**WACS Board Succession Plan**

**September 12, 2018**

Background: The WACS board has been led by Terrell Gilbert as chair and Hannah Heck as vice-chair since its inception. In a desire to have healthy leadership change with an *uninterrupted commitment to carrying out the mission and vision of the school*, we want to plan for succession of these key leadership roles as well as other important leadership of the board. Likewise, we want to ensure that the board has the expertise at the committee and board level to appropriately oversee the implementation of the WACS strategic plan.

Succession Philosophy

Each board committee should have depth of skillset and provide a pipeline for leadership and board membership.

Current board make-up and transition plans:

* Currently 11 board members (by-laws specify that the board can have as many as 13 members).
* Chuck Johnston will be rolling off the board within the 2019-2020 school year.
* Kim Day has expressed a desire to roll off the board when a good replacement(s) is found.
* Several other members have had long tenures—will be asking board members to self- evaluate their board participation prior to the October full board training to better understand the landscape of board transition.

Recruitment Priorities

* Leadership
  + Individuals (both internally and externally) who have the capacity, skills, desire and commitment to the mission and vision of the school that would prepare them to help lead the board (oversee committees, hold the vision and mission).
    - Specifically, as Terrell Gilbert and Hannah Heck look to transition out of the roles of chair and vice chair of the WACs board in the next few years, it is important that there is an intentional process to transition leadership.
    - Terrell Gilbert and Hannah Heck will remain in their leadership roles once a successor is identified to help train a future leader, and will also remain on the board for a period once they transition out of their current leadership roles to aid in the transition.
    - Terrell Gilbert and Hannah Heck will not transition at the same time.
  + Ensure we have individuals prepared to lead each WACS committee. Hannah Heck looks to transition out of the leadership of the Governance Committee in the next calendar year. Donovan Potter will resume leadership.
* Committee Capacity
  + Focus Area #1: Governance Committee—the governance of the WACS board was highlighted as a key role for the WACS board in the Strategic Plan. Currently, there are only two members of the committee. With Hannah Heck looking to roll off leadership of this committee in the next year, we recommend adding one additional board member to support this committee work AND at least one additional member to the Governance Committee. Committee members should have attention to detail and ideally experience with policy creation, HR and/or legal expertise.
  + Focus Area #2: Education Committee—given Kim Day’s desire to transition in the mid-term, the desire to support the administration, provide appropriate accountability for implementation of the WACS strategic plan and a desire to reflect a more diverse skillset given our school’s full K-8 growth, we recommend adding at least one additional board member with an educational background AND at least one additional member to the Education Committee. Specifically, look to add expertise in 21st Century Learning (project-based learning etc.), organizational development and staff and school culture.
  + Focus Area #3: Development Committee—the strategic planning process highlighted the need for greater strengths in communication and marketing around the school AND a need to communicate the good work that is implemented through the strategic planning effort. Additionally, the feasibility study that WACS commissioned by Coxe Curry highlighted marketing and communications as our #1 barrier to being able to effectively fundraise. We recommend adding at least one board member with a marketing/communications skillset to help support messaging to donors, policy-makers and current and potential parents.
  + Focus Area #4: Finance Committee- like the development committee, this committee currently has only two board members. In the mid-term, we would recommend adding an additional member with a strong finance skillset to ensure continued fidelity to our board fiduciary duty.

* Other Skills and Background
  + Continue to seek to reflect the diversity of the Westside of Atlanta in the governance of our school board;
  + Bring board members who are committed to the mission and vision of the school, ideally with some connection to or demonstrated commitment to the Westside;
  + Mid-term, look to add a member to the board with a specific expertise in diversity equity and inclusion; and
  + Mid-term, look to add a member with a skillset in policy and/or advocacy OR grow a member’s familiarity with these issues.

Next Steps

* Current board member self-evaluation by October 2019
* Based on feedback and reflection, create a succession plan and map for board development to be discussed at October 22 training