

**Granite State Arts Academy**  
a charter school

Granite State Arts Academy  
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Appendix A: Founding Members' biographies

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**(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**

A building has been leased located at 16 Rt. 111, Building 4, Derry, NH 03038

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 that makes the location very promising.

The layout of the space will include the following:

- 5 classrooms
- 1 visual art room
- 1 dance studio
- 1 music room with ISO booth and recording lab
- 1 theater with black box with ample seating (also to be used as the cafeteria\*)
- Warming kitchen
- Director of School office
- Office Manager office
- Guidance office
- Business Manager's office
- Computer lab

The black box theater space would double as a cafeteria to serve students in two shifts with food being prepared by contract agreement with an outsourced company.

Outdoor activities would exceed the school P.E requirement. The area around the building is 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 possibly 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 is 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 post graduate education 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 I, Geometry, Algebra II, 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: Pre- Algebra

9-02: Algebra I

10-01: Geometry

10-02: Algebra II

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.

**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.

(See attached for complete curriculum.)

**Music:** The Music department will be focused on a classical and 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. The music department will also offer Voice and Chorus.  
(See attached for complete curriculum.)

**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.  
(See attached for complete curriculum.)

**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.  
(See attached for complete curriculum.)

**(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, 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 semester of their last year.

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

The School will employ four core curriculum teachers that will be multi certified. There will be one full-time Art Dept. Head for each department: Dance, Music, Theater, and Visual Arts. 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 Administrative staff will work on an annual contractual plan, with options for pay with twenty-six pay periods. Administration will work year round, with paid vacations.

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.

**(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. The school is located in Derry, however 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. 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. Carpooling is highly recommended.

**(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:

**First steps:** The following items need to be completed and submitted to: Dr. Michele Fox, Director of School. Please submit electronically.

- School application (see attachment)
- A personal typed essay by student as to why the student would like to attend GSAA and what they would contribute to the school community
- Transcripts and / or report card
- Attendance records
- Behavioral summary from Principal or Guidance Counselor
- IEP etc. if applicable
- Recommendation from non-family member i.e. mentor, arts or academic teacher that shows the applicants interest and involvement in the arts

**Second Steps:**

- Student interview with staff
- Parent question and answer meeting
- Sharing in major arts discipline (for placement)
- Testing (for placement)

**Third Steps:**

- Lottery
- Notification of acceptance
- Meeting for all new students
- Meeting for all parents

**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. Siblings of those attending the school are given first rights to attend.

**(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 has appointed 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 Business Manager will manage all funds in and out of the school's Operating account with a second signature required by either the Director of School or the Office Manager. 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) 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 SAU 10 to best coordinate transportation services. Scheduling is anticipated to include 3.0 hours of Core Curriculum, a 35 minute lunch break, a 35 minute block for either study hall, or guidance, a 1.5 hour block for two of the following: phys education and/or health, language arts and/or technology and 2.5 hours of Art Education. The start hour of the school day begins at 8:00 a.m. and end at 4:10. The School will employ an extended school day to allow for the arts. Every Friday will be an early release day with the school day ending at 1:50.

See attached daily schedule Appendix B

**(s) 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.

**(t) Consultants to be used for various services, if known**

The following consultants will be retained:

1. An Educational Attorney will be retained for any legal issues.
2. An independent auditor will be retained as required.

**(u) 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.

**(v) 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.

**(w) 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.

**(x) 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.

**(y) 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**

(See attached)

**Appendix B: School Day Schedule**

(See attached)

## **Appendix A: Founding Member Biographies**

### **Wendie Leweck**

#### **Chair**

#### **Marketing/ Fundraising, Finance and Admissions committee**

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 twelve and seventeen, all whom are musicians.

**Don Erdbrink**  
**Vice Chair**  
**Facilities, Finance and Admissions 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.

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.

**Paul O'Neil****Treasurer****Personnel and Curriculum 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.

**Carol Dawson****Assistant Treasurer****Curriculum and Governance committee member**

Carol has been teaching drama for over 30 years in public and private schools in Tennessee, Pennsylvania, Maine and New Hampshire. For nine years she directed the Phillips Exeter Academy Summer Arts Program where she chaired and taught. She has developed many theater arts courses including: Stage to Page, Fundamentals of Acting, Theater History, Presentational Aesthetics, Playwriting, Play Production, Stagecraft, Shakespeare Unplugged, Public Speaking, Argumentation & Debate.

Her coaching experience includes developing three competitive debate programs. During her coaching tenure her team members competed on the national and international level.

Carol has directed various plays from the classical to the modern. She co-wrote two Children's Theater Scripts that were produced at Georgetown University. A most rewarding experience came from coaching students to write their own shows and then encouraging them to take their writing and produce it for an audience.

She has a Bachelor of Arts Degree from The Ohio State University in Theater and English and a Masters in Theater from The University of Tennessee. She was one of twelve teachers who was awarded a fellowship at Northwestern University in Graduate Theater Studies.

Ms. Dawson feels that being a teacher of the performing arts is an incredible experience that has never been second-guessed. No two days are alike and the creativity that comes from adolescents is one of the most rewarding aspects of her career.

**Sarah Kelley**

**Secretary**

**Governance, Curriculum, and Admission Committee Member**

Sarah lives in Brentwood, NH and is certified as 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 (22 and 20), and loves to bike, ski, and read.

Her passion for GSAA is based on the philosophy that "one size does not fit all" when it comes to educating our children. Families need choices in education; in her work as an educator and counselor she has seen students be successful in public, private, and charter environments.

**Todd Abernathy**

**Board Member**

**Facilities, Marketing/Fundraising, Community Outreach committee member**

A published writer and former military journalist, Wm Todd Abernathy earned his BA in Creative Writing from Chester College of New England, and his MFA in Fiction from Southern New Hampshire University. He is a senior editor for the Collective Fallout literary journal, and fiction editor for the Tower Journal literary magazine. He currently teaches writing as an adjunct professor at Mount Washington College and Granite State College.

**Bianca Gynan**  
**Board Member**

Bianca has worked in education in the public school system for over twelve years. Her core philosophy is that the world is the best classroom (she travels as much as she can in hopes to expand the walls of her own), and she supports the fact that all learners have their own unique and precious minds. Bianca enjoys the calling of teaching and is determined to be a most effective educator. She aims to support her students through their natural preferences in learning with a belief that human expression has been banging on the classroom doors for ages and she is excited that it's finally being invited in.

A passionate and motivated teacher, Bianca looks to make a positive difference in the world. She is a dedicated lifelong learner fascinated by the social sciences and educational psychology. She has a true love for history and served as Vice President to the history club at Great Bay Community College.

Bianca received degrees in the following:

Great Bay Community College: Associate's Degree in Teacher Preparation.

Franklin Pierce University: Bachelor of Arts in American Studies

Attending Southern New Hampshire University: Master's in Education with a secondary focus on Social Studies.

**Sherry Kilgus-Kramer**  
**Board Member**  
**Marketing/ Fundraising committee member**

Sherry is the President and Founder of Strengthen Our Schools Salem NH, a non-profit organization advocating for quality education in Salem, New Hampshire. She also held the position of President of the MOMS Club of Salem, NH for two years. She has a long record of community service and has served on various non-profit boards.

Sherry received her Bachelor's degree in Political Science and Economics from the University of Michigan and a Master's degree in business from the University of Maryland. She worked in corporate marketing for several years before staying home with her two daughters. She has volunteered extensively in the Salem School District and PTA. In 2009, Sherry was instrumental in organizing the effort to successfully implement Kindergarten in Salem. Through that experience, Sherry recognized the need for an advocacy organization that would help build awareness of the need for school improvements. In 2010 she founded 'Strengthen Our Schools' (SOS). Putting her marketing skills to work, she implemented communications campaigns resulting in the approval of \$22 million in renovations to three elementary schools in 2010 and \$16 million for three additional schools in 2013.

Sherry lives in Salem, New Hampshire with her husband and two girls, all of whom love art, music, and theater. When not working, Sherry enjoys singing, playing piano, hiking and camping.

**Eric Doucet**  
**Curriculum Consultant**

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.

**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. He serves as the Chair for the Exeter NH School Board

**Appendix B: School Day Schedule**

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>A</b> 8:00 - 9:30				
<b>B</b> 9:35 - 11:05				
First Lunch 11:10-11:45				
Second Lunch 11:45-12:20				
<b>C</b> 12:20 - 1:50				
<b>D</b> 1:55 - 3:25	Teacher Collaboration Time			
<b>E</b> 3:30 - 4:15	Teacher Collaboration Time			

**(See below for key)**

**A = English/Social Studies Block (45 Minutes/Day English and 45 Minutes/Day Social Studies) 3 Hours and 45 Minutes in English and 3 Hours and 45 Minutes in Social Studies Per Week All Year**

**B = Science/Math Block (45 Minutes/Day Mathematics and 45 Minutes/Day Science) 3 Hours and 45 Minutes in Mathematics and 3 Hours and 45 Minutes in Science Per Week All Year**

**C = Enrichment Block Includes Technology, Health, World Languages and Physical Education depending on student's year in school. This block can be split into 45 minute time periods, thus creating the possibility of two courses per block, meeting a total of 7 hours and thirty minutes per week all year.**

**D/E= Arts Electives which can include any of the arts courses offered. The D Block will meet for six hours per week and the E Block will meet for three hours per week all year.**