volunteers as a concert director for the Exeter High School Solo and Ensemble concerts. He currently volunteers for the Exeter Theater Company, a group working to re-establish the historic Ioka Theater in Exeter NH as an active performance center.

Don lives in Exeter with his wife, step-son Michael, and two daughters, Emily, a freshman at Emerson College in Boston and Haley, a senior in High School. Both of the girls are active in music and theater.

Tim Gaudreau
Treasurer
Governance and Management committee member
Personnel committee member

Eco-artist Tim Gaudreau is passionate about the environment and the interconnections between people and nature. His work combines photography, video, new-media, graphics, and sculpture with humor and irony to create collaborations that advocate for a greater awareness of eco-issues and empowerment. His work initiates dialogue about social and environmental issues and serves as an entryway to improve our relationship to Nature and consider each individual impact.

Awards including the Artist Advancement Fellowship from the NH Charitable Foundation, Fellowships from the MacDowell Colony and NH State Council on the Arts, and commissions from the city of Portsmouth have given Gaudreau the opportunity to create public art projects that stimulate collaboration and interaction while challenging conventional thinking. Gaudreau has traveled extensively and his intimate portraits reveal people and cultures. With residencies stretching from California, India, and South America to Laos and Africa, he has returned with lots of stories and thousands of images. His work is represented on Greenmuseum.org and has been featured in exhibits internationally, in magazines such *Orion Magazine*, books such as *Cycle-Logical Art*, *Recycling Matters for Eco-Art*, and on such shows as *That's Clever* (HGTV), *New Hampshire Chronicle* (WMUR-TV), *New Hampshire Outlook* (NH-PTV), and *The Front Porch* (NHPR).

Gaudreau completed his Master of Fine Arts degree in interdisciplinary studio art and critical theory through the intensive program at the Maine College of Art in 2002. Gaudreau's photography and design background grew from a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the University of New Hampshire completed in 1992.

Paul Oneil
Assistant Treasurer
Building committee member

Paul has been employed by the Mallory Institute of Pathology (Boston, MA), Amicon Corporation (Danvers, MA), and Millipore Corporation (Bedford, MA), and is currently a Technical Director at Pall Life Sciences (Port Washington, NY) in a career focused on the research through commercial-scale production of biopharmaceuticals. His education

included a B.S. in Zoology from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst ('81) and an M.A. in biochemistry from Boston University ('85). As occasional advisor to the biotechnology programs at NH Technical Community College (renamed Great Bay Community College), the Northeast BioManufacturing Center and Collaborative, and as technical writer and frequent technical trainer, Paul has long-recognized the wide diversity of learning styles and the under-representation of the creative process in conventional technical educational environments. As the father of two high-achieving teenaged girls he has come to know the importance of shaping an education to a child's unique personality and talents.

Eric Doucet
Board Member
Curriculum committee member

Eric is a teacher at Exeter High School with 14 years of experience in the classroom. He received a Master's in Teaching from the University of New Hampshire and holds a Bachelor's degree in Theater Arts with a focus on Directing and Acting. Eric is the founder and executive producer of DARWiN'S WAIting ROOM, a Seacoast based comedy troupe that has been entertaining audiences since 2008. He has written over twenty short plays that have been performed on the New Hampshire Seacoast as well as three high school plays that have been produced in various parts of New Hampshire. He is the father of two young boys.

Sarah Kelley
Governance and Management committee member

Sarah lives in Brentwood, NH and is currently a school social worker in Massachusetts. She is also certified as a guidance counselor in New Hampshire. She has worked in the education field as a grant writer, admissions officer, Spanish teacher, athletic coach, and academic advisor. With a Bachelor's degree in Spanish from Macalester College (Saint Paul, MN) and a Master's degree in Clinical Mental Health, from Lesley University. Sarah has worked with students of all ages and from varied backgrounds. She is married, is the mother of two daughters (20 and 18), and loves to bike, ski, and read.

Joe Friedman
Building committee member

Joe has been President of Brooks Properties, a Salem, NH Developer, Owner and Manager of Commercial Real Estate for the past 8 years. Joe and Brooks Properties have played a vital role in the growth and expansion of the Exit 2 area in Salem. Currently, Brooks Properties is working on the build-out of its master plan for the 24 acres it owns along Keewaydin Drive in Salem, NH as well as other properties in its portfolio in Southern New Hampshire and Northern Massachusetts. In Exeter, Brooks Properties owns and manages the multi-tenant office and medical building that was the former Rockingham Courthouse at 1 Hampton Rd.

Prior to joining Brooks Properties, Joe Friedman was a broker for CBRE in Manchester, NH, an Area Manager for Jones Lang Lasalle in Boston and a District Manager for Grubb & Ellis in Boston and Connecticut. He holds an undergraduate degree in Political Science from the University of NH and an MBA in Real Estate and Urban Development from American University in Washington, DC. Joe has served on Economic Development Panels including Windham, NH, and has guest lectured at UNH and the University of Hartford.

John Dinger
Curriculum Consultant

John received his M.A. from Columbia Teachers College in Philosophy & Education and focused on the arts and politics. Also, John conducted research for various professors at Teachers College. John attended the University of New Hampshire and received his B.A. in Philosophy.

John taught as a private general subjects tutor in New York City and as a teacher assistant/P.E. teacher at Montessori Hale O Keiki in Hawaii. He taught 5th-8th Grade at Seacoast Charter School in Kingston, NH from 2007 - 2013 where he helped develop a middle school program, which focuses on community building and building student independence.

John lives in Portsmouth, NH and is currently working at the Birches Academy, a public charter school, in Salem, NH as a 5th - 8th Grade English Teacher and Teacher Mentor.

Patrick O'Day Attorney at Law-GSAA Consultant / Advisor
Legal Council Consultant

Patrick holds a Masters Degree in Education and is also an Attorney who specializes in educational issues.

Appendix B: Five-Year Budget

(See attached)

Appendix C: Draft of By-laws for Friends of Granite State Arts Academy

Friends of Granite State Arts Academy Board of Trustees Guiding Principles

A. Board Composition

- 1.) A full Board consists of fifteen members serving a two year term. The board shall not consist of less than five members. Members of the Board shall be comprised of those who support the mission of Friends of Granite State Arts Academy and those who are supporters of the arts.
- 2.) The officers of the Board shall be a President (Chair), a Vice-President (Co-Chair), a Secretary, a Treasurer and a Vice-Treasurer. This core group is referred to as the Directors.
- 3.) Directors who have, or could reasonably be perceived to have, a conflict of interest with respect to the affairs of the society, have a duty to declare this interest. Such a declaration is to be made to the members upon nomination or, if serving as a director, to the Board, when the possibility of a conflict is realized.
- 4.) The President shall be responsible for the effectiveness of the Board of Directors and shall perform other duties such as acting on one or more committees, and assist other Board members as needed.
- 5.) The Vice-President of the Board shall be responsible to assist the President, and assist other Board members as needed. In addition, the Vice-President of the Board would act as Chair in the event that the President was unable to be present at a meeting.
- 6.) The Secretary of the Board shall be responsible to record the minutes of the meetings of members and directors.
- 7.) The Treasurer shall be responsible for overseeing financial management practices, insuring that the Directors understand the financial situation and is responsible for keeping accurate books and records.
- 8.) The Assistant Treasurer shall be responsible for reviewing and ensuring that the Treasurers records are accurate.

9.) The directors may also appoint a Recording Secretary who is not a Director, for the purpose of performing the duties of the Secretary during absence, illness or incapacity.

10.) All Directors are expected to act on at least one committee, to further the effort of the organization.

B. Standing Committees

1. Governance (organizational structure and plan)
2. Curriculum and Instruction (including learning goals and objectives, number of students per classroom, per graduating class)
3. Student Assessment (including graduation requirements)
4. Staffing (Including qualifications sought)
5. Transportation
6. Special education plan
7. Admission Procedures / Due Process/ Discipline
8. Fundraising/ Accounting/ Grant Writing
9. Annual Budget
10. Real Estate/ Facility location
11. Marketing / PR

C. Meeting Schedules

- 1.) Board of Directors: once monthly, the third Thursday of the month 7:00 p.m. unless otherwise noted
- 2.) Committees: once monthly outside of board meetings until the school is fully operational at which point a portion of the general board meeting will be dedicated to these tasks
- 3.) Board development: as needed

D. Meeting Rules

- 1.) Quorum: 50% of seated members
- 2.) Minutes will be taken at all meetings and distributed to the full board prior to the next meeting.
- 3.) Every member shall have one vote and there shall be no proxy voting
- 4.) Committee meeting options include: in person, via conference call, email or designated Google page

E. Board Member Responsibilities

- 1.) Participation in at least one committee
- 2.) Develop, review and support short and long term goals

- 3.) Dedication to ensuring the board fully supports its Mission
 - 4.) Ensuring that all legal requirements are met
- F. Board Member Expectations
- 1.) Regularly attend meetings
 - 2.) Advocate for the school within the community
 - 3.) Participate in as many program activities as possible
 - 4.) Identify potential board members
 - 5.) Use unique talents and expertise to further the success of the board
- G. Fiscal Year
- The fiscal year for accounting purposes shall be January 1- December 31

Appendix D: School Day Schedule

(See attached)

Appendix E: Letters of Support

August 12, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Mark Christen, and I am a music educator in the Derry Cooperative School District and also a private music instructor in the area. I also teach music courses at Manchester Community College. I received a Bachelors of Science degree in Music Education at Bob Jones University in South Carolina, and I received a Masters in Music Education from UMass/Amherst. I have been teaching music for 27 years now in the southern New Hampshire and northern Massachusetts region.

Granite State Arts Academy is a specialized charter school that is needed in this region, and is essential for the education of students in art, theatre, music and dance. Because of my experience in teaching music in the area, I know first hand the need for students who want to specialize in an area of the Fine Arts. I currently teach a private lesson student who is going into high school this year. After I read the article in the local newspaper about Granite State Arts Academy, I knew this school would be the perfect fit for her as she also specializes in dance. She was unable to fit music into the curriculum where she is currently attending. I also understand the need for students in the arts to have a school of choice in which to enroll, as I myself began my music career teaching at a private school in the area. My experience in education includes teaching at a public school that had a performing and fine arts school within the high school. And even though the school specialized in art, theatre, music and dance, the other core subjects of math, reading and writing were also taught.

Thank you for your time in considering Granite State Arts Academy to be a school of choice in the southern New Hampshire region. If you have any questions, you may contact me at:
603-340-1071.

Sincerely,
Mark Christen

Dear Wendie,

I just read about the projected opening of your academy in the Derry News. I am a resident of Londonderry and a Visual Arts Educator at Goffstown High School. I have over 35 years of high school experience in NH art education. During this time I have served on many state and regional arts committees, was recognized as the NH Art Educator of the Year, am a former President of the NH Art Educators' Association, former Administrator of the Scholastic Art Awards of NH (currently a board member). Please let me know if you are interested in any way that I might be able to provide assistance or help in advancing your school.

I am so pleased to see a high school arts academy becoming a reality in NH!

Ava-lyn Lane
48 Shasta Drive
Londonderry, NH 03053

Dear Ms. Leweck:

When my family first discovered the Seacoast Charter School we were not looking for an arts integrated school- we were just looking for an alternative. My son Nate was going into sixth grade and I was afraid he was going to get left behind and not pushed to his limits to get the most out of his education. Nate was incredibly bright, usually testing at and above 99th percentile in most standardized tests, but because he was not challenged his grades reflected a bored, detached average student. He was all math and science, logic and linear thinking. Unbelievably tough on himself- giving up anything he could not master instantly. He had no social skills, had no idea how to relate to his peers- most fifth graders want to talk about baseball- not string theory.

It was with hesitation I enrolled Nate in a school that had a curriculum I feared he would not take to- I couldn't have been more wrong. Within two months when I asked Nate what his favorite class was - I was astonished when he said it was his violin class. I was even more surprised - and secretly pleased when his one of his report card comments was - "Nate needs to spend less time socializing " This was a complete about face for my son - he got invited to his first peer birthday party ever. He slowly began to change from this rigid, perfectionist to someone who knew it was ok to try and fail - he discovered how to learn and grow from his mistakes instead of letting them stop them dead in his tracks. It seems this infusing of music and arts into every aspect of his education was what he had needed all along. I thought he needed more challenging math or science - what he really needed was an environment that challenged every aspect of his mind, heart and soul on a level that only music and arts does. Three years immersed in that culture where once had stood a rigid, unhappy, perfectionist a new person emerged - one that is happy and quirky. One that is confident in his abilities and his ability to make decisions. An outgoing, funny kid with tons of friends and an amazing ability to tackle a

problem no matter how tough it seems. When he entered a music and art school I thought they would teach him to play violin, instead they gave him the gift of self. My child is one of many who probably never would have discovered all the gifts they have to share with the world were it not for the music and arts integrated education they were lucky enough to have. And I thought they would teach him to play violin....

Sincerely,

Kelli Twiss

Dear Wendie:

I am currently teaching instrumental music and general music in Derry at 5 different schools, on a part time basis. I also teach numerous music lessons in the area. My proficiencies are in the woodwinds, but I also have experience teaching and playing guitar, bass, piano and drums. I have also worked in vocal music and have experience singing in groups.

I just discovered this school in reading about it in the Nutfield News. I have already recommended the school for a clarinet student who is excelling on her instrument and in dance, and whose mom is looking for a focused arts school for her daughter.

I am interested in being a part of the team. I have a vast amount of experience teaching music, including teaching an on line Classical music course and an American Popular Music course at Manchester Community College.

I also have a friend who specializes in the arts and works as a para with autistic children, and she would be interested in the school as well.

I just recently moved to the Derry area in order to establish myself as a music educator and a resident who works well in marketing and supporting the local community. And I have current experience in sales and marketing.

I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Mark Christen
603-340-1071

August 12, 2013

Dear Board of Education:

I am writing to you in regards to the approval of the Granite State Arts Academy. I have come to learn a lot about them and their goals with becoming an art school. I think that the introduction to a school based not only on the education of children but also integrating into the curriculum a way to involve their creativity will be an amazing addition to the community. This way of running a school has always been an interest to me.

I went to a public school my whole life. I went to one that did not offer a lot of art classes. Creative writing is my specialty and I would love to be able to teach children to open their minds and write how they are feeling or figure out fantasy lands where they can be happy. This school is a way to give that back to children.

This school not only helps to mold children to be ready for the world as an adult, it also will be able to give them a new perspective on the world. It will be able to open their minds to the world around them and help them to cope with growing up. Adding an artistic value to school will also add a piqued interest in children. Giving them something to look forward to will also help with their success in school. Being able to give children a more personalized curriculum with classes they want to take will also help with this.

Granite State Arts Academy will be an amazing addition to this community. It will encourage not only an amazing educational experience but also a great addition to the area. I fully support the addition to this to New Hampshire. If you need to talk in any way, do not feel the need to hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Rebekah Moniz
(603) 703-2158
monizrebekah@gmail.com

Dear State Board of Education:

I support the creation of Granite State Arts Academy serving students grades 9 through 12. I support Granite State Arts Academy because it will provide educational options for the families of rural Derry NH and the surrounding areas.

I support the mission statement and academic curriculum emphasizing on integrating the Arts with Academics, letting student be creative thinkers, active citizens, and independent learners. I believe this will help a child's personal development and growth for the future of our communities here in New Hampshire, helping the students be successful and move onto higher education in whatever fields they choose.

I believe that ALL children learn differently, some through text, some through visual arts and some through what they hear. I truly believe that Granite State Arts Academy will be giving children all three options to learn. What an incredible way to gain knowledge and have personal growth, social awareness and set high personal achievement for their individual educational experience.

My life experience are as follows:

I have parented two children who both graduated early and have went onto further their education. I have attended the San Francisco community music center for about four years studying vocals and some music theory.

Community Volunteer:

- Head start program and elected treasurer.
- Lobbied for the head start program in Portland, Oregon.
- Spoke for the start of an early education program, for the park and rec in San Francisco, CA.
- After school program at Grattan Park and rec program (8 years)
- Pembroke academy as elected PTO officer (public relations)
- PTO/PTA (10 years)
- Housing Counselor for Friends & Family program in Concord, NH.
- I have volunteered and raised funds for the Cancer Foundation, Jump Rope for Heart Foundation, Homelessness in NH (through the Friends & Family program)
- In charge of and was head of holiday festivals for several years.
- Helped with the education of non-English speaking children.

Sincerely and Respectfully,

Kellie L. Robinson
1292 Mammoth Rd. Pelham, NH 03076

"Derry, New Hampshire's Place to Be"



PLANNING DEPARTMENT
George H. Sioras, Director

July 16, 2013

Dear Wendie:

It was a pleasure to meet you last week and to have the opportunity to tell you a little about the Town of Derry and hopefully welcome you as a new member of our community. As Planning Director of the town for the past 29 years, I have seen first hand the quality of the Brookstone Properties development on Route 111 from its initial conceptual plans to the build out you see there today. It is one of the town's premier developments. I believe having the Granite State Arts Academy located in Brookstone Park will be of great value to the school and be a welcome part of its beautiful and picturesque setting.

I would be pleased to endorse your plans for a charter school in Derry and hope to see you move forward with the opening of the Granite State Arts Academy. Best of luck in this exciting endeavor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. H. Sioras".

George H. Sioras
Planning Director
Town of Derry

14 Manning Street . Derry, New Hampshire 03038
Tel 603.432.6110 Fax 603.432.6109
Website: www.derry-nh.org e-mail georgesioras@derrynh.org

Community Survey Results

90% of respondents felt a need for an arts based high school in the Derry / Salem area.

41% of respondents are willing to volunteer to assist in the success of the school.

The interest in the arts offered was almost equally divided. (Participants were asked to check all areas of the arts that interest their child.)

Dance: 41%

Music: 50%

Theater 42%

Visual Arts 58%

Comments posted within the survey:

“My girls go to the Birches Academy in Salem and I am so happy with the art music and education there! I would be so excited if my Girls could attend a Charter High School! Looking forward to watching the progress!! Good Luck!”

“We have our son in Seacoast Charter School now. He's in 8th grade we are looking forward to the school opening in Derry.”

“Pelham seriously lacks in visual arts, performing arts, etc. We rely on private programs and parks & rec programs. Schools are barely able to cover core curriculum courses. My kids already benefit from attending an arts based charter school in Salem. Would love to see this continue at the high school level.”

“Good luck! My oldest is 10 but we are excited about the possibility. My children currently attend the Birches and I would love for them to continue. I also work there and am a founder there and see a real need for a high school.”

“My child is very interested in being a vocalist and learning music in every form but has not had enough opportunity to do so. A charter school of the arts is exactly what our community needs.”

