

SAN FRANCISCO WALDORF SCHOOL



Our Strategic Plan for
Future Generations

See page 3

Photo: Scott Chernis



New teachers bring great energy and fresh perspectives to our classrooms - nursery, grades, and high school.

READ MORE ON PAGE 4

In this issue . . .

- 3 Our Strategic Plan for Future Generations
- 4 Welcome New Faculty
- 6 Hidden Pictures: Class Teacher Susan Bolich
- 7 Alumni Profile: Dimitri Zabelin, Currency Analyst
- 8 Transitions that Work: Kim John Payne
- 11 High School Student to School Trip Leader

In the Classrooms

EARLY CHILDHOOD STORIES

Nursery Rhymes: Jack and Jill

Kindergarten Tales: Three Billy Goats

GRADE SCHOOL MAIN LESSON BLOCKS

Grade 1: Language Arts

Grade 2: Cursive Writing

Grade 3: Grammar

Grade 4: California Geography

Grade 5: Ancient Civilizations

Grade 6: Roman History

Grade 7: Age of Exploration

Grade 8: Chemistry

HIGH SCHOOL MAIN LESSON BLOCKS

Grade 9: Comedy-Tragedy/Anatomy

Grade 10: US Government/Poetics

Grade 11: Chemistry/Astronomy

Grade 12: Calculus/Optics

UPCOMING EVENTS:

October 21: Fairy Walk

November 10: World Cafe

Visit sfwaldorf.org/MySFWS
for more event info.

A message from our Administrative Director

Dear Families and Friends,

San Francisco Waldorf School is entering its 40th year and next September we will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the first Waldorf School, founded in Stuttgart, Germany in 1919. In the context of these major milestones and combined with progress made toward our existing strategic plan goals (*see page 3*), we are creating a plan to guide our work into the future.

San Francisco and the Bay Area have changed dramatically since the creation of our first strategic plan a decade ago. We have seen the steep rise of technology, social media, and cost of living. The Bay Area is celebrated as a hub of innovation and place of racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity, yet neighborhoods and communities are changing quickly and many families are being priced out. As these and other changes increase in speed, we recognize a rise in anxiety among adults and children.

Our work as a Waldorf school community is to continue to actively create—freely, imaginatively, collaboratively, and sensitively—the



experience that will support our students to be their best selves: to meet the changing world with interest, enthusiasm, and goodness.

In the process of creation, we will continue to learn from our experience and the expertise of others. In this newsletter, we hear from one alumnus about how his experience at SFWS helped him strive and adapt. We read from parenting researcher and guide, Kim John Payne, and his advice for parents in the changing world. As we take a brief look back at our growth over the past 8 years, we can decide what to continue, improve, create, and discard, and we can ensure that SFWS thrives for our children and their children.

Welcome back to another school year and another opportunity to help create a world of opportunity and meaning for our children and each other.

Warm regards,
Craig



Creating a Strategic Plan 2030

How is SFWS meeting the needs of students and families in the world today? What steps should we take to help Waldorf education thrive in San Francisco for the coming decades?

These are the foundational questions that the school will consider through a six-month strategic planning process. As our current plan reaches the end of its useful life (2010-2020), our school will create a unified vision and develop concrete, measurable objectives for our future.

We are at a pivotal stage as an institution: San Francisco and the world have changed dramatically in the past decade. At the same time, our school has achieved most of the goals set out in our current strategic plan, from strengthening classroom resources through institutional financial sustainability. Some highlights include:

- Raised faculty salaries to be among the highest of urban Waldorf Schools in North America
- Improved student high school preparedness and retention by creating and refining middle school math, science, and language programs.
- Raised a \$3 million endowment fund and nearly completed the fundraising and design of a new community center/gymnasium
- Built learning differences programs at the Grade School and High School
- Added gardening and outdoor classroom programs on both campuses.
- Established a Multicultural Council of parents, faculty, staff, and trustees to lead our diversity work. Among the many achievements: integrated new, diverse, and inclusive curriculum for early grades through high school, and launched faculty diversity and inclusion workshops
- Expanded Alumni engagement programs and reunions
- Created an Administrative Council as a representative, organizing leadership group, while clarifying roles and collaboration between Faculty, Administration, Steering Groups, College of Teachers, and Board.
- Established a thriving nursery program

Even with these successes, there is still plenty of work ahead, particularly increasing faculty diversity and deepening the culture of equity and inclusion.

Continued page 10

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Laura Ambroseno, Trustee

Craig Appel
Administrative Director

Joan Calderera
High School Humanities

Dagmar Eisele
Kindergarten Teacher

Jessica Eicher
High School Chair

Ghita Harris-Newton, Trustee

Laurence Jaquet
Upper Grades Teacher

Madhulika Jain-Chambers
Trustee

Mitch Mitchell
Advancement Director

Karen Nelson
Grade School Chair

Jim Stearns, Trustee

Alyssa Stellar
Grade 4 Teacher

Astrid Thiersch
Eurythmy Teacher

Welcome New Faculty

Unique paths to our classrooms

Our new teachers bring great energy and fresh perspectives to the classrooms. They arrive on campus from other schools, teacher training programs, the professional community, and graduate schools, here and abroad. We are excited to introduce our talented new faculty, each of whom is partnered with a current teacher/mentor for the transition to our school and the years ahead.

* * *

Gil Griffin, High School Humanities.

Gil is an author and former journalist with *The Washington Post* and the *Los Angeles Times*, and has taught at the high school, college, and graduate levels. He recently published his first book, *Jumping at the Chance*, the true story of how NBA hopefuls are changing Australian Rules Football. Gil is a sports enthusiast, world traveler, and rescue-level scuba diver who is fluent in Spanish and Tagalog. He holds a BA in history, African and Asian emphasis, from Brown University and a MS in journalism from Columbia University School of Journalism.



Tal Honig and Gil Griffin join the High School faculty

Tal Honig, High School Chemistry.

Tal holds a BS in physics and chemistry from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and an MS in Chemistry from the Weizmann Institute of Science. Her PhD work, also at the Weizmann Institute, focused on kinetic processes in red blood cells. In Israel, Tal taught science and math at an Israeli-Arab high school. She is a recent graduate of the Bay Area Center for Waldorf Teacher Training and completed her practicum training with Dr. Carini.

Farida Baxamusa, Guest Teacher, High School Earth Science.

Farida recently moved to the Bay Area from San Diego, where she completed an MS in Geological Studies from UC San Diego. She also holds an MS in Geology from St. Xavier's College in Mumbai, India. Farida worked as a research and teaching assistant at Scripps Institute of Oceanography in the field of paleomagnetism.

Diana Wuerthner, College Counselor.

Diana has an MA in US History from San Francisco State University and a Master's of Library and Information Science from San Jose State University, where her primary academic focus was legal and constitutional history. She is already a dedicated member of the school community as faculty, member of the Multicultural Council and a Waldorf parent. She had a busy summer of college campus visits and conferences, including the Western Association of College Admissions fair and the Harvard Summer Institute on College Admissions program in Boston.



Grade School faculty visit the High School: Librarian Liz Perry, Math Teacher Sandy Portillo-Robins, and Music Teacher Joyce Lijanco

Charlie Wu, Guest Teacher, High School Mathematics. Charlie was raised in San Francisco and obtained a BS in Chemical Engineering from Columbia University. He will teach courses in Algebra and Pre-Calculus.

* * *

Juniper Ethersmith, Nursery Assistant. Juniper previously served as Director of Nursery Aftercare and as a first and second grade aide. She is happy to return to teaching after taking time off with the birth of her second son.

Jane Johansen, Upper Grades Educational Support. Jane has served as a school director, teacher, counselor, and resource specialist at Waldorf and public schools. She holds a BA from the University of Santa Clara, a MA from Western Institute of Social Research, and Waldorf Teacher certification from the Waldorf Institute of Southern California. She is currently pursuing her doctorate.

Kevin Manning, Kindergarten Assistant. Kevin is an avid gardener and storyteller who joins Yelena Tcheng in the Kindergarten 1 classroom. A Waldorf parent, Kevin has a teaching certificate from the Bay Area Center for Waldorf Teacher Training and a BA from San Francisco State University, with majors in French and Sociology.

Kiki Neibuhr, Second Grade Aide. Kiki is an alumna of the Roaring Fork Waldorf School with a BA from UC Santa Barbara. She is transitioning from the corporate world to teaching.

Liz Perry, Librarian. A current parent, Liz has worked in public libraries for many years. She studied Geology and Biology at Earlham College and then, completed a Master's in Library Science from Simmons College. She completed her Waldorf Education studies eight years ago.

Sandy Portillo-Robins, Upper Grades Mathematics. Sandy has many years of experience teaching mathematics at independent Waldorf and Waldorf-inspired schools, including Credo High School, East Bay Waldorf School, and the Community School for Creative Education. She holds a BA from the University of California, Davis, her mathematics and science credential from St. Mary's College, and Waldorf certification from the Bay Area Center for Waldorf Teacher Training.

Joyce Lijanco, Grade School Chorus. While music teacher Lisa Sargent is on sabbatical, Joyce will teach chorus.



Early Childhood Teachers: Juniper Ethersmith and Kevin Manning

Joyce was the chorus teacher at Acacia Waldorf School in the Philippines. She holds a BA in Educational Communication and Linguistics from the University of the Philippines.

Dennis Zhu, Upper Grades Mandarin. While teacher Yi-Hsin Yao is on maternity leave, we welcome Dennis Zhu. Dennis holds a BA in Mechanical Engineering from Beijing Industry University and has been teaching Mandarin for 15 years. He taught for ABC Language Schools and is a voice actor for Rosetta Stone.



Jane Johansen coordinates Educational Support for the Upper Grades

Hidden Pictures

Susan Bolich-Giddens, Grade 8 Class Teacher



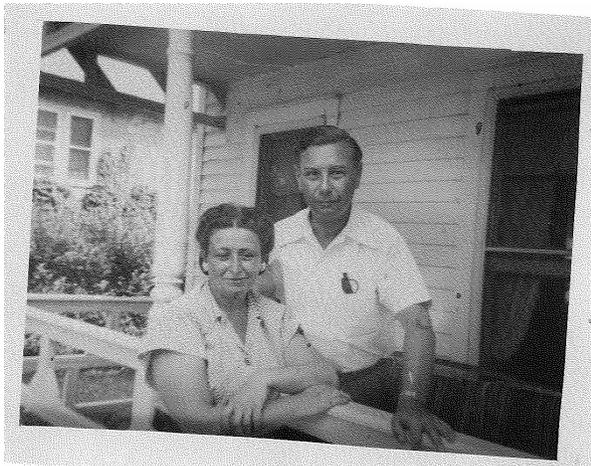
Have you ever discovered an old photo with elegant cursive writing on the back and wondered: Who are these people? Where did they live? What is their story? Who took this intimate shot?

This particular photo was discovered in the faculty room after I had been rifling through the faculty library. I posted the photo with a note asking if anyone had lost it, but to no avail. Many weeks passed, no owner came forward. Was this a Dia de Los Muertos offering that didn't make it back to its rightful owner? Did it mark a page in a colleague's book who had long left the school? Or was it one of our alumni's grandparents? It felt like an item worthy of finding its rightful home.

Since we could not decipher the name on the back and no faculty or staff claimed this photo, the students decided to write their own creative short stories about this old black and white gem. Here is how student Sky Belkora envisioned the family in her story entitled "Found Photo":

The weather was bright and sunny on July 4th 1947, and Mr. and Mrs. Freedman were sitting on their front porch, waiting for their eldest daughter, Shirley, to return from University. Shirley had recently written a letter home saying she had taken an interest in photography. In the letter, she asked for some money to purchase a very new-fangled camera. Mrs. Freedman, whose name is Barbara, is always eager to support her children's interests so she dutifully sent Shirley a big fat check. Mr. Freedman, Albert, is also excited because he has spent the past hour fixing his hair in the bathroom mirror, just in case Shirley happened to take a photo. A few moments later, Shirley pulled up to her childhood home in Frankfurt, Kentucky. She pulled out her camera, ready to snap a picture of her dear, supportive parents. As soon as they saw her car pull up, Mr. and Mrs. Freedman assumed their "photo ready pose" they had practiced many times. Shirley snapped the photo and climbed the stairs to greet her parents.

Years later, Shirley, her husband George, and their youngest daughter Francis, were preparing for their annual Fourth of July picnic, when Shirley opened a hatbox in the closet and found the photo taken exactly fifteen years ago. Seeing the photo reminded her that she ought to phone her mother to thank her for the scrumptious peach pie recipe her mother had sent her.



*Is this your family photo?
Please visit the Grade
School Office and tell us
about yourself and this
lovely couple.*

ALUMNI PROFILE

Dimitri Zabelin: Graduate School to Currency Analysis

We caught up with Dimitri Zabelin '12 as he transitioned from the world of academia to work as a currency analyst and housing advocate.

Tell us about your educational path?

I attended Waldorf from kindergarten all the way through high school. I went to College of Marin for two years (2013-2015) and transferred to UC Berkeley where I completed my undergrad in Political Economy. In the summer of 2016, I also attended the London School of Economics for an accelerated summer program.

After graduation, I went back to Berkeley to get my master's in global political economy. I also taught and briefly served as a University Consortium Fellow at Harvard during their Euro Atlantic Consortium. My interest in political economy developed as I looked for a balance between the metaphysical and mathematical. Political economy offered a perfect middle ground; I was able to intellectually flourish and apply what I have read to the actual world.

In fact, my graduate work drifted slightly away from political economy, toward East-Central European history. My thesis, entitled "*Profane Chauvinism or National Idealism? A Comparison of the Ustasha and Iron Guard Regimes,*" was an analysis of why fascism organically emerged in Romania and not in Croatia during the early-mid twentieth century.

What have you been doing since you received your graduate degree?

I am currently working as a Currency Analyst for an English financial



Dimitri and his mother Nina at graduation from UC Berkeley (Master's Program), Spring 2018.

services company called IG. I specialize in analyzing how the international political economy affects currency markets and focus on geopolitical shifts that influence asset price expectations. I am also the co-founder of a housing advocacy group called NextGen Marin, and work on the weekends as a business development associate for a real estate investment company.

Any school highlights or particularly influential teachers?

Doing theater and field trips were highlights: that's when all the social cliques dissolved and we were just a community. There were several teachers through the years but for the sake of brevity I would have to say Mr. Weber stands out. In Kindergarten, he told stories, especially those before the Shepherd's Play, that gave me a sense of peace I have not been able to replicate. He was a blacksmith when it came to words, and forged for me, some of my most treasured memories at Waldorf. Although, I have to admit, doing theater will always hold a special place in my heart, and for that

I have to thank Kelly Lacy. Without her, it wouldn't have been the same experience.

I also want to say thank you to all the Waldorf faculty for giving me a wonderful education, and for shaping my childhood in such a positive way. I will always remember it with a smile on my face.

Can you reflect on other ways the school influenced your life?

I began to really appreciate the way in which Waldorf teaches, to think individually and creatively. I particularly liked that we were forced to do theater or music because it made us (or at least me) more confident in how I carried myself, presented, and spoke. The literature that Waldorf has us read does come in handy when exploring intellectual subjects in university and I remember reading *Faust* with Mr. Weber in high school and thinking "this is great, but, when the hell am I going to ever apply this?" As fate would have it, one of the most influential books I read in university would have an entire chapter in it dedicated to *Faust* that changed my life.

Waldorf's spirituality, which I initially viewed as the residue of some philosophy established at Woodstock, is actually incredibly profound and carries with it wisdom that I realize is too complex for any high schooler to grasp. I have been fortunate enough to have had a glimpse into the philosophy of Steiner and realized that for a man of the past, his mind was born in a kind of metaphysical future.

Any advice for current students?

Try not to worry so much. High

Transitions that Work

Kim John Payne, M.Ed.

This article was excerpted from Kim John Payne's book, *The Soul of Discipline*. Payne is an educator, researcher, and best-selling author of *Simplicity Parenting*.



Transitions become troublesome when we try and take our kids away from an activity before connecting with them and the activity that they've become so absorbed in. First connect; then direct. Young children do not see themselves as separate from the environment they live in. It's why they touch, taste, smell, feel and gaze at everything around them with such intensity. They have not yet developed the ability to stand back and look at the world in an impartial way. Children pour themselves into play. They become one with the scene, structure or game they have created. It's beautiful to witness

this happy, unselfconscious concentration. The most problematic transitions come when a parent tries to move a child quickly from a state of connectedness (my world) to a state of disconnectedness (your world).

Imagine a child is playing in the mud and sand, making rivers and streams to direct the water she pours in. There are twig bridges, pebble roads and a mud dam. Dad has enjoyed spending time helping, but is also aware that they need to pick up his older son from school and get everyone home before the low-blood-sugar skirmishes begin. He has already given his customary five-minute warning. But that only spurs his daughter Mazy to gather an even bigger pile of rocks and twigs. Dad now anticipates some pushback and says with firmness, "It's getting late—we have to go now." Mazy resists. She says she hasn't finished yet. He responds that he told her five minutes ago that they would need to go. Her stubborn stance signals Dad that the only way to get going is to pick her up and carry her crying to the car. He wrestles to buckle her seatbelt. People are watching. When they are finally under way, he says, seething inside, "Mazy, that was very naughty. If you can't finish up your game when I tell you to, then we are not coming to the playground anymore." Mazy lets loose a deafening howl.

Such transition drama sounds all too familiar to many parents. But transitions do not have to be harrowing. These practical techniques can help make them much less arduous:

Your World - My World - Our World. Understand how self-involved children become. Rather than crash into their world waving our agendas, bring them back, gently. First your world, then my world, and lastly our world.

Your World. A child's world is a space all of her own. She may be reading a story or playing with her dolls. If you want to prepare her for a transition, approach calmly and sit beside her quietly. Some parents like to do something of their own while they sit, like lace a shoe, knit, or sharpen a pencil. That way you aren't interrupting. You are sharing the moment. Your child may look up and say, "It's, like, a robot. The robots got these killer ants. And the ants are going..." And with that story, you connect with your child. Even if neither of you say much she is very much aware of your presence. This step usually only takes 15 to 30 seconds.

My World. After you have connected in this manner, a child will be much more open to the fact that you've got a world too. Infants tend to be easier to "enfold" within a parent's energy, as they still are in or want to inhabit this protective sphere. From about age three or four things start to change as children seek to become more independent. Now, they need a bridge to cross to their parents' world. My world is "Yes, a flying robot can do a lot. We'll set the table when I'm done making the salad." Such words form that bridge. You've acknowledged your daughter's Flying Robot vs. Killer Ant world view, but you've also signaled to her that you are cooking supper, and both of you will set the table when you finish your clearly explained task.

Our World. You have now laid the groundwork for a successful transition. Not only have you connected with the child, but you have also connected the child to the next part of the day. If you had simply told her what to do and insisted that she respect the parameters of your world, she would experience a sharp transition, feel disconnected and disoriented, and likely push back. All it takes is a few seconds and a matter-of-fact sentence or two like "Okay, let's park your cars back in the garage and then we're going to fill the water jug." Or "Come, let's fill the water jug and see if you can carry such a heavy thing all the way to the table by yourself."

Workshop with Kim John Payne: The Soul of Discipline

Raising Respectful Children in a Culture of Disrespect

Saturday, January 26, 7 - 9pm

Sunday, January 27, 9 am to 12:30 pm

Fee: \$100

Location: Grade School

Registration: sfwaldorf.org

Parenting and discipline styles have changed over the years yet often our original influences flow into our daily family life. It is revealing to explore discipline styles, from the blind obedience of the past to behavior modifications based on punishment and reward or to our current model of behavior affirmation, often expressed as the good-job culture.

While these tools have their place, this presentation will set out three cumulative discipline phases.

- Training creative compliance for the young child
- Building emotional skills for the elementary age
- Managing critical choices for the teenage years

For discipline to be effective it must always begin with preventive discipline. This presentation will provide a developmental roadmap to help parents and educators establish the kind of discipline that is both nurturing and effective.

A DECADE OF GROWTH

Highlights from our Strategic Plan 2020



OUTDOOR CLASSROOMS
Outdoor ed program expands across campuses.



MANDARIN PROGRAM
Mandarin and Spanish taught in Grades 1 - 12.



A THRIVING NURSERY
Nursery program added and facilities expanded



FINANCIAL GROWTH
New opportunities thanks to Endowment and Home Court Campaigns

STRATEGIC PLAN CONTINUED

A joint Board, College of Teachers, and Faculty Committee is guiding the strategic planning process. The school retained a consultant, Skip Kotkins of Carney, Sandoe & Associates, who also facilitated the recent Administrative Director search. Through the fall, the team will gather input from community stakeholders—parents, faculty, students, and alumni families through in-person meetings and electronic surveys.

“We are a community of dedicated people and visionary thinkers who have come together around a powerful educational idea,” said Craig Appel, Administrative Director. “This is an opportunity for everyone to reflect, share ideas, and strengthen our small but influential institution for the next generations of children.”

The visioning exercises will be backed with research and data about our community, parent survey results, input from other local school leaders, and demographic data. The school welcomes participation from the entire community.

Look forward to these opportunities to share your ideas:

Surveys: Released in **early October**.

Meetings: In-person meetings will be scheduled on **October 10-11**.

Draft Plan: The strategic plan should be released as a draft to the community by **March 2019**.

ALUMNI PROFILE CONTINUED

school is a time to develop, learn, and enjoy life. Responsibility is necessary but the consequences of letting go of your worries are substantially less impactful than when you get older. Don't sweat the small stuff. If you embarrass yourself, good. That means you've been authentic. If you make a mistake, embrace it, learn from it, and move on. Through every difficulty you learn a little more about yourself.



Acting Elective: One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest



The Class of 2012, high school days

High School Student to School Trip Leader

College Senior Aldyn Markle '15 builds expertise in outdoor education

In high school, the Astronomy trip to Mount Lassen was Alydn Markle's favorite. She and her classmates investigated the night sky; hiked a barren, volcanic peak; experienced pure darkness in the Subway Cave; and enjoyed some unstructured time to explore.

For the past several years, before she returns to college in the fall, Aldyn has re-joined the Astronomy trip as a chaperone and leader. She has also supported the school's summer Range of Light trips to Yosemite. "Working with my former teachers in the field has been a real privilege," she notes. "Each year my role deepens and my perspective evolves."

At just 21, Aldyn already has years of outdoor education experience under her belt. She worked through high school as trip leader with Environmental Traveling Companions, a nonprofit organization that opens the beauty of the outdoors to people with disabilities and under-resourced youth. She also hosted kayaking trips on the Bay through Sea Trek.

As a senior at Hampshire College, Aldyn is studying marine biology and science education. Her field work has taken her to Sarasota, Florida to study communication masking in bottlenose dolphins and to the Marine Mammal Center in the Headlands to work on educational program development. She was also part of a student team recognized by the American Ecological Engineer Society for their storm water filter designs.



Aldyn has earned a certificate of Coastal and Marin Science Education and will devote her senior year to her thesis project.

Community Events - something for everyone!

We host lectures, workshops, and celebrations through the year. Check weekly bulletins or visit sfwaldorf.org/MySFWS

Community Enrichment Program: Presented by the Grade School and Early Childhood Faculty, this series is designed to help parents explore topics in child development, Waldorf education, and Anthroposophy. Coming September 25:

Natural Dentistry - Healing Decay with Minerals and Food

Institutional Advancement: Our community comes together through the year for celebrations, fundraising, and the arts. Don't miss: **3-on-3 Basketball Tournament**, November 17

Multicultural Council: Our Parent Diversity Committee works to build community and facilitate dialogue among families. Don't miss the **World Cafe** on November 10.

The school year begins...



A Rose Ceremony welcome



*High school volleyball in full swing.
Photo: D. Brockmeyer*



High school orientation week



Sharing stories in After Care

News from the Board of Trustees

The Nominations Process

Our Board of Trustees shares governing responsibility with the College of Teachers and the Administrative Director. The Board is empowered to establish legal, fiscal, and strategic policies that ensure the long-term structural health of our school. All Trustees go through a rigorous nomination process and are appointed by consensus. Trustees are parents, an alum, two faculty members, and others from the community.

What do we expect of our Trustees?

- Attend orientation/Ambassador training
- Attend 6 Board meetings a year
- Attend and support school events
- Make SFWS a philanthropic priority
- Participate on Board committees

Who can be nominated as a Trustee?

Any member of our community can nominate themselves or others. Nominees can come from both inside and outside the community. We seek Trustees who have skill sets and life experiences that allow the board to attain excellence and represent our diverse community. For example, Trustees may have legal/financial experience, exemplary organizational skills, or institutional knowledge.

Nomination suggestions should be forwarded to the Committee Chair Tzaddi Thompson:
tzaddi_smith@hotmail.com

The Board encourages community members to attend the public portion of its regular meetings to learn more about the school's governance.