

Gathering Waters Chartered Public School

Application

Sponsored by The Friends of Gathering Waters

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Projected Opening: September 2021

Proposed Location: Keene, NH

Total Projected 5 Year Enrollment

Grade	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
1	15	20	25	25	25
2	15	20	25	25	25
3	15	20	25	25	25
4	15	20	25	25	25
5	15	20	25	25	25
6	15	20	25	25	25
7	15	20	25	25	25
8	15	20	25	25	25
9	15	20	25	25	25
10	0	20	25	25	25
11	0	0	25	25	25
12	0	0	0	25	25
Total	135	200	275	300	300

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Attachments:

- 1. Circus Smirkus Fundraising Plan**
- 2. Alliance for Public Waldorf Education Common Core Alignment**
- 3. Proposed 5-Year Budget**
- 4. Accountability Plan**
- 5. Signature Page**

Section 3: Introduction

a. General description and proposed or potential location RSA194-B:3,II(a); Ed 318.05(c)(2)

With this application, we seek to open a chartered public school for grades 1-12 inspired by the core principles of Waldorf education. The name of the school is Gathering Waters Chartered Public School (Gathering Waters). The founding group, Friends of Gathering Waters is a group of 10 parents joined by community members, educators and supporters of the growing number of Waldorf-inspired charter schools and initiatives that are now serving more than 10,000 students nationwide.¹

The recent proliferation of public charter schools inspired by Waldorf education coincides with the growth of non-sectarian Waldorf education worldwide, with more than 1,090 private and public Waldorf schools in more than 64 countries. Here in North America, there are more than 160 accredited independent Waldorf schools. The charter school model is making it possible for thousands of families across the United States to choose Waldorf education for their children—families who want this option but are deterred by the financial costs of private Waldorf schools, which must charge tuition and have limited resources for offering financial aid.

In New Hampshire, the charter school model presents a unique opportunity for our region. We have here a committed and informed group of parents, educators, and supporters from the local business and non-profit sectors who are prepared to give time, effort, and resources to make this highly regarded educational approach an option for our students. In addition to the presence of strong local support, our region is uniquely situated to support a Waldorf-inspired charter school because of the wealth of knowledge and resources that are already established here, including two Waldorf teacher training programs. Indeed, families have moved to the Keene area from all over the country because of the presence here of organizations inspired by the underlying philosophy behind Waldorf education, such as Monadnock Waldorf School, High Mowing, Sophia's Hearth Family Center in Keene, Camp Glenbrook in Marlborough, Kroka Expeditions in Marlow, and Badger Corporation in Gilsum. Thus, southwestern New Hampshire is home to a well-established community that is ready and eager to support a Waldorf-inspired chartered public school and with whom we welcome the opportunity to partner.

Gathering Waters aims to realize the core purpose of Waldorf education, as expressed by its founder Rudolf Steiner a century ago: "Our highest endeavor [as educators] must be to develop free human beings who are able, of themselves, to impart purpose and direction to their lives."² Key values that guide the culture of a Waldorf school include:

- Profound respect for each human being as a unique individual who passes through distinct life stages; educators' responsibility is to meet students in each developmental stage with age-appropriate content and methods for delivering the curriculum.

¹ Statistics and other information about public Waldorf charter schools can be found on the website of the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education, www.allianceforpublicwaldorfeducation.org.

² Quoted in the website of the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education, www.allianceforpublicwaldorfeducation.org.

- Education should address the multidimensional nature of the human being and strive to enliven and expand capacities—intellectual, emotional, social, artistic, spiritual—as well as impart knowledge.
- Active, experiential learning, social activities, and artistic immersion are ideally part of teaching every subject.
- Healthy human relationships among teachers, staff, students, and families are at the heart of the school; a school is a learning community wherein everyone works together to ensure the best outcome for every student.
- Equity, diversity, and social justice are embedded in the content of the curriculum and the social life of the school community.
- Teaching is an art: the teachers who work with students on a daily basis and who have the appropriate professional credentials should have primary responsibility for matters of pedagogy, curriculum, standards, and assessments.

It is important to note that while we use the trademark Waldorf with some freedom here for the sake of explaining the impulse behind our application, Friends of Gathering Waters acknowledges the rigorous process of self-study and peer review that will be required for us to use the trademark Public Waldorf as part of our formal identity. This trademark is held by the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education, which provides networking for Waldorf-inspired charter schools across the US. We look forward to becoming an initiative member of the Alliance and will welcome the guidance and resources of the many public Waldorf schools that have paved the way for our future success.

Please refer to section 11 on page 46 for a more complete description of the proposed school facility.

b. Name, address, telephone and fax numbers and email address of contact person. Ed 318.05 (c) (3)

Gabrielle Schuerman, 37 Grant Street, Keene NH, 03431, 603-852-2718,
Gabrielle.Schuerman@gmail.com

c. Persons eligible to submit application to establish a chartered public school RSA 194-B:3, V. Ed 318.05 (c) (4)

Parent Group:

Gabrielle Schuerman- parent, Keene, NH
 Theresa Majoy-parent, Keene, NH
 Eliza Murphy-parent, Keene, NH
 Lori Burman-parent, Keene, NH
 Michele Chalice-parent, Keene, NH
 Jennifer Butler-parent, Keene, NH
 Elizabeth Hamshaw-parent, Keene, NH
 Emily Sherwood-Turner-parent, Keene, NH
 Laurel Iselin -parent, Alstead, NH
 Ronja Elliston-parent, Alstead, NH

d. Education Vision and Mission Statement RSA 194-B:3,II (d), Ed 318.09 (e)(1)

The mission of Gathering Waters Chartered Public School is to offer students in the Monadnock region an education that enables them to discover their interests and

capabilities; explore the surrounding world; and cultivate a lifelong love of learning, a sense of community responsibility and understanding of environmental sustainability. We carry out this mission by providing an academically rigorous and engaging curriculum that integrates the arts, meaningful practical work, outdoor education and service to the larger community.

Our vision is an inclusive school culture of compassion and respect where deep interest in others goes hand in hand with individual growth. The educational environment enables students to develop self-confidence, self-knowledge, intellectual flexibility, and the capacity for creative problem solving that supports ethical action in their local and global communities.

e. Summary of the school’s focus, including a description of the characteristics, methods and goals of the school. Ed 318.05(c)(9)

The focus of Gathering Waters is on achieving a balance between, on the one hand, enabling students to discover and unfold their unique individual interests and talents and, on the other hand, cultivating a school culture of shared understandings, common values, and ensuring that students acquire the knowledge and skills needed for contributing to a better future for all. Teaching is meant to support the development of dispositions and capabilities—curiosity and lifelong enthusiasm for learning; independent, critical thinking; conscience, compassion, and social skills; initiative, creativity and follow-through.

Some distinctive features and methods for carrying out these aims are:

- A commitment to a broad humanistic understanding of the goal of education: a well-rounded individual who is filled with a sense of purpose and of the value of life; able to sense what is right in a given situation, with the power of resolution to carry it out; guided by empathy and genuine regard for the needs and rights of others; able to think creatively and independently; and well-equipped with a full range of practical, social, and cognitive knowledge and skills.
- A rich and varied curriculum that includes multidisciplinary courses, practical work, outdoor education, performance and visual arts, crafts and community service projects, as well as standard courses in language arts, science, math, history, and foreign languages.
- Experiential learning—active engagement in course-related activities.
- Integration of the arts into academic subjects.
- Multidimensional assessment methods whose purpose is encouraging and motivating further learning (rather than ranking or penalties), including classroom performance assessments, student self-assessments, portfolios, narrative reports, as well as required standardized testing.
- Block subject scheduling that allows for deeper engagement in the subject at hand.

f. Target population

As a public charter, Gathering Waters will serve all school-aged students in grades 1-12 and their families with special effort given to include those children who are educationally and economically disadvantaged, in the Monadnock region of southwestern New Hampshire, including Cheshire, Sullivan and Hillsborough counties.

g. Measurable Goals and Objectives and a timeline for implementation and accountability Ed 318.05(c)(9)

Following approval of this application, our proposed timeline for implementation is as follows:

- By January 1 2021
 - The Friends of Gathering Waters appoints a formal Board of Trustees.
 - The Board assisted by the Friends identifies a suitable location and arranges for leasing of facilities as of March 1, 2021.
 - Board committees (Executive, Finance, Governance, Human Resources, Development/Fundraising, Enrollment/Outreach and Strategic Planning) necessary to ensure progress toward target school opening date are set up and are meeting regularly.
 - The Board approves a budget and fund-raising plan for start-up costs during the pre-operations period, to be overseen and implemented by the Board Development/Fundraising Committee; this budget includes full operations costs for the three-month period July-September 2021.
 - The Board approves a detailed five-year post-operations budget and the Fund-Raising Committee reviews, approves and begins to implement the fundraising plan to ensure ongoing private support revenue.
 - The Board recruits and organizes volunteers to assist in public relations, fund raising, facilities preparation, and general support of the Board.
 - The Board approves and oversees implementation of outreach campaigns to recruit and hire full-time and special subject teachers.
 - Board begins a search for the Lead Administrator to be hired February 1, 2021.
 - Enrollment and Outreach Committee actively engages in recruitment activities and dissemination of application materials.
- By February 1 2021
 - The Board hires a full time Lead Administrator on a contractual basis
 - The Board continues oversight of all necessary steps for successful school operations, including enrollment, faculty, budgets, and fund-raising.
 - Application deadline-applications reviewed by admissions panel and lottery held on February 15 if needed. Rolling admissions continue as space allows.
 - Board begins a search for the Business Administrator, Administrative Assistant and Development Coordinator.
- By March 30
 - Business Administrator and Development Coordinator are hired on a contractual basis
- By May 1 2020 -Board completes policy development.
- By June 30, 2021
 - Faculty contracts are finalized, with full-time teachers to begin work July 1, 2021, and part-time faculty to begin September 8, 2021.
 - Contracts for Lead Administrator, Business Administrator, Development Coordinator and Administrative Assistant are finalized.
 - Facilities have been leased and necessary upgrades/renovations begun.
 - Lead Administrator oversees publication of curriculum materials (course catalog); Student-Parent and Employee Handbooks.
- Starting July 1, 2021

- Contracts for Full-time faculty, Lead Administrator, Business Administrator, Administrative Assistant and Development Coordinator go into effect.
- Up to 15 students in grades 1-9 complete admissions process; school governance entities and processes are set up as described in this application.
- Curriculum/Assessment Committee created to oversee curriculum development.
- Teachers engage in short and long-term curriculum and assessment planning.
- September 8, 2021—Gathering Waters Chartered Public School opens.

The Board of Trustees is accountable for compliance with this timeline and with all provisions for the operation of the school as set forth in the application as approved.

h. Projected student enrollment for each of the first 5 years of operation. Ed 318.05(c)(6)
 Projected enrollment: 1st year -135; 2nd year-200; 3rd year -275; 4th and 5th years-300. These are projections. Waldorf teachers are trained to teach the range of grade levels thereby allowing flexibility in staffing and the potential for combined classes as needed.

i. Students to be served: grade/age levels, maximum number, other information about pupils to be served. RSA 194-B:3,II (e), Ed 318.09 (c)(5)

Gathering Waters will serve grades 1-12 beginning with grades 1-9 the first year with an additional grade and students being added each successive year until the school is at capacity. Projected enrollment is an average of 25 students in each grade with full capacity enrollment of 300 students. Student attrition will be examined each year and robust enrollment efforts made across the grades.

Total Projected 5 Year Enrollment

Grade	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
1	15	20	25	25	25
2	15	20	25	25	25
3	15	20	25	25	25
4	15	20	25	25	25
5	15	20	25	25	25
6	15	20	25	25	25
7	15	20	25	25	25
8	15	20	25	25	25
9	15	20	25	25	25
10	0	20	25	25	25
11	0	0	25	25	25
12	0	0	0	25	25
Total	135	200	275	300	300

j. **Educational need—How this school is different...will it be located in an underserved community for educationally disadvantaged, at risk students? List the district, charter and non-public schools currently operating in the general area.**

While we recognize that students in this region have access to other schools, we are confident that the distinctive features of Gathering Waters, its culture, curriculum and teaching methods, will meet the needs and aspirations of students in our region of all backgrounds and ability levels. The characteristics noted in part e. above, which have been hallmarks of the Waldorf approach for decades, have been strongly validated by scholars in the field of education. We provide citations in Section 5.

While not specifically designated an underserved area, Cheshire county is ranked 8th out of 10 counties in NH with a poverty rate of 10.2 percent. 14.1 % of individuals in Keene live below the poverty line (<https://www.nhes.nh.gov/elmi/products/cp/profiles-htm/keene.htm>) and 23% of children enrolled in school in Keene are living in poverty (www.welfareinfo.org). According to the NH Board of Education website, Cheshire county ranks about in the middle of all NH counties in terms of high school completion rates suggesting that the area could well benefit from a school such as Gathering Waters.

Those students who desire and require a smaller, more personal learning environment will find extraordinary support from committed, involved teachers and staff. Those who have struggled under a curriculum and assessment framework that does not do justice to their unique abilities and learning styles will thrive within a closely-knit and supportive learning community that holds students to high standards while also supporting them each step of the way. Those who have felt “lost” or threatened in their current schools will benefit from the warm, caring and inclusive environment that Gathering Waters fosters among its students. And all students regardless of intellectual, artistic or physical ability will be given the opportunity to cultivate their own unique gifts while also strengthening their commitment to a sustainable and healthy world. Students who have discovered what they are capable of and what their interests are will be able to choose their next steps freely and wisely, and will be well prepared to contribute to a compassionate, sustainable, and prosperous future for their local and global communities.

Public Schools Currently Operating in the larger region:

SAU 29 Elementary Schools (Chesterfield Elementary School; Wells Memorial Elementary School, Harrisville; Benjamin Franklin Elementary School, Keene; Fuller Elementary School, Keene; Symonds Elementary School, Keene; Wheelock Elementary School, Keene; Marlborough Elementary School, Marlborough; Marlow Elementary School, Marlow; Nelson Elementary School, Nelson; Westmoreland Elementary School, Westmoreland), Keene Middle and High School, Monadnock Regional Middle and High School, East Swanzey (6.6 miles from Keene), MC2 Charter High School, Keene, LEAF Charter High School, Alstead (24 miles from Keene), Fall Mountain High School, Langdon (25 miles from Keene), Conant High School, Jaffrey (16 miles from Keene), Conval High School, Peterborough (20 miles from Keene)

Independent Schools Currently Operating in the area:

St Joseph’s Academy, Keene, Monadnock Waldorf School, Keene, Dublin Christian Academy - Dublin (21 miles from Keene), Victory High School- Jaffrey (29 miles from Keene) , The Dublin School – Dublin (21 miles from Keene)

k. Any reasons why the prospective board of trustees believes RSA 194-B.3.XII relative to a shortening of deadlines may apply to this case

Recognizing that the current pandemic may create barriers to fundraising as well as cause delays in the acquisition and retrofit of a suitable space, we respectfully ask for an expedited decision regarding the application of Gathering Waters so that we may move forward with the full understanding and confidence of our acceptance.

Section 4: Governance

a. Governing Board: roles, responsibilities, qualifications, skillset, experience. Ed318.09(e)(2)

The operating bodies of the school are the Gathering Waters Chartered Public School Board of Trustees, the Administration (consisting of the Lead Administrator, Business Administrator, Administrative Assistant and Enrollment and Development Coordinator), the Leadership Council (consisting of the Lead Administrator and Faculty Chairs) and the Faculty. The Parent Council, and in the High School, Student Council play an advisory and supportive role. All governance bodies will adhere to democratic processes and principle. Implementation of governance is characterized by collaboration, effective leadership, and accountability.

Our school leadership process follows the guidelines of the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education, which recommends the principle of shared responsibilities within established legal structures, for school governance. In Public Waldorf Schools collaboration among teachers, staff, administration and boards, with stakeholders' input, is the rule. A core organizing principle of Waldorf education is that decisions related to educational programming are best made by the teachers who are working directly with students every day. When possible those responsible for making such decisions act from knowledge and experience working with Rudolf Steiner's educational insights.

The Leadership Council made up of the Lead Administrator and the Lower (1-5) and Upper School (6-12) Faculty Chairs is responsible for training, supervising, supporting and reviewing all faculty members as well as supporting students and families who may require special care. The Council develops, monitors, and reviews the curriculum as well as the daily schedule and future planning. It is the responsibility of the Board to approve recommendations regarding hiring of faculty submitted by the Leadership Council. In the event of a disagreement on the leadership council, the Lead Administrator shall make the final decision. Since there will be no Leadership Council prior to having hired teachers, the initial recruitment and hiring of Faculty will be the sole responsibility of the Board.

The Lead Administrator is responsible for the day-to-day-work of the school and direct supervision of the Faculty (in conjunction and consultation with the Faculty Chairs), the Business Administrator, the Office Assistant, and the Enrollment and Development Coordinator.

The Board of Trustees has the final responsibility for fiscal and legal matters and is accountable for the school and its operations. The Board of Trustees is made up of four parent representatives, one or two teacher representatives appointed by the Faculty, the Lead Administrator as a non-voting member, Business Administrator, and four community members. We will attempt to ensure highly qualified Board Members with expertise and skills in the

following areas: law, finance, fundraising, education, marketing, development, information technology and administration. Trustees should show dedication to the mission and vision of the School and possess the following personal characteristics:

- Honesty, sensitivity to and tolerance of differing views, a friendly, responsive and patient approach, community-building skills, personal integrity, a developed sense of values, a sense of humor and a commitment to professional standards of confidentiality.
- Willingness to prepare for and attend Board and committee meetings, ask questions, take responsibility and follow through on a given assignment, contribute personal and financial resources according to circumstances, open doors in the community, evaluate one's own performance.
- Willingness to develop certain skills not already possessed, such as: to cultivate donors and solicit funds, cultivate and recruit Board members and other volunteers, read and understand financial statements, learn more about the substantive program area and issues pertaining to the school.

The Board meets on a monthly basis throughout the year and is an open public meeting (in accordance with RSA 91 A-2, except for those meetings or proceedings designated as nonpublic sessions as defined in RSA 91-A:3, II). Board members are expected to attend meetings regularly and will be subject to replacement if absences reach 50 percent 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.

It is the responsibility of the Board to develop policies and put them in writing, so they serve as guidelines and goals for the successful and efficient functioning of the school. It will annually evaluate and update its policies and ensure compliance with RSA 194 B:5. If in express conflict, compliance to NH state regulations will take precedence. The Board's functions include:

- Overseeing that the school's program and operation are faithful to the terms of its charter, bylaws, policies, and its mission statement.
- Adopting policies that further clarify and assist in maintaining the mission and educational program of Gathering Waters.
- Ensuring that the school's academic programs are successful. All academic programs are evaluated and reviewed annually by the Board. These evaluations are used to determine the effectiveness of the programs and provide direction for improvements.
- Ensuring that the school is financially solvent by planning and budgeting to meet the school's goals, approving an annual budget for the school as well as a long-range strategic growth plan.
- Ensuring proper accounting and reporting policies
- Hiring the Lead Administrator, Office Coordinator, Enrollment and Development Coordinator, and Business Administrator and evaluating their performance annually; hiring faculty upon recommendations by the Faculty Chairs and Lead Administrator.
- Creating, serving on, and appointing people to necessary committees.

- Providing Board orientation to all members, which includes introduction to the school and curriculum, classroom visits, and copies of Board by-laws and Employee and Student-Parent Handbooks

Prior to opening the Board of Trustees of Gathering Waters will develop policies regarding:

- Budget, fund-raising and growth,
- Records Retention,
- Promotion of School Safety,
- Reporting of suspected abuse or neglect,
- Sexual Harassment,
- Pupil safety and violence prevention,
- Limiting the use of child restraint practices,
- Developmentally appropriate daily physical activity,
- Grievance and complaints process.

These policies will be compiled in a binder and included as appropriate in the Student-Parent and Employee Handbooks.

b. Method by which trustees and their terms are determined. RSA 194-B:3,II(c)

The founding Board is appointed by the Friends of Gathering Waters, the founding organization of the school, which includes community members, parents and educators. A formal transition and induction will take place within two months of school authorization and before the school begins to operate. Prospective Board members will participate in training in general governance and financial management, as advised by the New Hampshire Center for Nonprofits, the Local Government Center, and the New Hampshire School Boards Association. Terms of Trustees are staggered three-year terms. Approximately one half of the initial Trustees will be appointed for two or three-year terms to initiate staggered terms to ensure 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 and establish policies for Board governance and filling vacancies.

c. Board of Trustees By-Laws Ed 318.09(e)(2)

Please See Appendix I

d. Organizational Structure and Growth Plan RSA 194-B:3, II (b)

The developers of the school, the Friends of Gathering Waters, will empower and establish a formal Board of Trustees within two months of authorization. The Board of Trustees will immediately begin functioning in accord with its Bylaws, meeting monthly or more frequently as needed to ensure successful implementation of the school's program by September 2021. Its plan for organizational growth includes the following steps:

- Election of Board officers.
- Review of and implementation of a comprehensive fundraising plan for pre- and post-opening of the school.
- Preparation of detailed and if necessary revised budget for school operations.

- Hiring of the Lead Administrator, Enrollment and Development Coordinator, Business Administrator and Office Assistant.
- Hiring of initial full-time faculty.
- Set up the Board Executive Committee, to consist of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board, the Lead Administrator and Faculty Chairs.
- Set up other committees as designated in the Bylaws.

Please also see Section 3g. for timeline for implementation.

The Executive Committee, with Board oversight, will ensure that preparation for delivering the curriculum is completed by September 2021, including but not limited to decisions/steps in regard to enrollment; student transportation; course schedules; adjunct/part-time faculty; classroom supplies/equipment; extracurricular activities. The Board of Trustees will direct the Lead Administrator to initiate a process for forming the Parent and Council within a month of school opening. Focus during the first five years of operation will be on strengthening our internal processes and policies to ensure continuous improvement through a process of self-evaluation and consultation with other charter schools, the Department of Education and the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education. We will continue to develop and refine daily policies, procedures and practices in our program and strengthen the faculty and administration through professional development. Supplemental programming during the school day will be developed to meet the needs of our students. The first five years allows for modest growth in student population up to a maximum of 25 per grade. Each year of the first four years we plan to add an additional high school class until we have a complete 4-year high school in year four. Each of these steps will be undertaken after careful evaluation of our already existing program to ensure the delivery of a high-quality educational experience for all students. As the school grows, faculty and administrative staff will be added to support school needs (see budget payroll calculator for break down). Additional programs such as before and after care will also be developed to meet the needs of our families.

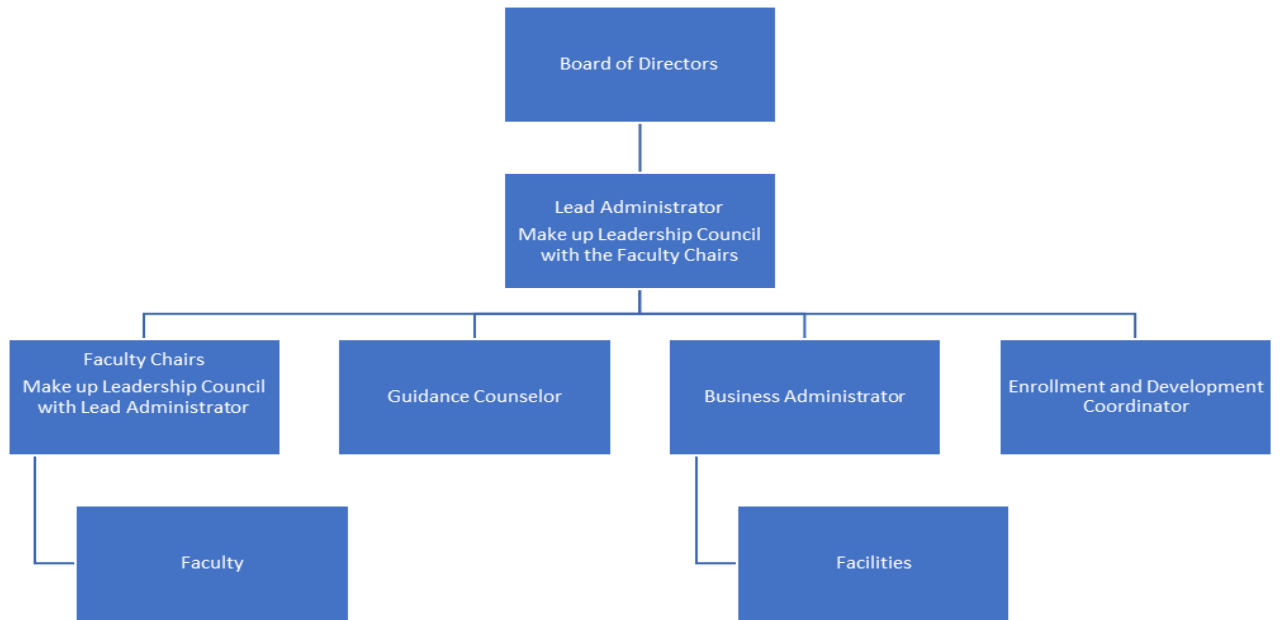
Board of Trustees

Holds Faculty and Administration responsible for accomplishing the school’s vision and strategic plan. Provides legal and fiduciary stewardship, strategic planning, fundraising and risk management oversight. Hires and reviews Lead Administrator, Business Administrator and Enrollment and Development Coordinator.

Board Committees	Lead Administrator	Faculty Led by Faculty Chairs	Business Administrator	Parent Council
Executive -Oversight of administration and operations with Faculty Chairs, Lead Administrator and Business Administrator Finance -Monitors budget, reports to the full board on financial issues Governance Recruits & orients new board members, ensures committees are working effectively, maintains climate to promote effective	Regulations/ Compliance Security/Safety Oversee Special Ed. School Report Card Budget Mediator and Advisor Collaborates with Faculty chairs on curriculum, faculty hiring and evaluation	Curriculum/ Program Educational Policies Hiring with Lead Administrator Teacher Review Teacher Support Festivals Classroom Mgmt	Payroll (contracted) Benefits (contracted) Financial Reporting Supplies Main Office Buildings & Grounds	Community building & education Forum for parent input Encourages parent involvement Faculty/ Staff appreciation events

work and morale within the Board. Human Resources -HR, Compensation Policies/Procedures Development and Fundraising -Creates development plan; Enrollment and Outreach -plans and facilitates outreach events w/ Enroll & Dev Coordinator and office mgr support Strategic Planning -Long range planning	Admin Assistant manages activities of main office Enrollment and Development Coordinator Enrollment Outreach Fundraising Development			
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Gathering Waters Organizational Chart



e. Fundraising Plan Ed 318.09 (e)(11)

The Development and Fundraising Committee of the Gathering Waters Board of Trustees is tasked with working with the Development and Enrollment Coordinator in the planning and implementation of all development and fundraising activities, recognizing that to be successful we will also have to engage school staff, parents and students. We will have an estimated

\$346,000 of start-up costs reflecting 3 preoperational months of salaries, lease and taxes, technology infrastructure, curriculum and professional development and supplies. It is anticipated that we will receive a Federal Start-up grant to cover the majority of these costs. The members of the Development Committee of the Board will be responsible for submitting the necessary application to the State of NH by the listed deadline. We also expect to raise a modest 20,000 in donations from supporters in the community prior to opening in September 2021 through an online Silent Auction to be posted at the time of our acceptance being organized by our marketing committee as well as individual appeals.

Our current budget involves raising a total of 97,000 our first year growing 3% each year. 32% of this (31,000 in the first year) will be raised through school sponsored fundraisers: a holiday craft fair to be held in early November and Circus Smirkus to be held in the Summer and a cash raffle in the spring. While some of these fundraisers require a significant input of time on the part of parents and community members we recognize that they also serve a dual function of community building and marketing in the community. Given this dual function they will be the responsibility of a subcommittee comprised of members of the marketing and outreach committee and the development and fundraising committee with oversight by the Development Coordinator.

Approximately 16 % (16,000 in the first year) will be raised through the annual fund and appeals to individuals. The appeal will go out by November 1 with the aim of reaching our goal of 16,000 by December 15 of each year. We expect to have 100% board and faculty involvement at whatever level feels manageable to the individual. This annual appeal will be the responsibility of the Fundraising and Development Committee with oversight by the Development Coordinator and administrative assistance by the Administrative assistant.

The remaining 51 % (50,000 in the first year) will be raised through larger individual donations of 5000 or more and foundation grants. The identification of appropriate grants will be the responsibility of the Development Coordinator. Members of the Development Committee will assist with grant writing until the point in time that our budget can support a grant writer. We are currently investigating grants through the Putnam Foundation and the Barr Foundation as well as local businesses such as C and S Wholesalers and Markham Image. Deadlines for such grants may be variable but we expect to have raised the total from grants by March of each year. The Fundraising and Development Committee is accountable to the Board of Trustees. The Board will conduct an evaluation of all fundraising activities twice a year to ensure that goals are being met, and to determine best practices and potential areas of improvement. Please see the detailed fundraising plan in Appendix N, and the Circus Smirkus plan in Attachment 1.

f. Grievance/complaints Process or Policy

Gathering Waters is committed to providing the best possible working conditions for its employees and educational environment for students and families. Part of this commitment is encouraging an open and frank atmosphere in which any conflict, complaint, suggestion, or question receives a timely response within the school. Gathering Waters strives to ensure fair and honest treatment of all employees, students and families. All school community members are expected to treat each other with mutual respect and are encouraged to offer positive and constructive criticism.

Internal Grievance/Disputes arising from within Gathering Waters, including all disputes among and between students, staff, parents, volunteers, advisors, partner organizations, and governing board members, will be resolved pursuant to policies and processes developed by the school. The LEA shall not be involved with internal disputes of Gathering Waters unless Gathering Waters requests LEA involvement or it is legally required.

If employees disagree with established rules of conduct, policies, or practices, they can express their concern through the conflict resolution procedure. No employee will be penalized, formally or informally, for voicing a complaint with Gathering Waters in a reasonable, business-like manner, or for using the conflict resolution procedure. If a situation occurs when employees believe that a condition of employment or a decision affecting them is unjust or inequitable, and they do not feel that this can be resolved through informal measures, they are encouraged to make use of the following steps. The employee may discontinue the procedure at any step.

1. Employee presents conflict in written form to the Faculty Chairs or Lead Administrator after the incident occurs.
2. If that person is unavailable or the employee believes it would be inappropriate to contact the Faculty Chairs or Lead Administrator the employee may present the conflict to the Chair of the Board of Trustees.
3. The Lead Administrator or Board Chair responds to conflict during discussion or after consulting with others, when necessary, and documents discussion.
4. Any grievance or complaint that is not resolved by the above steps shall be brought before a subcommittee of the Board for hearing. This subcommittee will make recommendations to the full Board for action regarding the grievances and/or complaints brought forth.

The above process also applies to any parent or student. In situations involving a classroom teacher or other employee they are encouraged to first bring their complaint to the teacher or employee in question. If they feel the issue is not resolved or it is not appropriate to bring to that person, they shall bring the concern in writing to the Faculty Chairs or Lead Administrator or the Board as above.

In the case of grievances and/or complaints against the Board that cannot be resolved through informal conflict resolution, a neutral third-party mediator shall engage the Parties in a voluntary and non-binding mediation session designed to facilitate resolution of the dispute. The cost of such mediation shall be split between the parties. If applicable, each party shall bear its own attorney fees which result from the dispute resolution process.

Not every conflict can be resolved to everyone's total satisfaction, but only through understanding and discussion of mutual conflicts can members of the Gathering Waters community develop confidence in each other. This confidence is important to the operation of an efficient and harmonious work environment.

In the case of disputes between the LEA and Gathering Waters, an attempt will always be made to resolve them amicably and reasonably without resorting to formal procedures. Both shall refrain from public commentary regarding any disputes until the matter has progressed through the dispute resolution process unless legally required to do otherwise. In the event of a dispute between Gathering Waters and the LEA, the involved parties agree to frame the issue in a written format to be submitted to the Superintendent of the LEA and Gathering Waters Lead

Administrator. The Lead Administrator and Superintendent shall meet informally and confer in a timely fashion to attempt to resolve the dispute, not later than 5 business days from receipt of the statement. In the event that this informal meeting fails to resolve the dispute, both parties shall identify two governing board members from their respective boards who shall jointly meet with the Superintendent and Lead Administrator and attempt to resolve the dispute within 15 business days from the dispute statement. If this joint meeting fails to resolve the dispute, the Superintendent and Lead Administrator will identify a neutral third-party mediator to engage the Parties in a voluntary and non-binding mediation session designed to facilitate resolution of the dispute. The format of the mediation session shall be developed jointly by the Superintendent and Lead Administrator. Mediation shall be held within thirty business days of receipt of the dispute statement. The costs of mediation shall be split between the LEA and the Gathering Waters. If applicable, each party shall bear its own attorney fees which result from the dispute resolution process.

Section 5: Education Plan

- a. Curriculum that meets or exceeds state standards in the subjects offered; clearly defined, research-based with evidence of effectiveness. RSA 194-B:3, II (f); Ed 318.09 (e)(4)**

Please note that the proposed Gathering Waters curriculum, with specific course listings and standards for student achievement in each year, is given in Appendices K and L. State standards are incorporated into the curriculum in an age-appropriate manner. Please also see Attachment 2 for the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education Recommendations for the Grade Level Placement of the Common Core Standards in a Waldorf Inspired Public School Program. Research on effectiveness is presented in Section 5b below.

Gathering Waters uses a curriculum inspired by Waldorf Education that is adapted for public use by the Alliance of Public Waldorf Education. This curriculum is modeled on the curriculum for grades 1 through 12 that is used in independent Waldorf schools throughout the world. In regard to subjects required, it accords with those curriculums used in most public and private elementary and high schools throughout the U.S.

The Gathering Waters curriculum includes these core subjects for all grades: English language arts; mathematics; science; social studies/history; a foreign language; music; visual and performing arts; handwork and crafts; movement, games and physical education. It is a developmental approach: content and method of delivery are calibrated to meet the needs, interests, and capabilities of students at each developmental stage through the grade. The curriculum includes participation in service projects in the community and daily school jobs such as clean-up and recycling. Community and school service help students learn the values of meaningful work, self-sufficiency and responsibility to oneself and others.

The Waldorf curriculum model is published in chart form by the Research Institute for Waldorf Education. The chart, “The Waldorf School Curriculum: An Overview for American Waldorf School Teachers,” is available on the website of the Research Institute for Waldorf Education (www.waldorfresearchinstitute.org).

Another source describing the Waldorf curriculum is:

The Tasks and Content of the Steiner-Waldorf Curriculum, by Rawson, M., Richter, T. and Avison, K, Eds. Floris Books, 2nd Ed. (2014).

This book describes the development of each subject through the years 1-12 and gives an overview of the work of each class.

A source describing only the Waldorf high school curriculum is:

“The Waldorf High School” (An excerpt from *Understanding Waldorf Education: Teaching From the Inside Out*, by Jack Petrash, Gryphon House, Inc. (2009). Available at

https://www.waldorfschool.com/documents/education/the_waldorf_high_school_understanding_waldorf_education.pdf

This article summarizes the themes and methods for delivering the Waldorf high school curriculum, including its developmental focus through four years on capacities for observation, comparison, analysis, and synthesis; in depth study through block courses; training for independent and critical thinking; and artistic immersion.

The Waldorf curriculum presented in these sources is flexible and adaptable. Within the basic sequence of required courses, a Waldorf school faculty may adopt content and activities that best meet the needs and interests of the students being served. For example, Waldorf schools in China may emphasize Asian languages, cultures, and history whereas those in the U.S. have traditionally had a more Euro-American focus. That said, in recent years the curriculum of schools in the U.S. have incorporated more focus on Asia, in recognition of current world realities. The curriculum is also evolving over time. Waldorf school teachers regularly engage in collegial discussions of best practices for addressing the changing needs of today’s students. For example, the High School Research Project of the Association of (Independent) Waldorf Schools in North America has published a series of teachers’ colloquiums on core subjects –available from the Online Waldorf Library (www.waldorflibrary.org).

The Waldorf curriculum and instructional methods are grounded in an understanding of child and adolescent development; in particular the high school curriculum is designed to inspire and support students in their quests for identity, community, independence and purpose (Steiner 1921/2003, 1926/1977). This developmental approach is essentially Piagetian in nature in focusing on developmental stages and developmentally appropriate lessons across the age range (Piaget & Inhelder, 1969/2000). That is, expectations in regard to the development of capabilities and dispositions change with each grade. Course content, standards, and instructional and assessment methods are designed to accord with these differences.

Gathering Waters takes this model of education even further to address issues that are important in today’s quickly changing world. Social justice, equity, diversity, individual and global responsibility and environmental sustainability are embedded in the content of the curriculum and in the affirmation of each member of the community.

The Waldorf approach followed at Gathering Waters is holistic. Academic progress is part of a more comprehensive educational goal that explicitly includes and fosters emotional, physical, social, and character development, as well as cognitive abilities, in order to support the full human potential of each student. Recent research in the importance of multiple intelligences supports the holistic Waldorf approach (Gardner, 1993; Goleman, 1995; Salovey & Mayer,

1989). Features of the Waldorf approach such as experiential learning activities and group projects help support students in developing emotional intelligence and social inclusiveness as well as intellectual capacities.

In Waldorf pedagogy, the *how* (implementation) is as important as the *what* (course content). Methods for delivery of the curriculum aim to awaken, maintain, and enhance students' interest, curiosity, creativity, and enthusiasm for more learning. At Gathering Waters, through all grades, teachers use the following delivery methods that support this aim. (Research confirming the effectiveness of these delivery methods is given in Section 5b.)

Core curriculum subjects are taught in blocks. Core academic subjects are taught in 1½- 2 hour main lesson morning blocks—these are extended lessons that prioritize depth in a subject matter, promote inquiry and critical thinking, and allow for students to complete projects. During the main lesson teachers use a three-day rhythm consisting of content delivery, verbal recall, and illustration and/or composition of the core content. A subject block lasts for three to four weeks and there are usually nine blocks per year. Each block culminates in an individual or group project and end-of-block reflection. This approach allows students to fully immerse themselves in a subject and allows teachers to deliver deeper and more sophisticated content to meet students' growing intellectual ability and expanding worldview. The structure of the high school curriculum includes trimester courses, for example, electives and ongoing math skills courses.

Artistic activity is integrated into academic subjects whenever possible. Teachers include drawing, painting, diagrams, clay modeling, poetry, and dramatic presentations as part of students' learning experience in every required or elective class. For example, in history or geography students may make hand-drawn maps; in botany they will make detailed drawings of roots, stems, and leaves; in physics they will illustrate or diagram the steps in experiments; in anatomy they draw the parts of the body; in English they will illustrate a scene from a book, replicating the literary style of the author.

Teachers design core academic subject courses to ensure that student understand and build on basic principles and are given rich content on which to exercise critical and independent thinking. In all courses, students review basic principles and are exposed to carefully selected content on which to exercise and expand faculties such as critical and independent thinking: for example, basic postulates in science; classics and contemporary work in all literary genres; key figures and trends in history; controversial and topical issues in current events.

Experiential learning and field trips. In most courses, students engage in real-life activities related to the subject—enabling teachers to make what educators call performance assessments. For example, in a history block, a class may do a play about an event in that period. In science blocks, students perform experiments and draw their own conclusions (rather than first reading about results in a text book). They move out of the classroom and into surrounding forests and wetlands to observe wildlife, analyze soils, and appreciate the concepts of adaptation and succession first hand. In civics, they may attend city council meetings or visit the house of corrections to hear resident narratives.

A social curriculum marked by highly personalized relationships. Students are encouraged to support and encourage each other, building healthy peer relationships, and to embrace difference and diversity through group project assignments, peer assessments, and activities such as Morning Gathering and class plays. Small classes, relationships with the same class teacher over several years (in grade school) or individual advisors over four years (in high school), along with frequent interactions with the wider community, contribute to a school social culture of equity, respect for diversity, respect for individuality, and an ethic of social justice. A commitment to enable students to find a sense of social safety and that allows for authentic self-expression is increasingly critical in a time when bullying and cyberbullying are rampant.

The Gathering Waters curriculum is aligned with the Common Core State Standards, the NH College and Career Ready Standards and the NH core aligned Math, English/Language Arts, Science and Arts Standards, the NH Computer Science Standards and Work-Study Competencies, although it may differ in its implementation and timing. This alignment of the curriculum with the Common Core is outlined in Part III of Public Waldorf Schools and the Common Core Standards, published by the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education (Appendix P). The Alliance for Public Waldorf Education states, “Every Common Core Standard (K-8) is included in Part III. None has been omitted – Part III simply reorganizes the CC standards, placing them in their appropriate Waldorf Grade Level in a summary format.” Teachers will utilize this document as well as the Common Core alignment rubric available from the NH Department of Education in their curriculum planning. Please see Appendices K and L for a full presentation of the curriculum including content area standards for each course at each grade.

**b. Research for selecting curriculum Ed 318.09 (e)(4)
Elementary School Curriculum**

Most research on the effectiveness of the Waldorf curriculum and pedagogical methods focuses on public Waldorf elementary schools. However, the core principles of Waldorf pedagogy: experiential learning, artistic immersion, age appropriate methods of delivery, and a holistic concern with social, emotional, physical as well as cognitive development of students—are common through all twelve years.

The following five studies confirm the effectiveness of Waldorf-inspired public elementary-level education:

“Twenty years and counting: A look at Waldorf in the public sector using online sources,” by A. L. Larrison, A. J. Daly, and C. L. Van Vooren. *Current Issues in Education*, 15(3).

In this study, seventh and eighth graders in public Waldorf elementary schools in California performed better than their peers in non-Waldorf schools in reading and math.

Learning from Rudolf Steiner: The Relevance of Waldorf Education for Urban Public School Reform by Ida Oberman. Abstract available from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED498362>

The key finding of this California study was that students in public schools using Waldorf methods matched their peers in the top ten and outperformed the average of peers statewide in standardized tests. The author attributes this success to the Waldorf instructional and curricular focus on the three Rs—rigor, relevance, and relationships.

Growing a Waldorf-Inspired Approach in a Public School District by Diane Friedlaender, Kyle Beckham, Xinhua Zheng, and Linda Darling-Hammond. Abstract available from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED574645>

This research report found significantly higher positive student achievement outcomes on standardized state assessments by Waldorf students, greater engagement and significantly lower disciplinary action and truancy. These results held across the subsets of African American, Latino and socio-economically disadvantaged students.

Does Waldorf Offer a Viable Form of Science Education: A Research Monograph (2003) by D. Jelinik, and L. Sun. Sacramental: College of Education, California State University. Available at <https://www.csus.edu/indiv/j/jelinekd/Publications/WaldorfScience.pdf>

This study of independent Waldorf grade-schools found that Waldorf students scored slightly higher than their contemporaries in public schools in regard to scientific reasoning and problem solving, especially problems involving part-whole relationships—this latter difference was statistically significant. Researchers found 80 percent alignment of the Waldorf science curriculum with that used in public schools. Narrative responses by members of the scientific community who evaluated the Waldorf curriculum and the instructional methods noted some of what they considered as some deficiencies in curricular content, but were favorably impressed by the Waldorf strong emphasis on experimentation, demonstration, and observation. Although the Waldorf high school science curriculum was considered, study relevance to Waldorf high schools is limited as study participants were drawn from elementary schools. Researchers concluded with the following statement:

Time and again as our researchers visited the many Waldorf schools across America we were impressed with the eager, confident and curious Waldorf students we encountered. These students demonstrated original thinking and innovative problem solving, leaving us with the impression that they cared about what they were doing, were intrigued by challenging situations, and penetrated matters with an artist's perception.

The Comparative Status of the Creative Thinking Ability of Waldorf Education Students: A Survey by E. J. Ogletree, University of Chicago, Illinois. (1996).

This is an older study showing that 1,165 Waldorf students in grades three through six (in Waldorf schools in the United Kingdom and Germany) scored higher than non-Waldorf students on the Test of Creative Thinking Ability.

High School Curriculum

There are two sources for data on the effectiveness of the Waldorf high school curriculum: (1) test results from the independent (private) Waldorf high schools and (2) test results from public Waldorf high schools.

(1) The most robust evidence for the effectiveness of the Waldorf high school curriculum comes from a series of studies of graduates of independent Waldorf high schools, which provide data on college and university acceptances. In order to be accepted by colleges and universities, Waldorf high school students must take and achieve acceptable scores the SAT and ACT standardized tests. There is no data on standardized test scores for the separate years of high school because independent Waldorf high schools do not use other standardized tests during the four high school years to measure student progress toward the learning goals of each grade. Instead; they use

multidimensional assessment strategies, including teacher-made tests, as described in Section 5f below.

The most recent statistics on college acceptances are provided by *Into the World: How Waldorf School Graduates Fare After High School*. (Safit, Gerwin, et al., 2020). This study updates two earlier studies that found similar rates of college acceptances (Baldwin, Gerwin, & Mitchell, 2005; Mitchell and Gerwin, 2007). Available at www.waldorfresearchinstitute.org/research-from-waldorf-education. The new updated study is based on over 1,000 survey responses in 2019 from graduates of 39 different independent Waldorf high schools. Some 98 percent attended college or university; 95 percent reported feeling prepared for college and 75 percent reported feeling prepared for life; 92 percent completed their degree program and 90 percent had been accepted at one or more of their top three college choices. The list of college acceptances includes small and large colleges and universities including some considered prestigious and selective, indicating high test scores. The study also noted that Waldorf high school graduates tend to choose careers in education, the humanities and service fields (40 percent); a growing percentage is choosing careers in STEM fields (22 percent).

(2) The other source of data for the effectiveness of the Waldorf high school curriculum is from public charter schools that use the Waldorf high school curriculum. It is a very small sample size because to date there are only three public Waldorf high schools that are members of the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education. (Most Waldorf charter schools are K-8 schools). These three schools are subject to and are meeting local and state standards as confirmed by the appropriate standardized tests required by their state.

One of these schools, Credo High School in Sonoma County, with an enrollment of 410 students, grades 9-12, reports the following:

The percentage of all Credo students meeting or exceeding standards on California standardized state tests is well above both county and state averages.

2016-2017	Credo	Sonoma County	California
English/Language Arts	83%	45%	48%
Mathematics	59%	31%	37%
Science	86%	55%	54%

Results over two years of the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP), given in the eleventh grade (the data is combined with grade school results) show the percentage of students meeting or exceeding California state standards:

	Credo 2017-18	2018-19	State 2017-18	2028-19
English Language Arts	89%	73%	50%	50%
Math	57%	62%	38%	34%

<https://credohigh.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Credo%20SARC%202018-19.pdf>

Credo’s class of 2018 was the school’s fourth group of graduates: 70 percent went to four-year colleges, 24 percent went to two-year colleges, and 6 percent took a gap year. Ninety-seven percent of graduates qualified for admission to the University of California. Credo High School is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). In addition, according to Credo’s website, “In recognition of the high quality of our academic program, the University of California has guaranteed admission to the top 9 percent of each Credo graduating

class, and Sonoma State University has guaranteed admission to all Credo graduates with a GPA of 3.0 or higher. (www.credohigh.org)

Specific test results for a second school, the Desert Marigold School in Phoenix, AZ, are not available for general inquiry. However, according to the school's website, students in grades 3-12 participate in Arizona's standardized testing program and the school currently meets or exceeds state standards. The following statement from the school's website aligns with the approach to testing to be used at Gathering Waters:

As a publicly funded school, DMS participates in the required [state] standardized testing, but see it as only one facet of assessing a student's development. The focus of those tests is limited to academics, only one aspect of a child's development.

Nevertheless, these tests can be a useful tool to the school, when viewed in light of our multi-faceted approach to assessment. We will never strive to "boost" results by "teaching to the test" as our curriculum prepares children sufficiently to "succeed." Currently, students in grades 3 through high school are being tested per Arizona Department of Education guidelines. In addition, DMS has chosen Galileo testing to supplement our assessments and familiarize students with testing routines....

***State Standards:** DMS meets the core state educational standards through our developmentally sound, experiential approach, bringing educational experiences and content in an age-appropriate manner. We continually assess our program to assure that it best meets the needs of students, and that it is in harmony with both state standards and what is age-appropriate.*

The third public Waldorf high school affiliated with the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education is George Washington Carver School of Arts and Science in Sacramento. It is an ethnically diverse school with 270 students. Data from its website and its 2017-18 School Accountability Report Card indicate need for improvement in complying with some California state standards, which may reflect the fact that 20 percent of the students have learning disabilities and 47 percent are in the category of economically disadvantaged. Nonetheless, the graduation rate was 92 percent and 89 percent attended two- or four-year colleges.

Also relevant to evaluating the success of the High School curriculum is:

Hether, Christine A. *The Moral Reasoning of High School Seniors from Diverse Educational Settings*. (2001). Ph.D Dissertation, Saybrook Graduate School and Research Institute, California. Summarized in an article, Hether, Christine, "The Moral Reasoning of High School Seniors from Diverse Educational Settings," available as https://www.waldorflibrary.org/images/stories/articles/RB13_1hether.pdf

This research found that Waldorf high school students scored significantly higher than peers in religious-affiliated independent schools and public schools on the widely-used Defining Issues Test (DIT), a standardized tool which measures moral reasoning using moral problem sets. It was found, through qualitative methods (interviews) that this result was probably attributable to the Waldorf "whole person" approach—it was emphatically not due to teachers' proselytizing but rather is implicit in the curriculum and pedagogy.

In conclusion, data confirming the success of the Waldorf high school curriculum throughout the four years is strong but limited and will eventually be provided by new public Waldorf charter

high schools, whose students, like those in the California and Arizona schools, will take standardized tests as required by their state charter.

Implementation of Curriculum

In addition to the research on Waldorf Inspired Curriculum there is ample research on the **methods** of implementation of the curriculum that are used for all grades 1-12.

Core curriculum subjects are taught in blocks. Block scheduling has been shown to allow more time for individualized attention and student evaluation. (Black 1998; Marshak 1998; Skrobarcek et al. 1997) and increased student grade point averages (Zepeda and Mayers, 2006). Instructional blocks have also been shown to foster student-teacher relationships (Carroll, 1994) and improved school climate (Zepeda and Mayers, 2006).

Artistic activity is integrated into academic subjects whenever possible. Considerable research has confirmed the importance of the arts for the development of cognitive abilities and emotional health as well as creativity (Davis, 2007; Efland, 2002; Eisner, 2002, 2005; Heilman, 2005; Posner & Patoine, 2009; Starko, 2010). Arts education encourages students to recognize their own and others' skills, fosters student/teacher collaboration, bridges cultural differences and draws in parents and community (Nobori, 2012).

Teachers design core academic subject courses to ensure that student understand and build on basic principles and are given rich content on which to exercise critical and independent thinking. Teachers plan their courses according to the "understanding by design" method advocated by Wiggins and McTighe (2005). Rich content is essential for students to develop their own critical thinking abilities: they need to know what others have thought, what challenging questions in science, history, and the humanities have been discussed, and what solutions have been attempted (Senechal, 2010).

Experiential learning and field trips. Such activities have been confirmed by educators as effective for ensuring, as well as assessing, understanding (e.g., Mehrens, 1992; Moskal, 2003; Wiggins, 1998; Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). Field trips motivate students to want to learn (Kern & Carpenter, 1984) and can result in a more positive attitude on the part of students towards science and environmental concepts (Bitgood, 1989).

A social curriculum marked by highly personalized relationships Research has shown the importance of the school as a caring community for good learning outcomes (Shepard, 2000; Gallagher & Goodman, 2008). Positive peer relationships enhance a sense of belonging and improve student behavior in school (Christenson & Havsy, 2003). Students succeed when they are supported by caring teachers and when home, school, and community work together to maintain high expectations for student behavior and achievement (Zins et al., 1996).

c. Statement that the school will have available information about its curriculum and policies to all persons and parents and students considering enrollment. RSA 194-B:2,II; Ed 318.07 (b) (6)

Gathering Waters will make available information about its curriculum and policies to all persons, parents and students considering enrollment. This information will be available in printed form, mailed or distributed on request, and online on the school's website. It will also be included in outreach materials. Every effort will be made to make materials accessible for ESL learners and those with a wide range of reading abilities.

**d. Measurable Academic Learning Goals and Objectives and timeline for accountability
RSA 194-B:3, II (g)**

Please see Appendices K and L for a detailed presentation of the Gathering Waters curriculum with academic learning goals and objectives listed by grade and by course. Students in the lower school must meet the standards listed in order to proceed to the next grade level. Students in the High School must also meet the standards with a passing grade of C. The curriculum presented in Appendices K and L is the basic required curriculum. Depending on the qualifications and special interests of faculty, Gathering Waters will add elective courses when the school has reached full enrollment and finances are stabilized.

Section 5f below describes the methods by which Gathering Waters teachers will measure student progress toward meeting standards.

In addition to the measurable goals enumerated by grade-level and subject in Appendices K and L, at Gathering Waters we are guided by a set of cross-disciplinary goals for the development, throughout the 1-12 school years, of abilities and capabilities that are needed for learning in all subjects and for overall school success and by the broad goal of educating the whole human being. These are also included at the end of Appendix L.

Timelines for accountability in achievement of subject-specific goals and objectives are as follows:

Elementary School

Teachers will provide students with ongoing feedback on their work in an age-appropriate manner. In the middle of each semester parents will be provided with a written assessment of their child's work in both main lesson and special subject areas to be accessed on Big Sis. This will be followed by a more comprehensive assessment at the end of each semester. Parent-teacher conferences will also be scheduled on a twice-yearly basis. At any point during the year if a teacher has specific concerns about a student's progress they will communicate directly with parents.

By the end of grade 7 we expect at least 80% of all students at Gathering Waters will be reading and performing math at grade level as assessed by NH SAS tests: ELA and Math.

By the end of grade 8 we expect at least 80% of all students will exhibit grade level scientific reasoning assessed by state science testing.

By the end of each school year we expect at least 80% of all students will have completed a comprehensive competency-based portfolio of their work throughout the school year of acceptable quality according to the teacher assessment.

High School:

- At midway point of each three- to four-week block and midway point of each trimester course, teachers provide students whose work is not meeting expectations with an update so stating, with comments and help offered on how to improve.
- At the completion of each block course, teachers provide a report with a letter grade, comments, and narrative evaluation.

- At the end of each trimester course (required skills-based or elective), teachers issue reports that indicate the exceeding, meeting, or failure to meet goals and objectives, with letter grades, comments, and narrative evaluation.
- At the end of each academic year, teachers and student advisors issue reports with a cumulative narrative evaluation, along with letter grades in all courses.
- **By the end of each school year we expect at least 80% of all high school students to have completed all of their courses with a grade of C or higher (please see Appendix L for high school grading standards).**
- **We expect 90% of all seniors to have completed the graduation requirements as outlined below in section g.**
- **We expect 90% of all seniors to have completed a high-quality senior project to the satisfaction of their community mentor and faculty advisor.**

e. Performance Standards

Performance and learning standards for every grade level at Gathering Waters are outlined in Appendices K and L and are aligned with the Common Core Standards as set by the State of New Hampshire. While some aspects of the curriculum may differ in their implementation and timing from that of other public schools none of the standards has been omitted and it is expected that graduates from a Waldorf-inspired Public School will have achieved the Common Core Standards (1-12). Please see Attachments for the Recommendations For the Grade Level Placement Of the Common Core Standards In a Waldorf-Inspired Public School Program. This approach has been validated by The Alliance for Public Waldorf Education and the research outlined above in section 5b.

In addition to academic skills and knowledge outlined in the Common Core Standards, the curriculum at Gathering Waters includes standards for the development of character, healthy physical growth and relationships, social consciousness, environmental awareness, imagination and creativity, attributes that we consider to be essential for success in college, careers and life.

f. Achievement Tests to be used to measure pupil academic and other goal achievement RSA 194-B:3,II(h)

Measurement of student achievement will comply with RSA 194-B:8,V, which states “At least annually, and near the end of each school year, a chartered public school shall evaluate the educational progress of each pupil, as specified in RSA 194-B:3 II(h). Such evaluation shall include, but not be limited, to the New Hampshire statewide education improvement and assessment program, as provided in RSA 193-C. The cost of the state assessment program shall be borne by the state.” Student achievement will initially be measured using current mandatory State Assessment System (SAS) testing in grades three through eight, with accommodations for students with learning challenges.

The purpose of assessment. The purpose of assessment at Gathering Waters is to support further learning. Most educators recognize that motivation is an essential condition for learning to take place (e.g, Wiggins & McTighe, 2005; Black et al., 2004; Marzano & Kendall, 2007). Assessments that let individual students know what they still need to know, rather than ranking or scores without explanations, will help to motivate and encourage further learning. This approach to measuring student progress and achievement is known as learning-centered

assessment and is advocated by many education scholars (e.g., Stiggins, 2002; Wiggins, 1998; Wiliam, Lee, Harrison, & Black, 2004).

Classroom assessments. Teachers conduct classroom assessments continuously and simultaneously as they teach. Research confirms that such curriculum-embedded classroom assessments, conducted during teaching and learning, and which give personalized, individual feedback, are the fairest, most reliable, and most valid indicators of student progress (Airasian, 2005; Anderson, 2003; Mc Millan, 2006; Stiggins, 2001; Wiggins, 1998). Classroom assessments function as **formative assessments**, allowing teachers to understand what students still need to know to proceed toward meeting learning goals for the course.

Performance assessments. The experiential nature of the curriculum—that students are engaged in subject-related activities such as experiments, demonstrations, recitations, group projects—lends itself to a type of classroom assessment known as performance assessment. Performance assessments are advocated by many education scholars for ensuring fair and reliable measurement of student achievement (e.g., Baron & Wolf, 1996; McTighe & Ferrara, 2011; Mehrens, 1992; Wolf & Reardon, 1996).

Competency Based Portfolios. Students create their own record of achievement for most block and trimester courses. They compile their essays, notes taken, lab reports, quizzes and tests, drawings and diagrams, artwork, or project reports into a portfolio that contributes toward their course grade and supports students in self-assessment. Research supports the benefits of portfolios as a record and confirmation of work done (Darling-Hammond, 2008; Gardner, 1993; Wiggins, 1998).

Multidimensional summative assessments. Each block course and trimester skills-based class culminates in a test, an oral exam, a comprehensive essay or report, completion of a portfolio or block lesson book, and/or student project or presentation. Teachers measure each student's progress towards the course objectives and arrive at a final grade using some of all of these pieces of evidence.

Student peer- and self-assessment. When appropriate, in addition to teacher reviews, students share their work with their fellow students and receive constructive criticism through discussion and written evaluations. Student self-evaluation and peer assessments are effective methods for motivating further learning (Shepard, 2000; Stiggins, 2001). At Gathering Waters, these methods are part of the classroom as a learning community wherein students and teachers mutually support the advancement of all toward attaining course goals.

State and District Required Testing

Gathering Waters will participate in State and District requires NH SAS tests: ELA and Math 3rd-8th grade as well as 5th and 8th grade science testing.

First and Second grade Assessments: The first and Second grade teachers will provide ongoing observational assessment of each child throughout the school year and will communicate student progress regularly to parents both informally and formally. These assessments will include: body coordination, fine and gross motor skill development, rhythmic abilities, proprioceptive and vestibular skills, visual, tactile and auditory development, speech

and communication development, language and cognitive development, social and emotional integration and development. Based on the findings of these assessments, the class teacher has the opportunity to incorporate targeted physical-spatial exercises into regular classroom teaching with the goal of supporting the development of all learners. When practical and possible, students new to Gathering Waters will be assessed prior to being placed in the First or Second grades.

High School Specific Assessment:

End-of-course assessments will be guided by rubrics as set forward in the NH Competency based standards for English, Mathematics, Social Science and Science. Teachers maintain written records of students’ achievements and issue reports to parents according to the timeline stated above in part (d), that is, mid-block and mid-trimester for students not meeting expectations and at the end of blocks and trimesters for all. Constant fine-tuning and periodic adjustments maximize student progress and assure intellectual engagement on the part of each child. All reports contain teachers’ comments in addition to letter grades. A narrative element in reports has been shown to support student motivation and performance (Brualdi, 1998; Wiggins, 1994).

Teachers record grades (see Appendix L) for college admission on a transcript that delineates courses taught as intensive blocks and as year-long skills classes. We treat all subjects equally in terms of grade point assessment. We do not rank students. Within each subject in the curriculum a variety of academic ability levels will be met. All of our students have access to advanced level classes and our teachers will tailor the material to meet the particular needs and capacities of every student to achieve the educational goals.

State and National assessment tools such as PSATs and SATs in junior and senior years will also be used in order to help students better understand their progress in comparison with a national average.

The Senior Project is a comprehensive research project that provides evidence of a student’s skills and understanding in a particular subject or subjects. Senior projects are designed with the guidance of a faculty advisor. They may culminate in an oral presentation to the school community and include an artistic component involving a medium of the student’s choice.

g. Graduation requirements sufficient to ensure the school has provided an adequate education for its pupils RSA 194-B:3,II(i)

In order to graduate high school students must earn at least 28 credits in accordance with the SAU 29 graduation requirements in addition to community service hours. The academic credits are embedded in the main lesson blocks as well as trimester skills courses. Additional credits may be earned through independent study, online offerings and other extended learning opportunities. Students earn credit by demonstrating competency as outlined in the description of assessments (f) above.

Humanities-English	Four years of courses in literature, including full-length classical and contemporary works. Writing work includes rhetorical, grammatical, syntactical patterns, forms and structures. The writing relates to the literature and course content. 1 credit each year through block courses.
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Humanities-History/Social Studies	Four years including US and world history, geography, political science and economics. 1 credit each year through block courses
Mathematics	Four years including algebra, geometry, intermediate algebra, pre-calculus, calculus and computer science. 1 credit each year through block courses and skills classes.
Science	Four years including earth science, biology, chemistry and physics. 1 credit each year through block courses and skills classes.
World Language	Four years required including 3 years in the same language. 1 credit each year through skills classes.
Visual and Performing Arts	Four years including fine arts, practical arts, music and performing arts. 1 credit each year through skills classes.
Movement and Physical Education	Four years including sports, dance, yoga, and health education. 1 credit each year through skills classes.

These requirements exceed New Hampshire's state graduation requirements per Ed 306.27 (m).

h. Student Performance Data Management System

All records of student performance will be managed through Big SIS data management system which has been developed with a specific focus for use in Waldorf schools. With BigSIS, teachers use the teacher portal for grades, reports and curricular assignments. Parents and students can access assignments, documents and reports through the parent portal. Reports are stored in the student's record and may be printed out.

i. Daily/Weekly Schedule Sample (subject to change)

Elementary School

Times	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:45-8	Faculty Gathering	Faculty Gathering	Faculty Gathering	Faculty Gathering	Faculty Gathering
8 -10	Main Lesson	Main Lesson	Main Lesson	Main Lesson	Main Lesson
10-10:30	Snack/Recess	Snack/Recess	Snack/Recess	Snack/Recess	Snack/Recess
10:30-11:15	Extra Main/Math	Handwork	Extra Main/Math	Handwork	Extra Main/Math
11:15-12	Language	Art	Language	Art	Language
12-1	Lunch/Recess/ Jobs	Lunch/Recess/ Jobs	Lunch/Recess/ Jobs	Lunch/Recess/ Jobs	Lunch/Recess/ Jobs
1-1:45	Extra Main/LA	Woodworking/ Movement	Extra Main/LA	Woodworking/ Movement	Extra Main/LA
1:45-2:30	Music	Environ Ed	Music	Environ Ed	Environ Ed

High School

Times	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:30-8:45	Faculty Gathering	Faculty Gathering	Faculty Gathering	Faculty Gathering	Faculty Gathering
8:45-9:10	Morning Meeting/ Sing	Morning Meeting/ Sing	Morning Meeting/ Sing	Morning Meeting/ Sing	Morning Meeting/Sing

9:15-10:45	MAIN LESSON	MAIN LESSON	MAIN LESSON	MAIN LESSON	MAIN LESSON
10:45-10:55	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
11-11:45	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
11:50-12:25	Art	Music	Art	Music	Study Hall-tutoring
12:25-1:25	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	12:25-1:10 LUNCH
1:30-2:15	Language	Humanities Skills	Language	Humanities Skills	1:10-2:10 Class Meetings
2:20-3:05	PE	Study Hall-tutoring	Service Work	PE	2:15-3:05 ASSEMBLY
3:05-3:15	Jobs	Jobs	Service Work	Jobs	Jobs
3:15-3:30	Faculty Office Hours	Faculty Office Hours	Faculty Office Hours	Faculty Office Hours	Faculty Office Hours
3:30-4:30	Clubs Activities Open Studio Study Hall	Clubs Activities Open Studio Study Hall	Clubs Activities Open Studio Study Hall	Clubs Activities Open Studio Study Hall	Clubs Activities Open Studio Study Hall

Supplemental programming needs will be evaluated and implemented based on the individual needs of each student. For students who require academic support, individual and group tutoring is provided. In the elementary and middle schools such support will be coordinated initially through that student’s teacher in collaboration with the guidance counselor and the student’s family. In the high school each student has an advisor who will work alongside the student’s teachers, the guidance counselor and in partnership with the student and his/her family to ensure that any needed services, are available to ensure student success. Credit recovery can be arranged on a case-by-case basis with the teacher in consultation with the Faculty Council and Lead Administrator. Students may also access supplemental programs through their resident districts.

Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) provides financial assistance to schools with high numbers or high percentages of students from low income families. The purpose of the funding is to help ensure that all children meet high academic standards. (Please note that students do NOT have to be from low-income families to receive support through Title I funded programming.) Services provided are supplemental to instruction that already occur within the school setting. This purpose is accomplished in two ways: (1) by providing children supplemental support through enriched and accelerated education programs; and (2) by providing instructional personnel with substantial opportunities for professional development. Parent involvement is critical to the success of students and is highly encouraged through Title I.

For students who meet or exceed the school’s content area standards, particularly in the High School, individualized enrichment programming will be developed incorporating independent study, college classes at Keene State College, community internships and online learning opportunities.

Section 6: School Operations Plans

a. Admissions Procedures RSA 194-B:3,II(o)

Gathering Waters Chartered Public School is an open enrollment, public school. Our admission procedures shall not discriminate or violate individual rights as prohibited by law. We expect the following of all students who are admitted: 1) The applicant student and their parent or

guardian agrees to the mission of the school, its policies, program, and expectations and signs the Admissions Agreement. 2) The enrolled student attends orientation within 6 months of enrollment during which he/she is expected to read the Student-Parent Handbook.

Students are recruited and admitted as follows:

- 1) **Beginning in January the first year and November in following years** the Enrollment and Outreach Committee of the Board (with the Development and Enrollment Director in subsequent years) actively engages in recruitment activities in Keene, and surrounding counties, including speaking and distributing information at area middle schools, community centers, the YMCA and library as well as holding on-site information sessions and open houses for prospective students and their families. Efforts will be made to reach as many students in the area as possible including migrant and refugee populations, English language learners and those who are educationally disadvantaged, homeless, or homeschooled. Gathering Waters provides application packets with information on its educational philosophy, curriculum and student expectations. When necessary translation services are available.
- 2) Students must complete the application and submit it by **February 1**. Applications may be completed in paper form or online and will include a conventional application form, a statement of interest to include essays, videos, personal interviews, drawings or other means of expression, and a statement of support from the student's parent, guardian, and/or adult advocate. While a requirement for admission, these statements are not used as a basis for selection and do not constitute a barrier to admission for the student.
- 3) Applications are reviewed by an admissions panel appointed by the Enrollment and Outreach Committee, composed of the Lead Administrator, at least one faculty member, a parent and a member of the wider community. In the first year this work will be done by the Enrollment and outreach Committee.
- 4) If at the application deadline, the number of spaces available is less than the number of qualified applications received, a lottery will be conducted by **February 15th** with all qualified applicants beginning at the highest grade offered by the school and continuing sequentially to lower grades. The hierarchy for admission priority will be assigned as follows:
 1. Children of Gathering Waters Founding Board Members, faculty and staff (in that order) shall receive 1st priority. We expect to reserve not more than 15 slots each year for such children.
 2. Siblings of existing students shall receive second priority for admission. If a student is selected in the lottery for admission, any younger siblings who are also qualified applicants are automatically granted admission if space in their grade level is available. If there are more qualified applicants who are siblings of existing students than there are available spaces, the siblings shall be subject to a lottery to determine award of available spaces. Siblings not awarded admission shall be placed at the head of the waiting list according to their lottery position.
 3. Students residing in New Hampshire shall receive absolute priority over out-of-state students.
 4. The remaining spaces shall be filled by blind lottery.
 5. Students not receiving admission through steps 1-4 shall be placed on a waiting list by blind lottery and be offered admission in that order as space becomes available.

6. If the number of students meeting any of the criteria 1-5 above exceeds the number of spots available the students meeting that hierarchical criteria will be subject to a random lottery to fill available spots.
7. Following the application deadline qualified applications will be accepted on a rolling admissions basis until all spots are filled.
8. If after the application deadline the number of qualified applications is greater than the number of spaces available qualified applications shall be placed on a waiting list and given the following priority:
 - a. Children of Gathering Waters Founding Members, faculty and staff shall receive 1st priority on the waitlist.
 - b. If space opens and a student is admitted from the waiting list any younger siblings of that newly admitted student who are also qualified applicants on the waiting list are automatically moved to the head of their respective waiting list.
 - c. Students residing in New Hampshire shall receive absolute priority over out-of-state tuition students.
 - d. Qualified applications received earlier shall have higher priority than those received later.
 - e. If the number of students meeting any of the above criteria exceeds the number of spots available, the students meeting that hierarchical criteria will be subject to a random lottery to place them on the waiting list.
2. Once admitted to Gathering Waters, enrolled students in good standing are not subject to the enrollment lottery and are automatically offered space in the school. Families of enrolled students will be asked to sign and submit a letter of intent to reenroll by an established date prior to the enrollment lottery. Students who have unenrolled from the school and wish to re-enroll must reapply subject to the above procedure.
- 5) Prior to school opening the student and parents review the responsibilities, rules, and commitments needed to attend and sign the Admissions Agreement, which is also signed by the Lead Administrator.
- 6) Once accepted, if a student is enrolled in a school district special education program, the student's sending school's Evaluation and Placement Team will be contacted to discuss special education support services. The student's parent or legal guardian will provide additional application components as needed: a completed educational history, transcripts from previous schools attended, and releases of information needed for obtaining records from prior schools.
- 7) Once accepted, the student attends an orientation and may need to provide a completed educational history, transcripts from previous schools attended, and releases of information needed for obtaining records from prior schools so the school can obtain additional information, e.g. skill screenings to determine levels of literacy (reading, writing, and math). Parents and Guardians are required to provide required medical information that must be on file before students are able to attend.
- 8) New students must successfully complete the orientation experience before their formal admissions period is completed. Students who have been accepted for orientation may attend the school while completing their admissions period.

9) Given that diversity is crucial to the school culture the admissions panel ensures that recruitment and enrollment practices promote inclusion by eliminating all barriers to enrollment for educationally disadvantaged students including foster youth, unaccompanied homeless youth and ELL. The panel also tracks applications from year to year and reaches out to underrepresented groups in future recruitment efforts. The panel ensures that methods for admission are not designed, intended or used to discriminate or violate individual civil rights in any manner prohibited by law according to Ed 318.07 (b) (1)a.

10) Further amendments to this timeline will be made as a policy by the Board of Trustees prior to the beginning of the enrollment period.

All registration procedures will be reviewed and policies developed by the Board of Trustees prior to the application deadline of February 1.

b. School Calendar, number and duration of days pupils are to be served RSA-194B:3,II (s)

The school day runs from 8-2:30 for elementary school and 8:30 a.m. until 3:15 a.m. for high school following the newly proposed school day hours for in SAU 29. High School students are invited to stay until 4:30 for clubs and open studio time. We follow the SAU 29 yearly schedule of vacations and holidays for a total of 37 weeks of instructional time. Please see Appendix J for 2020-2021 school calendar. The calendar for 2021-2022 will be aligned with that of SAU29 as well.

c. Staffing Overview, qualifications for professionals and paraprofessionals RSA194-B:II (j)

Staffing at Gathering Waters includes a highly qualified Lead Administrator working with a Business Administrator, Development and Enrollment Coordinator, and office assistant who will work closely with the Board of Trustees, Faculty, Guidance Counselor, Students, and Parents to fulfill the mission of the school. Paraprofessionals will be hired as needed. Grant writing services may also be contracted as needed.

Qualifications for the Lead Administrator include:

- A dedicated dynamic leader who is passionate about the school's mission and knowledgeable about Waldorf philosophy and practices.
- Classroom teaching experience.
- An advanced degree in education/school administration
- Prior administrative experience.
- Diversity of work, travel, community service and other life experience.
- A record of success in community building.
- Experience in raising and managing funds.
- Highly effective communication, coaching, organizational and interpersonal skills.

Qualifications for Business Administrator include:

- Exceptional organizational and multitasking skills.
- Highly effective communication and interpersonal skills.
- Proficiency in MS Office and other computer skills such as managing websites, handling social media presence, working with budgetary and educational management software such as BigSIS and experience with payroll and benefits.

- Commitment to the school’s mission and familiarity with Waldorf philosophy and practices.

Qualifications for Office Assistant Include:

- Exceptional organizational and multitasking skills.
- Highly effective communication and interpersonal skills.
- Proficiency in MS Office and other computer skills such as managing websites, handling social media presence, working with educational management software such as BigSIS
- Commitment to the school’s mission and familiarity with Waldorf philosophy and practices

Qualifications for Faculty include:

- Dedicated and enthusiastic educators who are passionate about the school’s mission.
- Extensive classroom experience and a degree in their subject specialty (for High School)
- Highly collaborative and team-oriented style.
- Experience implementing technology and multimedia in the classroom.
- Diversity of work, travel, community service and other life experience.
- Highly effective communication, coaching, organizational and interpersonal skills
- Advanced degree in education and/or NH teaching certification and Waldorf teacher certification or willingness to pursue this as professional development. At least 50% of the faculty shall have NH state certification or 3 years teaching experience per NH State Standards.

Qualifications for the Enrollment and Development Coordinator include:

- Dynamic individual who is passionate about the school’s mission and knowledgeable about Waldorf philosophy and practices.
- Relevant experience in Development, Marketing, grant writing and enrollment
- Exceptional organizational and multitasking skills.
- Highly effective communication and interpersonal skills.
- Proficiency in MS Office and other computer skills such as managing websites, handling social media presence, working with educational management software such as BigSIS

Qualifications for the Grant Writer include:

- Dynamic individual who is passionate about the school’s mission and knowledgeable about Waldorf philosophy and practices.
- Exceptional organizational and multitasking skills.
- Highly effective communication and interpersonal skills.
- Relevant Grant writing experience

Qualifications for the Guidance Counselor/LEA Liaison include:

- Dynamic individual who is passionate about the school’s mission and knowledgeable about Waldorf philosophy and practices.
- An educational degree with a focus on school counseling, special education, or other relevant field.

- Already established or ability to strong working relationships with the local educational community.

Qualifications for Paraprofessionals include:

- Dedicated and enthusiastic educators who are passionate about the school’s mission.
- Highly collaborative and team-oriented style
- Highly effective communication and interpersonal skills
- Bachelor’s degree in education or related field

d. Employee Job Descriptions/Responsibilities, Ed318.09(e)(6)

Lead Administrator

The Lead Administrator will be expected to:

- Ensure the school’s educational program meets county, state and federal goals for academic performance.
- Collaborate with the Lower and Upper School Faculty Chairs to train, supervise, support and review faculty members, develop, monitor, and review the curriculum as well as the daily schedule and future planning.
- Compile and maintain accurate student records.
- Assist and coordinate with faculty ongoing student assessment and evaluation tools.
- Oversee student admissions, attendance, and student records.
- Oversee special education program along with Special Ed Liaison
- Prepare the School Academic Report Card annually.
- Establish procedures to carry out the policies adopted by the Board.
- Evaluate and implement school safety plans.
- Be the direct liaison between the school and the community.
- Prepare and submit annual budget to the Board with input from faculty and other stakeholders.
- Maintain appropriate fiscal and program records necessary for annual audits.
- Propose to the Executive Council policies for discussion/possible adoption by the Board.
- Support Board functions such as preparing agendas, board packets, and record keeping.
- Participate with the Faculty in ongoing curriculum training in alignment with the mission and educational program, so as to provide effective, informed oversight.
- Act as a mediator and advisor in matters of students scheduling, discipline, curriculum development, instructional practices and professional development.
- Act as the direct supervisor for the Business Administrator, Faculty Chairs, Faculty, Office Assistant and Development Coordinator.

Business Administrator

The Business Administrator will work with the Lead Administrator on all administrative matters as necessary, including but not limited to budget, development, scheduling and preparation of required reports to the state. They will process payroll, manage benefits and oversee facilities.

Administrative Assistant

The Administrative Assistant works to support the Lead Administrator and Business Administrator. They will assist with planning, implementing and coordinating events and

participate in outreach efforts as needed including visits to area schools and hosting administrators and teachers. The Administrative Assistant will have direct and significant interaction with students, parents, faculty and staff and visitors, often being the first point of contact with the school.

Development and Enrollment Coordinator

The development and enrollment coordinator will work in collaboration with the Lead Administrator, Business Administrator and the Board Enrollment and Development Committee to create and prepare enrollment materials, oversee implementation of the lottery and investigate and pursue opportunities for funding including overseeing annual giving.

Grant Writer

The Grant Writer will work with the Development and Enrollment Coordinator to identify and pursue possible grant funding.

Faculty

The faculty, provides the day-to-day educational experience for the students. In accordance with state law (RSA194-B: 14, IV), Gathering Waters will ensure that at least half the faculty have either NH state teacher certification or three years of teaching experience. We aim to bring together a group of teachers who are committed to meeting both NH state standards and the principles of Waldorf Education as defined by the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education.

All full and part-time teachers are expected to:

- Conduct the classes for which they were hired.
- Serve as advocates for students and connect them to support services, activities, and opportunities.
- Be cognizant of behavioral or academic changes in students that may warrant further attention or intervention.
- Nurture a school culture of compassion and respect where deep interest in others goes hand in hand with individual growth.
- Develop and implement the curriculum to include annual academic schedule.
- Coordinate ongoing student assessment and choice of appropriate evaluation tools.
- Participate in ongoing training and professional development.
- Develop special activities of the school in consultation with parents and students.
- Participate fully in each sphere of governance through the appointment of liaisons.
- Participate in teacher reviews in accord with the procedures set by the Faculty Chairs and Lead Administrator.
- Make recommendations to the Human Resources Committee of the Board regarding hiring of faculty.

Faculty Chairs

The Lower (1-5) and Upper (6-12) Faculty Chairs are chosen by the Faculty based on their experience with and understanding of the educational philosophy of the school and educational needs of the students to serve in a leadership position reporting directly to the Lead Administrator. The Faculty Chairs work collaboratively with the Lead Administrator to support Faculty in the successful implementation of curriculum in support of the School mission, vision,

and educational goals and serve on the Executive Committee along with the Lead Administrator and Board Chair.

Guidance Counselor / LEA Liaison

The Guidance Counselor / LEA Liaison works under the direction of the Head of School and in collaboration with Faculty to support the special education and counseling needs of students at the School, including being the point of contact for the LEA and coordinating support services between the LEA, the School, and families of students.

e. Average student/teacher ratio for the first 5 years Ed 318.05(c)(7)

The following chart does not include academic support teachers or visiting teachers. Note that specials’ teachers overlap into high school teaching. They have been counted in the elementary school count unless they are designated high school instructors (i.e language in year. Please see the budget for complete teacher breakdown.

Grade	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
1-8	T 13 St 120 Ratio 1:9	T 14 St 160 Ratio 1:11	T 14 St 200 Ratio 1 :14	T 14 St 200 Ratio 1:14	T 14 St 200 Ratio 1:14
H.S	T 2 St 15 Ratio 1:7.5	T 4 St 40 Ratio 1:10	T 7.5 St 75 Ratio 1:10	T 7.5 St 100 1:13	T 7.5 St 100 1:13

f. School employee and volunteer background investigations RSA 189:13-a. Ed 318.07 (3)

Gathering Waters Chartered Public High School shall conduct school employee and volunteer background investigations in accordance with RSA 189:13-a. ED 318.07(3). Such background checks will be completed before any staff member starts employment.

g. Personnel compensation plan, leaves, and other benefits. RSA 194-B:3,II (k): Ed 318.09 (e)(6)

The founding group, Friends of Gathering Waters, is deeply committed to supporting teachers with competitive salaries and benefits understanding the need for disciplined spending. Please see the budget for details. School administration and full-time teachers shall be paid an annual salary on a biweekly basis. Part-time staff will be paid at an hourly rate for time worked.

We expect to offer a 3 percent annual salary increase for full-time employees. While the details of a compensation package will depend on funding, we expect to offer basic health insurance coverage, retirement benefits as well as professional development support.

Teachers will be hired to work from July 1 to June 30. In addition to instructional days required by law, teachers will be expected to work 12 additional staff-development days each year (5 days before the beginning of school, 2 separate staff development days during the school year, and 5 days after the last day of school). In addition to scheduled school vacations, salaried employees will receive an additional 3 paid personal leave days and 5 sick days per year. Teachers without appropriate certifications or with fewer than 3 years teaching experience are further expected to attend professional development programs chosen in consultation between the individual teacher

and the Faculty Council. Gathering Waters may offer unpaid leave for employees pursuing educational studies. Please see section j for more information about professional development.

Full time faculty and staff and part-time salaried employees leading programs are also provided with up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave per year through the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) for any of the following reasons: • the birth and care of the newborn child of an employee; • placement with the employee of a child for adoption or foster care; • to care for an immediate family member (spouse, child, or parent) with a serious health condition; or • to take medical leave when the employee is unable to work because of a serious health condition. Employees are eligible for leave if they have worked for Gathering Waters for at least 12 months, at least 1,250 hours over the past 12 months. Whether an employee has worked the minimum 1,250 hours of service is determined according to FMLA principles for determining compensable hours or work.

Gathering Waters will offer up to two weeks of paid parental leave. Employees are also entitled to 3 days of paid leave on the death of an immediate family member defined as spouse, parent, child, brother or sister, grandparent or grandchild, spouse's parent, child, brother or sister, grandparent and grandchild. Any additional time off will be without pay or using PTO days. Employees who sustain work-related injuries are eligible for a medical leave of absence for the period of disability in accordance with all applicable laws covering occupational disabilities. A military leave of absence will be granted to employees who are absent from work because of service in the U.S. uniformed services in accordance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).

h. Administration Performance Evaluation

Gathering Waters will conduct an annual evaluation of administrative positions. The purpose of the evaluation is to improve administrative functioning to ensure that the school is fulfilling its mission and complying with all provisions of the charter. Prior to the opening of school the HR committee will create an evaluation rubric for each position detailing responsibilities and performance objectives. The evaluation rubrics will be completed by the employee being evaluated (self-evaluation) as well as the employee's manager (see organizational chart on page 12) and any other relevant personnel. In the case of the Lead Administrator evaluation rubrics will be completed by members of the Board, Faculty Chairs, Parent Council and at least one other administrative personnel. Emphasis will be on identifying strengths, areas of improvement and annual goals. An in-person evaluation shall then be conducted to discuss performance and establish key performance indicators which can be reviewed monthly. A written evaluation will be completed and placed in the employee's personnel file. If an employee is found to be underachieving in his or her performance, recommendations for improvement will be made and a 1-month follow-up evaluation scheduled. The power to dismiss any administrator based on the school's needs or expectations not being met will be held by the Board.

i. Teacher Performance Evaluation

In anticipation of becoming a member of the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education, Gathering Waters will align its criteria for teacher evaluation with the Alliance's standards for Waldorf teachers, which cover curriculum planning, student assessment, lesson delivery, classroom management, and faculty collaboration.

Gathering Waters uses a system of peer review for evaluating teacher performance and ensuring high quality teaching. This system has been well-tested by other Public Waldorf Schools. The Faculty Chairs, in collaboration with the Lead Administrator will determine the details of the peer-review system, that is: at what frequency, by whom, and on what basis teachers will be evaluated. At the minimum the system will include a required evaluation each year during a two-year probationary period for new teachers; continued evaluation every other year for other teachers and mandatory annual classroom visits by colleagues for all teachers. An evaluation rubric will be established for use in teacher reviews. This will cover the three aspects of teaching, Planning, Presentation and Professionalism. The following is an example of the questions to be addressed:

Planning:

1. Lesson: are the plans clear, concise and related to the subject?
2. Foresight: is the year planned out?
3. Are reports and evaluations submitted on time?
4. Classroom organization: is the room tidy, aesthetically pleasing and stocked with appropriate materials?
5. Is homework returned in a timely manner?
6. Are the main lesson books corrected on time and are they a good reflection of the subject and the developmental level of the students?

Presentation:

1. Does the teacher have a good grasp of the content?
2. Is the teacher well-organized and prepared?
3. Is the lesson at a level the student can understand and participate in?
4. Is the lesson balanced and presented as a unified whole in a 3-fold manner?
5. Is the lesson presented in an imaginative, lively, and thought-provoking way?
6. Does the teacher use oral and written language correctly and with good diction?
7. Is there adequate class participation and discussion?
8. Are there a good working relationship between teachers and students?
9. Is there a good working relationship between teachers and students?
10. Is the lesson paced in such a way that it allows for breathing in the lesson?
11. Homework: Does it fit with the school's expectation and support the students; participation in the curriculum?

Professional

Does the teacher:

1. Manage student conflicts well?
2. Participate in school functions?
3. Take initiative and follow through on it?
4. Have an openness and willingness to work with and consider suggestions, guidance, and feedback from mentors, colleagues, and the review process?
5. Begin and end classes on time?
6. Cooperate, work with and support colleagues?

The system is subject to Board approval and must involve outside peer reviewers in addition to peers within the school, the Faculty Chairs and the Lead Administrator. As new teachers are hired to serve an expanding student body, mentoring of new teachers by senior teachers will be provided.

Peer-review systems working with clear evaluation criteria have been shown to be the most effective in improving teacher performance and supporting high quality teaching, with consequent improved student learning outcomes, (Darling-Hammond, 2013). In these systems, the purpose of teacher evaluation is understood to be supporting the teacher to become a better teacher, rather than rewards or penalties. Peer review is done in an atmosphere of collegial support, trust, and inspiration. A peer review is conducted by a team of two or three teachers in conjunction with the Lead Administrator who may look at the following pieces of evidence: the teacher's written self-evaluation; an interview with the teacher; a series of classroom visits; review of students' work and assessments.

j. Professional Development

In accord with the responsibilities of teachers listed in Section 6d, all teachers are required to pursue professional development, at a frequency determined by the Faculty Chairs and Lead Administrator to be outlined in a professional development master plan in consultation with the Department of Education. Teachers may meet this requirement through attending workshops, conferences, or courses related to their subject specialty, Waldorf principles and pedagogy, high-school-level curricular innovations, or social/cultural issues affecting adolescents. Teachers are encouraged, and in some cases may be required, to pursue Waldorf teacher certification at one of the Waldorf teacher education centers accredited by the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America.

Gathering Waters provides paid time off for professional development. All full-time salaried employees, including administrative staff, receive two professional days per year. Teachers are not normally allotted professional days during the school year but may request an exception to be approved by the Faculty Chairs and Lead Administrator. Part-time salaried employees receive a prorated number of days based on their employment percentage. In addition to time off, Gathering Waters provides a professional development benefit stipend to full-time salaried and part-time salaried employees based on an amount determined by the budget each year. The benefit stipend for part-time salaried employees is prorated based on employment percentage. Employees may contact the Lead Administrator for information about professional development opportunities and benefits. All employees are given a copy of the Gathering Waters Employee Handbook, which describes the required process for requesting professional days and benefit stipends. See Appendix F.

k. Philosophy of Student Governance and Discipline RSA 194-B:3,II (p)

Gathering Waters Chartered Public School is committed to helping students build a healthy life and to guiding them as they grow and develop toward a gradually expanding consciousness of the personal, moral, and social implications of their choices and actions. We believe in respectful and transparent communication within the school community as well as with the individual. Our pedagogical model is based on Rudolf Steiner's indications for the developing human being. As such, the school culture will be one where our understanding of the role of discipline is one of

teaching the student rather than enforcing, shaming, or using punitive systems where the student does not engage in the deeper meaning of their behavior and its effects on themselves and others. By deliberately framing our behavioral expectations in terms of shared moral principles, we encourage adults and students to engage in thoughtful discussion, reflection, and positive action when transgressions occur. Our structures for discipline and guidance aim to support the individual by unfolding their natural gifts and abilities in a safe and supportive environment. Above all, the safety and well-being of the entire community is held in balance with the safety and well-being of individual students. Please see Appendices G and H, the Elementary and High School Student-Parent Handbooks, for details on community expectations.

l. Age appropriate due process procedures to be used for disciplinary matters RSA 194-B:3,II (p)

Disciplinary procedures: Minor infractions will be dealt with as necessary by teachers or the Lead Administrator. Repeat infractions, or actions of a more serious nature, will result in a conference to determine consequences. This conference will include the student, a parent or guardian, the Lead Administrator, a teacher and outside mediator if requested. Ongoing difficulties between students will result in individual meetings as well as peer mediation in accordance with the developmental capabilities of the students. A student who is frequently and repeatedly unable to meet school conduct expectations may be asked to leave the school.

Suspension and expulsion guidelines: Certain behaviors, such as bullying, harassment, and other violent behavior toward students or faculty; possession of illegal substances; and other criminally disruptive activity will be considered major offenses. On matriculation, students will be given the Gathering Waters Student-Parent Handbook that fully explains what actions may lead to suspension or expulsion. Students will sign the code of conduct, which will be kept on file for future reference. A pupil may be suspended or expelled from a chartered public school based on criteria determined by the Board of Trustees consistent with the advice of the principal and teachers and in conformance with RSA 193:13. Please see the Student-Parent Handbooks for more details on the disciplinary process. In all disciplinary matters Federal and State mandated due process provisions will be followed.

m. Student transportation plan RSA 194-B:3,II (I)

Gathering Waters Chartered Public School will be located in Keene, NH--part of SAU 29. Students attending the school have access to transportation only if they reside in the district where the charter school is located. The school will comply with charter law provisions that govern student transportation under Section 194-B:2, which states:

Attendance at a charter school for the purposes of transportation shall not constitute assignment under the provisions of RSA 189:6 and RSA 189:8. Pupils who reside in the school district in which the open enrollment or charter school is located shall be provided transportation to that school by the district on the same terms and conditions as provided for in RSA 189:6 and RSA 189:8 and that transportation is provided to pupils attending other public schools within that district. However, any added costs for such transportation services shall be borne by the charter school. For the purposes of open enrollment, neither the sending nor the receiving school district shall be obligated to provide transportation services for pupils attending an open enrollment school outside the pupil's residential district. No transportation will be provided by a sending school district or receiving charter school for students whose residence is other than where the school program is located. Gathering Waters will offer to help students outside SAU 29 coordinate transportation, through networking with surrounding school districts, including area

charter schools, forming carpool or ride-share groups, encouraging biking and walking, and other avenues.

n. Student, Staff Handbooks

Please see Appendices F, G and H for the Employee and Elementary and High School Student/Parent Handbooks respectively.

o. Student Information System

Gathering Waters will use BIG SIS as our student information system. This system will also serve as the primary mode for conveying information such as the Employee and Student-Parent Handbooks and academic information and will also handle registration and enrollment documents including health forms.

Section 7: Meeting Student Needs

a. Special Education RSA 194-B:3,II (n)

In accordance with RSA 194-B:8, I, Gathering Waters shall not discriminate against any child with a disability as defined in RSA 186-C. Gathering Waters will collaborate with LEAs from each sending district and the parents and/or legal guardians of special needs students to identify and implement practices to meet their needs. Gathering Waters Chartered Public School complies with all federal and state special education laws and rules applicable to a New Hampshire charter school setting. Under New Hampshire’s charter school statute, RSA 194-B: 11, III (a) “the funding and educational decision-making process for children with disabilities attending a chartered public school shall be the responsibility of the resident district and shall retain all current options available to the parent and to the school district.” Gathering Waters recognizes the critical role of the LEA in successful implementation and administration of IEPs. The Special Education Liaison at Gathering Waters is a Faculty member or guidance counselor who will collaborate with LEAs from sending school districts on matters pertaining to individual students’ needs. Specifically, the liaison will:

- Notify and collaborate with the LEA when an individual student may require referral for services or accommodations.
- Communicate with the sending district, parents and/or legal guardians, service agencies, faculty and other members of a students’ potential IEP team to ensure consistent implementation of IEP services.
- Review IEPs from the LEA with all teachers and staff involved in its implementation and support those teachers and staff to ensure full compliance with IEPs and student success.
- Maintain contact lists for all service providers related to IEPs.
- Provide concerns and/or recommendations to the LEA liaison about IEP implementation.
- Attend meetings with the LEA, parents, faculty and staff to review the IEP and/or educational status of students.

Already we have reached out to Karin Knudsen the SAU 29 Special Services Coordinator for Private and Charter Schools in Keene and are in discussion about how we can best support her work to ensure a high-quality educational experience for all of our students.

**b. Other Educationally Disabled and Economically Disadvantaged/at risk Ed
318.07(1)(c)**

The special education liaison at Gathering Waters also works to ensure that the school provides needed support for other educationally at-risk learners. The school works with local social service agencies such as Monadnock Family Services, Monadnock Developmental Services, Southwestern Community Services, Partners in Health, as well as Federal Title Programs to ensure that all aspects of a student's life that might affect his/her ability to learn and succeed are addressed. Below is a list of support programs that Gathering Waters will access to ensure educational success for some of the most vulnerable student populations:

- **Educationally Disadvantaged**-Title 1 funds will be used to hire highly qualified teachers, tutors and to purchase evidence based supplemental educational resources to support students identified through testing, and other curriculum-based measures.
- **English Language Learners (ELL)**-Title 3 funding will be used to ensure that ELLs attain English language proficiency and are able to meet state academic standards
- **Neglected or Delinquent**-Title 1 funds will be used to support supplemental instruction geared specifically towards the needs of students who are neglected or delinquent
- **Homeless Students**-Gathering Waters will make use of resources provided by The Homeless Program at the State of New Hampshire to support those students who are experiencing homelessness or other such transitions.
- **Migrant and Refugee Populations**-NH Migrant Education program provides services such as one-on-one tutoring, summer classes, mentoring, referrals to local service providers and assistance with school supplies.

c. Additional Academic Support and Credit Recovery

The individualized attention possible in a small school such as Gathering Waters, in addition to the philosophies and techniques of Waldorf education, lend themselves well to providing individual support for improving student achievement and closing achievement gaps. Ongoing evaluation of student achievement data forms the basis of this strategy. As mentioned above Federal title programs will be identified for which the school meets eligibility requirements in order to support our students. Where Federal title monies are not available, we will work to provide supplemental services such as after school tutoring, support staff in the classroom and additional learning resources. When necessary students will be able to make use of testing and other support services through that pupil's LEA. Recognizing that student achievement is influenced by a multitude of factors Gathering Waters will follow the National Education Association Guidelines focusing on:

- Enhanced cultural competence
- Comprehensive support for students including outreach to Student's Families
- Extended Learning Opportunities
- Classrooms that support learning
- Strong district support and collaboration
- Access to highly qualified staff
- Adequate resources and funding

Where credit recovery is required students will work to create an individualized plan with the teacher in question, faculty chair and the lead administrator.

d. Federal Title Programs

Gathering Waters will endeavor to secure funding through Federal title programs at every opportunity to support the education of our students and maximize leverage of State funding toward improvement of student education. Eligibility for specific title programs will be identified based on staff and student demographics/needs.

Section 8: Financial Management

a. Method of Administering Fiscal Accounts and Reporting RSA 194-B:3,II(q)

Gathering Waters follows all accounting guidelines for NH public schools. The school’s Board of Trustees will enact internal accounting controls, and will elect a Treasurer with financial oversight responsibilities to ensure that the school’s finances are managed with discipline, integrity, and transparency. To facilitate fiscal oversight by the Board of Trustees, key aspects of the school’s financial health will be reviewed using a “dashboard” or similar summary tool at each Board of Trustees meeting.

At least three officers of the Gathering Waters Board of Trustees will be given check writing authority. The Lead Administrator and the Board Treasurer are given a discretionary spending limit, set by the Board, and reviewed annually, for incidental purchasing. In addition, the Lead Administrator and Treasurer have the authority to endorse regular payroll expenses. For all other spending, two signatures are required on checks. Each individual with check-writing authority will be covered by a fidelity bond in accordance with the guidelines of the New Hampshire Department of Revenue Administration. The Board of Trustees will vote on a spending limit for purchases made without a quorum vote from the Board.

Gathering Waters complies with all requirements specified in the law pertaining to reporting requirements (RSA 194-B: 10-V): an annual report, annual financial audit and report, program audit, and participation during the annual school budget process. The annual financial audit is conducted by an independent auditor (CPA) hired by the Board. The Treasurer, or a committee assigned to the task, may recommend a specific CPA be hired, but the final choice of a CPA must be chosen by a majority. The audit should be completed no later than three months after the close of the fiscal year. The annual report will be provided to the State Board of Education, local board, and any person who requests it as required by law.

In compliance with i4see (Initiative for School Empowerment and Excellence) reporting, Gathering Waters will provide the New Hampshire Department of Education (NH DOE) with 4 quarterly financial reports per year. It will also, in our opening year, provide the NH DOE with a progress report by December 1. Thereafter progress reports will be sent by August 31 of each year. A first-year program audit will be conducted by the Department of Education at the end of the first year. Monthly Board meeting minutes will be submitted to the charter school office each month or posted online with the link sent to the charter school office.

b. Annual Budget Ed 318.09(e)(11)

Please see Appendix D for the proposed 5-year budget and pre-operations budget

c. Budget Narrative Ed 318.09(e)(11)

Gathering Water's current budget projections include revenue from the NH per-pupil adequacy funding, which is \$7188.00 at the time of this submission and shall adjust annually pursuant to RSA 194-B: 11. This budget includes projected employee compensation, including salaries, benefits, and hourly wages as well as an estimated \$346,000 of initial start-up costs reflecting 3 preoperational months of salaries, lease and taxes, technology infrastructure, curriculum and professional development and supplies. The budget reflects the growth of staff over the initial five years of operation and includes what we believe to be realistic fundraising, development and enrollment goals. Until we reach full enrollment we expect to cover the preoperational costs and estimated shortfall in the first 2 years with Federal Start-up Grant Funds. If these funds are not available we will increase our development and fund raising efforts in the preoperational phase as well as in years 1 and 2. Given the emphasis on art and the extra costs associated with supplies we have included a modest supplies fee of 200\$ per student for which financial aid will be available for those families who are eligible.

Accounting, Payroll, Benefits, IT and Legal services will be contracted. Initially we plan to pay 100% of each FT employee's health benefits, providing ST and LT disability. As the budget allows, we will offer a simple IRA with a 1-3% match, increase health benefits covered and cover families. We expect to be able to provide further support to faculty, staff, and students with the efforts of community volunteers, organized by the Parent Council.

Costs for the facility (rental or lease), utilities, insurance and instructional materials are projected based on other similarly-sized local charter schools and quotes we have received.

We have already created a mailing list of almost 200 interested supporters of the school. We have begun work on our website and Facebook page and will hold a celebratory silent auction fundraiser as soon as we hear of our acceptance. We have also have identified a number of grant and loan opportunities. Please see the detailed Fundraising Plan in Appendix N.

We understand, that there may be circumstances beyond our control that may lead to shortfalls in either fundraising or enrollment. Should our fundraising or enrollment targets not be met, we will identify and remove lower priority items within the operating budget so that we may provide the highest possible quality education within our revenue means.

Section 9: School Culture

a. School Environment: culturally inclusive

One of the key values of Waldorf education is profound respect for each human being as a unique individual. Gathering Waters strives to achieve a balance between enabling students to discover and unfold their unique individual interests and talents, and cultivating a cultivating a school culture of shared understandings and common values. We recognize that cultural inclusivity, equity, diversity and social justice are essential to the healthy functioning of the school and are therefore embedded in the content of the curriculum and the social life of the community.

b. Establishment and Maintenance of School Culture

The school culture of Gathering Waters is established by the profound respect that teachers and staff have for each human being as a unique individual. Teachers and staff are committed to enable students to find a sense of social safety allowing for authentic self-expression while also

recognizing their role as a part of a larger community. The emphasis on healthy human relationships among teachers, staff, students and parents is reflected in the respectful and collaborative approach to every aspect of the school, from governance, to the employee grievance policy to the student discipline policy. Students are encouraged to build healthy peer relationships and to embrace difference and diversity through group projects, class plays, peer assessments and activities such as Festivals, Assembly, Morning Gathering/Sing and advisee groups in the high school. Social and environmental responsibility is taught through the performance of daily school jobs, service trips and the community volunteer requirement. Throughout the school year there are multiple opportunities (festivals, student presentations and performances, committees and other volunteer work) for students, staff and parents to come together and support this vibrant community.

Section 10: Stakeholder Engagement

a. Philosophy of Parent (Family) Involvement RSA 194-B:3,II(v)

At Gathering Waters we believe parents and/or guardians are important and valuable participants in their children's education. We encourage parents, guardians and other important adults in students' lives to offer their input and participation in the school. As part of the admissions process, parents are provided with and encouraged to read the Student-Parent Handbook. Through the Parent Council, parent evenings, parent initiatives, and school fairs and festivals, the opportunities to find connection in the wider school community will be robust. Annual cultural festivals and events such as student art and instrumental evenings will allow parents to engage the curriculum and its advancement over the course of the year. Parents will be invited to share their talents and expertise through presentations and workshops with individual students, classes and the larger school community.

The Parent Council represents and is an advocate for all parents, referred to collectively as the parent body. Parent Council is comprised of at least one parent representative from each class. They meet on a monthly basis during the school year and:

- Serve as the ears and voice of the parent body to the Faculty, Lead Administrator, and Board of Trustees.
- Coordinate and/or sponsor parent education, outreach, festivals, various committees, clubs, and other activities that contribute to the life of the school.
- Coordinate class and all-school fundraising activities and oversee the allocation and disbursement of funds that have been raised with oversight from the administration.
- Recommend Parent Council liaison to the Board of Trustees, who will act as direct communicator between the two bodies once approved by the Board.
- Operates under and reports to the Board of Trustees, with an appointed liaison member.

Parent Council representatives are expected to attend the monthly parent council meetings as well as their own class meetings. It is the representative's duty to keep their class parents informed about issues taken up by parent council and to act as the voice of their class to the council. Representatives serve a one-year term. Representatives may serve more than a one-year term if it is approved by their class parents. Representatives are also expected to serve the Council in some capacity, either as an officer (Chair, Secretary or Treasurer) or as a liaison to one of the committees overseen by the Council. Additional members may be asked to serve on ad hoc committees.

b. Community Involvement Plan Ed 318.09(e)(10) Ed 318.09(e)(12)

The Monadnock Region has a long history of supporting local school communities. Gathering Waters will work to ensure our community understands the benefits of a Waldorf-inspired education through outreach events, community service and local business relationships. Central to the mission of Gathering Waters is our commitment to a school culture that promotes community involvement and responsibility as an essential and integral part of life. We encourage staff, faculty, students and families to be active citizens in our school as well as the local and global communities. Outreach events such as clean-up days, food drives, work parties “big brother-big sister programs” and other service-related activities are an integral part of the educational program. Community members will be invited to the campus to share their work and allow for discussions open to the public. We hope to be able to provide a space where community groups such as the Grand Monadnock Youth Chorus and Project Shakespeare can rehearse and perform and the Winter Farmer’s Market can be held. Already we have begun to develop and strengthen community partnerships with community members and organizations who have expressed an interest in working with us (see Appendix B). We have met with Keene’s Mayor George Hansel, as well as faculty at Keene State University and Antioch University New England and are in active conversations about possible mutually beneficial partnerships. As of the writing of this application we do not know whether any of the relationships will result in financial support of the school.

c. LEA Partnerships Ed 318.09(e)(12)

Rather than competing with existing public and charter schools, Gathering Waters welcomes the opportunity to partner with the other charter schools in the area as well as with the public schools in an effort to enrich the lives of all students in the Monadnock region. We recognize that to be successful such partnerships need to be rooted in respect for the tremendous work that the LEAs do and an understanding of the complexities that they face. We are now starting to reach out to key LEA stakeholders including Superintendents, Principals and Faculty to identify partnership opportunities that will benefit both Gathering Waters and the LEAs as well as the entire community. We are especially hopeful that those we might be able to support the LEAs in areas that Waldorf Schools are especially strong including the arts, music and environmental education.

Section 11: Facilities

a. Access to suitable facility

Friends of Gathering Waters has an active committee exploring opportunities in Keene for a facility that is appropriate based on the target location, students to be served and future growth. We have been working with a realtor and are currently in conversation about a 3-5 year lease agreement with the owner of the old Middle School in downtown Keene, a beautiful facility which in addition to providing ample classroom and office space has an auditorium and a gym. We are also looking at the old River Valley Community College building on Washington Street.

b. Description of School Requirements

Based on projections of up to 200 Elementary and 100 High School students by the fifth year of operation, the committee has determined that we need approximately 18,000 square feet for the elementary school and approximately 6000 square feet for the high school of combined, classroom, office and meeting space.

c. Classroom, Offices, Athletics, Outdoor Needs Plan

The ideal location for Gathering Waters will include proximity to outdoor space suitable for athletics, games and other outdoor activities, gathering as a school, and meeting in small groups. Developmentally it would be preferable to have 2 campuses closely located, one for the lower and the other for the High School. Ideally the facility would have space for gardening activities and would be walking distance to woods and wetlands to be used in various aspects of the curriculum. Classroom space should be warm and welcoming with as much natural light as possible. Space should be flexible to allow for multiple uses including large and small group discussions as well as movement activities. Space should be available for laboratory science work for the upper grades as well as studio space for painting, drawing, clay work and weaving and a wood shop. There should be one larger room that can be used for all-school gatherings, movement classes and performances which should include light and sound equipment. In accord with our emphasis on teaching and practicing environmental sustainability the facility should be well-insulated and have ample sun exposure to enable the future installation of solar panels.

Classroom space projected needs:

12 individual classrooms for grades 1-12

Assembly Room equipped with stage, lighting and sound equipment (at either campus)

Large Multipurpose room (at campus without Assembly room)

Woodworking Studio, 2 Art studios, 2 Music Studios (Upper and Lower School)

Office space projected needs:

2 secure offices for Business Administrator and Lead Administrator

Main Office

Shared Office Space for Enrollment and Development Coordinator and other staff

d. Plans for facilities lease or purchase

Please see above (a) We are currently in conversation about a 3-5 year lease agreement with the owner of the old Middle School in downtown Keene. We are also looking at the old River Valley Community College building on Washington Street which could be a lease, lease to purchase or purchase agreement.

Section 12: School Safety Management Plan

a. Emergency Operations Plan

We have drafted a preliminary Emergency Operations Plan initially included in Appendix E of our application. Much of what an Emergency Operations Plan entails is site specific. Once we have obtained a suitable facility The Board and Lead Administrator will work with local law enforcement and the fire department to further improve and adapt these plans to our specific site prior to the opening of school. During the month of August, prior to the start of regular class sessions, all teachers and staff will participate in no less than 8 hours of emergency preparedness training. This will include working with state and local authorities, and possibly private vendors to provide necessary training in:

- Run-Hide-Fight
- Fire Extinguisher Use
- Evacuation Procedure
- General Emergency Preparedness
- First Aid-including First Aid certification

- Child First Aid

b. Compliance Statement RSA 194-B:8,II; Ed 318.07 (b)(4)

The school facilities shall comply with all federal and state health and safety laws, rules and regulations including, but not limited to:

- Fire Safety
- Heating, ventilating and air conditioning
- Plumbing
- Electrical
- Food Service

Section 13: Communications Plan

a. Plan to disseminate and develop information to assist families with decision making, RSA 194-B:3, II(w)

Gathering Waters Chartered Public School will create posters, brochures, application packets, a Facebook page, and a website with information on its educational philosophy, curriculum, and student expectations. The school will also hold on-site information sessions for prospective students and their families. Regular community outreach will be overseen by the Lead Administrator of the school with potential collaboration of the parents, students, and faculty of the school. Outreach venues and materials will be chosen in order to promote inclusion of all students and to eliminate any possible barriers to enrollment for educationally disadvantaged students.

b. Plan to develop and disseminate best practices

As discussed earlier in this application Waldorf education has a long history of successful educational philosophy and practices. In order to share successful programs and practices with neighboring charter schools and the local public schools we will designate several members of the Board and school community to work alongside the Lead Administrator to lead the efforts to identify and disseminate best practices. This group will conduct a study of the strengths and weaknesses of the program and identify those practices that have been most successful at our school. They will work to establish relationships with other public schools, identifying those schools with similar best practices as well as those schools who might be most interested in and benefit most from the practices. They will establish clear objectives for dissemination and establish measures for success. Examples of dissemination efforts may include but not be limited to presentations at local, state and national charter school conferences, The Alliance of Public Waldorf School conferences and NHDOE's monthly charter school meetings.

c. Plan for timely and regular communication with families and school stakeholders

Friends of Gathering Waters has already begun the practice of regular communication with school stakeholders in the form of a monthly email newsletter through Constant Contact which currently provides updates on the application process, general information on Waldorf education and events sponsored by the Friends of Gathering Waters. We have also begun work on a website and Facebook page. Once school has started a newsletter will be sent out on a weekly basis and will include information about recent activities at the school, events, important dates and other pertinent information. Individual class teachers will also send regular email communications to update parents on specific class lessons and events. Parents will be able to access student progress, grades and homework through Big SIS, the student information system. There will also be the regular maintenance of the Gathering Waters Facebook page and Website

that will allow for regular updates on school events. For information such as school closures for snow families will be contacted by email and the notification will be posted on the WMUR school closures list.

Section 14: Assurances, Provisions, Policies

a. Global Hold Harmless Clause RSA 194-B:3,II(x)

Gathering Waters Chartered Public School, its successors and assigns, covenants and agrees at all times to indemnify and hold harmless SAU 29, any other school district which sends its students to the charter 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 charter school, its board, officers, employees, agents, representatives, contractors, guests and invitees, or pupils.

b. 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 RSA 194-B:3, II(y)

Any provision of the Gathering Waters Chartered Public School Contract found by competent authority to be contrary to applicable law, rule, or regulation shall not be enforceable. If any provision of the Contract is determined to be unenforceable or invalid for any reason, the remainder of the Contract shall remain in effect unless otherwise terminated by one or both of the parties in accordance with the terms contained therein. Said provision shall not be enforced by the School or its affiliates, and will be promptly amended by the Gathering Waters Board of Trustees to meet statutory obligations.

c. Statement of assurances related to non-discrimination RSA 194-B:3, II(m)

In accordance with RSA 193-B:3,ii(m) Gathering Waters Chartered Public School will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, gender identity, or gender expression, national or ethnic origin, age, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic or marital status, genetic information, pregnancy and pregnancy related medical conditions in the selection of students or staff, access to its educational programs and activities, with respect to employment terms and conditions or in the administration of the school or in any other way that is prohibited by law.

d. Provision for providing continuing evidence of insurance coverage RSA 194-B:3,II(t)

Gathering Waters Chartered Public 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 and its agents. Gathering Waters Chartered Public School 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.

e. Identity of Consultants RSA 194-B:3,II(u)

Liz Beaven, Ed.D., President, Alliance for Public Waldorf Education: School Operations
Ken Bettenhauser, Founder and Manager Director at HR Knowledge: Human Resources, payroll and employee benefits
Bruce Bischof M.A.: Humanities curriculum

Gene Calvano, Certified SCORE Mentor: School operations and Finance consultant
Michael D'Aleo, BS Mech. Eng., Rutgers University, MS Ed., Sunbridge College: Math and Science curriculum
Rostislov Eismont: Arts curriculum
Torin Finser, PhD.: School operations
Janet Gordon, B.A. MEd.: Arts and Governance
Alison Henry, B.A. MEd, PhD candidate: Governance and School Culture
Devin Gallagher at Fred C. Church Commercial Insurance: Insurance and risk management
Lisa Mahar, B.A. Retired School Administrator: School Operations
Cindy Marie, Founder and CEO at Central Source Charter School Business Management Services: Technology, HR, Accounting/ Finance
Virginia McWilliam: Chemistry curriculum
Stephen Sagarin, PhD: Humanities curriculum and school operations
Hans Schepker: Mathematics, physics and arts curriculum
Karl Schurman: B.A. Waldorf Teacher Training Certificate; Humanities consultant
Jamie York, M.S., Computer Science, University of Denver; Certificate in Waldorf High School Teacher Education: Mathematics curriculum consultant

**f. Policy and Procedure for guidelines for optional contracting of services
 ED318.07(b)(2);RSA 194-B:5, V; RSA 194-B:8, VII**

Gathering Waters Chartered Public School will either employ directly or contract with a local maintenance and custodial services provider and therefore declines to contract with SAU 29 for these services.

- In the event that there are students at Gathering Waters who wish to participate in athletic or other extracurricular activities offered at other schools within SAU 29 the policy of Gathering Waters will be to contract with the host school to provide that opportunity to those students. Transportation to and from athletic or other extracurricular activities will be the responsibility of the parents and/or guardian of the child participating.
- Because Gathering Waters has not secured a physical location at the time of this application, the specific transportation needs are not currently known. When the school's physical location is secured, Gathering Waters will negotiate a contract with the host district for transportation to meet the requirements of Ed. 318.08(j)(2).
- All contracted services shall be defined by purchase order or written contract in advance of such service being provided.
- Any contractor shall provide proof of adequate professional liability insurance.

g. Statement of development of policies Ed318.08(j)(7)

Upon authorization by the State Board of Education the Gathering Waters Board of Trustees will develop policies regarding:

- School Board Governance and Operations
- Promotion of School Safety
- Records retention
- Reporting of suspected abuse or neglect
- Sexual harassment
- Pupil safety and violence prevention
- Limiting the use of child restraint practices

- Developmentally appropriate daily physical activity

These policies will be made publicly available prior to opening and reviewed annually.

h. Provision for Dissolution of the Charter School RSA 194-B:3,II(z)

In the event Gathering Waters Chartered Public School should cease operations for whatever reason, including the non-renewal or revocation of its Charter, the Board of Trustees shall consult with the New Hampshire Department of Education to assure that contractual and financial obligations are met. The planned sale and distribution of any assets shall assure first, that any financial obligations of the school are met. When possible, items of in-kind donation will be returned to their donor. Any remaining assets will be evenly distributed among the charter schools within a 25 mile radius of Gathering Waters.

i. Conversion of public school to charter school RSA 194-B:3,II(aa) N/A

j. Plan for education of pupils after cessation of operation RSA 194-B:3,II(bb)

In the event that the school shall cease operation for any reason, the Gathering Waters Board of Trustees in conjunction with faculty will act immediately to place students in appropriate educational settings. The Gathering Waters faculty will assist in student transition.

1. Families will be informed of the dissolution of the School at least 90 days in advance.
2. A committee comprised of school faculty and parents will create a list of carefully researched educational 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.

k. If Charter school provides only available public education RSA-B:8,IV; ED 318.07

(b)(5) If Gathering Waters provides the only available public education services at a specific grade level within its home district the school shall offer those educational services to all resident pupils of the grade level in accordance with RSA-B:8, IV and ED 318.07 (b) (5).

l. Outline of proposed accountability plan RSA 194-B:3,II(dd)

Gathering Waters Chartered Public School will provide annual reports to the New Hampshire State Department of Education addressing progress and fidelity to the school's mission. The school will update the Department about its student enrollment, graduation and college matriculation rates, financial operations and governance on an annual basis. Data will also be gathered from students, parents, faculty and staff and alumni to track the school's educational impact. The school will provide one copy of its annual report to the state board and to its local school board. This report will also be available to anyone who expressly requests it.

- The school will conduct an annual financial audit and report to the state board and school board complying with and current format and content requirements imposed upon a public school. The report shall include the number of pupils served by the school and their respective tuition rates and a discussion of progress made towards the achievement of the school's academic and other goals set forth in its charter.

- The school will be subject to a first-year program audit by the department of education or its agent, and will be subject to a program audit by the department of education at least once every 3 years thereafter.
- A summary of the annual report will be provided to the parent or guardian of each pupil enrolled and will be made available to the legislative body.
- A representative of the school will attend and be prepared to report at and answer questions during relevant portions of the annual school district budget process.
- A full accountability plan will be developed by the Gathering Waters faculty and administration and approved by the Board of Trustees, prior to the date of opening.

Please see Attachment 4 for initial Accountability Plan

Section 15: Letters of support

Please See Appendix A

Section 16: Timeline for Opening

Following approval of this application, our proposed timeline for implementation is as follows:

- By January 1, 2021
 - The Friends of Gathering Waters appoints a formal Board of Trustees.
 - The Board assisted by the Friends identifies a suitable location and arranges for leasing of facilities as of March 1, 2021.
 - Board committees (Executive, Finance, Governance, Human Resources, Development/Fundraising, Enrollment/Outreach and Strategic Planning) necessary to ensure progress toward target school opening date are set up and are meeting regularly.
 - The Board approves a budget and fund-raising plan for start-up costs during the pre-operations period, to be overseen and implemented by the Board Development/Fundraising Committee; this budget includes full operations costs for the three-month period July-September 2021.
 - The Board approves a detailed five-year post-operations budget and the Fund-Raising Committee reviews, approves and begins to implement the fundraising plan to ensure ongoing private support revenue.
 - The Board recruits and organizes volunteers to assist in public relations, fund raising, facilities preparation, and general support of the Board.
 - The Board approves and oversees implementation of outreach campaigns to recruit and hire full-time and special subject teachers.
 - Board begins a search for the Lead Administrator to be hired February 1, 2021.
 - Enrollment and Outreach Committee actively engages in recruitment activities and dissemination of application materials.
- By February 1 2021
 - The Board hires a full time Lead Administrator and contracts for preop work
 - The Board continues oversight of all necessary steps for successful school operations, including enrollment, faculty, budgets, and fund-raising.
 - Application deadline-applications reviewed by admissions panel and lottery held on February 15 if needed. Rolling admissions continue as space allows.

- Board begins a search for the Business Administrator, Administrative Assistant and Development Coordinator.
- By March 30
 - Business Administrator and Development Coordinator are hired on a contractual basis and begin work
- By June 30, 2021
 - Faculty contracts are finalized, with full-time teachers to begin work July 1, 2021, and part-time faculty to begin September 8, 2021.
 - Contracts for Lead Administrator, Business Administrator, Development Coordinator and Administrative Assistant are finalized,
 - Lead Administrator oversees publication of curriculum materials (course catalog); Student-Parent and Employee Handbooks.
- Starting July 1, 2021
 - Contracts for Full-time faculty, Lead Administrator, Business Administrator, Administrative Assistant and Development Coordinator go into effect.
 - Up to 15 students in grades 1-9 complete admissions process; school governance entities and processes are set up as described in this application.
- September 8, 2021—Gathering Waters Chartered Public School opens.

Section 17: Signatures

I certify that I have the authority to submit this application and that all information contained herein is complete and accurate, realizing that any misrepresentation could result in disqualification from the application process or revocation after award. I understand that incomplete applications will not be considered. The person named as the contact person for the application is so authorized to serve as the primary contact for this application. (Please see Attachment 5, Signature Page).

- Gabrielle Schuerman- parent, Keene, NH
- Theresa Majoy-parent, Keene, NH
- Eliza Murphy-parent, Keene, NH
- Lori Burman-parent, Keene, NH
- Michele Chalice-parent, Keene, NH
- Jennifer Butler-parent, Keene, NH
- Elizabeth Hamshaw-parent, Keene, NH
- Emily Sherwood-Turner-parent, Keene, NH
- Laurel Iselin -parent, Alstead, NH
- Ronja Elliston-parent, Alstead, NH