

**BYLAWS OF**  
**THE GRANITE STATE ARTS ACADEMY:**  
**A PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL**

Salem, New Hampshire

**ARTICLE I**

**NAME AND SEAL**

The corporation shall be known as **THE GRANITE STATE ARTS ACADEMY: A PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL** (hereinafter referred to as the "GSAA") and shall have a corporate seal bearing the name of the corporation and the year of incorporation. The Board of Trustees may change the form of the seal and the inscription thereon at any time by majority vote.

**ARTICLE II**

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of GSAA is to be a public charter school pursuant to NH RSA 194-B. Granite State Arts Academy nurtures creative thinkers, active citizens, and independent learners with a curriculum that integrates the arts and academics. Our Vision is a high school that is dedicated to the arts. It will appeal to a broad cross section of students who are looking to discover the joy and transformational power of the arts and those interested in pursuing the arts in a professional setting. Our academic courses will strive to instill a sincere lifelong desire to learn. Students will explore real world problems, simultaneously developing cross-curriculum skills while working in small collaborative groups. Our vision is that during their time at GSAA students will attend art classes each day and study courses from the following arts disciplines: Dance, Music, Theater, and Visual Arts. This will allow for personalized learning, creating conditions where student so talents can flourish. This positive approach to educating will empower students to dream and create every day.

**ARTICLE III**

**MEMBERSHIP**

Board members are recruited and voted on by the sitting Board after a review of qualifications and submitted CV / resume. Acceptance requires a simple majority of the sitting members.

## **ARTICLE IV**

### **GOVERNANCE**

#### *Section 1 -Board of Trustees*

Pursuant to State law, governance of GSAA shall be vested in a Board of Trustees (They be vested and constituted as provided herein, which Board shall exercise without limitation all the powers and responsibilities of GSAA provided for herein and by law. Because all power and legal authority of the Board of Trustees lies in its actions as a group, individual Trustees (also referred to herein as "Trustees") may exercise authority over school affairs only by voting or when the Board has voted to delegate limited authority at an official meeting. In no other circumstances does an individual member have authority to act. Members of the Board shall not receive compensation for their services as Board members, but may receive reimbursement for reasonable expenses as approved by the Board.

#### *Section 2 - Board Responsibility*

The Board is responsible for general supervisory control and authority over the operations and policies of the chartered public school and may take all actions related thereto. Pursuant to N.H. RSA 194-B:5, III, the Board's authority shall include, at a minimum, the authority to do the following:

1. To adopt a name and corporate seal,
2. To sue and be sued, but only to the same extent and upon the same conditions that a town can be sued,
3. To acquire real property from public or private sources by lease, by lease with an option to purchase, or by gift for use as a school facility, provided that such acquisition is consistent with established school purposes,
4. To receive and disburse funds for school purposes,
5. To make contracts and leases for the procurement of services, equipment, and supplies, provided that:(a) If the Board of Trustees intends to procure substantially all educational services under contract with another person or entity, the terms of such a contract shall be provided in an addendum in the school's contract, (b) The state board and the district school board shall not approve any

such contract terms, the purpose or effect of which is to avoid the prohibition in this chapter against chartered public school status for nonpublic schools,

6. To incur temporary debt in anticipation of receipt of funds,
7. To solicit, accept, manage, and use any grants or gifts, provided that such activities are consistent with established school purposes,
8. To have such other powers and take such other actions that are available to a business corporation formed under RSA 293-A and that are not inconsistent with NH RSA Chapter 194-B.

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

### *Section 3 – Composition*

The Board shall have a maximum of thirteen Trustees; voting and non-voting, but shall have no fewer than 6 voting Trustees. The Board shall include at least one member from the following:

- Parent of a former, current or incoming GSAA student;
- The business community;
- The professional educator community; and
- The professional arts community.

Additionally, the Board should include the following non-voting, *ex-officio* members:

- Head of School;
- 2 GSAA teachers – one academic and one arts teacher; and
- One Student from GSAA

No greater than 25 percent of the membership of the Board may simultaneously serve as members of any other school board. No GSAA employee shall be other than an *ex-officio* member of the Board. Appointments to the Board shall be made pursuant to the Board Nomination Policy outlined in section 10.1. The Teachers and the students will select their own Board members. Students and Teachers will not take part in closed session discussion unless invited to by a two-thirds majority of the full Board.

### *Section 4 – Terms*

Each voting Board member shall have a two-year term that is renewable by a two-thirds vote of the Board.

The Head of School shall be a non-voting member of the Board so long as he or she is employed in that position. The teacher member shall serve for a one-year term, with no more than two consecutive terms unless separately approved by the Board.

### *Section 5 - Meetings and Actions*

The Board shall meet at least monthly during the regular school calendar year. For each official meeting, each Board member will be given at least seven calendar days notice of the time and place of the meeting. Official meetings shall comply with the requirements of NH RSA 91-A. Refer to Section 12 for special or emergency meetings.

No Board action shall be taken except at an official meeting and with an affirmative vote of the majority of voting Board members present. Board members shall not be eligible to participate in a vote or discussion when they have been recused due to a conflict of interest.

### *Section 6 - Quorum*

Except as specifically required in other provisions of these bylaws or in statute, a simple majority of Trustees qualified to vote shall constitute a quorum to convene a meeting and conduct business.

### *Section 7 - Conflict of Interest*

The Board of Trustees is committed to maintaining the integrity of the institution and securing the public's trust. As a result, the Board shall adopt and adhere to a conflict of interest policy, which shall include, at a minimum, the following:

Any material conflict of interest on the part of any member of the Board, officer, committee member, or employee, shall be disclosed in writing to the Board and made a matter of record through an annual procedure, and also when the interest involves a specific issue before the Board. Where a transaction between the School and a Board member, officer, committee member, or employee exceeds five-hundred dollars but is not greater than five-thousand dollars in a fiscal year, a two-thirds vote of the disinterested Board members present, eligible to vote, and voting is required. Where the transaction involved exceeds five-thousand dollars in a fiscal year, a two-thirds vote of the disinterested Board members and publication in the local newspaper is required. The minutes of the meeting shall reflect that a disclosure was made, the abstention from voting, and the actual vote itself. A Board member shall recuse himself or herself and be excused from any portion of a meeting where the discussion of or vote regarding any topic involving a family member is taking place, including but not limited to contracts, employment, and admission. No voting member of the Board may have any direct pecuniary interest in a contract with the school or in the purchase or sale of any school real or personal property or equipment. No member of the Board shall solicit any favor, gift, or other items of

monetary value for personal benefit, improperly use school property, use his or her position as a member of the Board for personal gain, or make unauthorized promises or commitments on behalf of the Board. Every new member of the Board shall be informed of the conflict of interest policy upon entering the duties of his or her office, and shall sign a statement acknowledging understanding of an agreement to this policy. The Board will comply with all applicable State and Federal conflict of interest requirements, including NH RSA 7:19, II and RSA 7:19-A, which are incorporated herein by reference.

### *Section 8 - Board Elections*

During the first quarter of each fiscal year of GSAA, the Board shall renew or elect Trustees, per *Section 4 d Terms* as referenced above, to replace those whose term will expire. The renewal(s) and/or election(s) shall take place during an official meeting of the Board called for that purpose. New Trustees shall be elected by a majority of Trustees present at such a meeting.

### *Section 9 - Officers and Duties*

The officers of the Board will consist of a chair, vice-chair, secretary and treasurer who shall be elected annually from among those Board members currently serving. The officer election shall take place at the next meeting following Board elections. No member may serve as chairperson for more than two years consecutively unless an extension is voted by two-thirds of the Board.

The officers' duties are as follows:

Chair: The Chair shall convene regularly scheduled Board meetings, and shall preside at each official meeting. Meetings shall provide for fair and open deliberation that is also efficient, timely, and orderly. The Chair is required to keep the Board informed of all activities of the corporation. The Chair is specifically authorized to sign, in the name of the Corporation, all contracts and documents authorized by the Board. The Chair shall determine the meeting agenda with the advice and input of the Head of School and other Board Members. The Chair shall appoint an acting secretary at any meeting where the Secretary is absent. The Chair, after consultation with the Board, shall appoint Board members to represent the Board with government agencies and any other organizations. The Chair shall have the authority to cancel and/or reschedule meetings after consultation with the Board members and the Head of School. The Chair is further authorized to call special or emergency meetings in accordance with the related provisions contained herein. The Chair of the Board shall have such other powers and duties as the Board may from time to time determine.

Vice-chair: In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-chair shall assume the duties of the Chair and shall also have such powers and duties as the Board may determine. The Vice-chair can at the will of the chairperson run the convene meetings instead of the chair.

Secretary: The Secretary shall be responsible for keeping the records of Board actions, including overseeing the taking of minutes at all Board meetings, including non-public sessions, sending out and posting meeting notices and announcements, distributing copies of the minutes and agenda to each Board member, and assuring that Corporate records are properly maintained. Procedures for recording minutes shall include the following, at a minimum:

1. Record all actions or votes at Board meetings by last name, except unanimous votes, which may be recorded as such;
2. Record in the minutes of all public meetings and other proceedings the full names of the Members and other persons appearing before the Board (the names of people in the audience who do not speak do not need to be recorded.);
3. Record a brief description of the subject matter discussed;
4. Record final decisions of any Board action;
5. Provide draft minutes of public meetings, so labeled, for public inspection within five days, as required by RSA 91-A:2, II. Minutes of nonpublic sessions must be publicly disclosed within seventy-two hours as required by RSA 91-A:3, III.
6. Present the draft minutes to the Board for review and approval;
7. Make corrections to the draft minutes after review by the Board;
8. Post the official minutes after they are reviewed and approved by the Board; and
9. Submit the original official minutes to the School's administrative office for filing in the School's permanent record.

The Secretary shall have such other powers and duties as the Board may require and shall perform all duties customarily incident to the office of a corporate secretary. In the absence of the Chair and Vice- chair, the Secretary shall assume the responsibilities of the Chair.

Treasurer: The Treasurer shall oversee the financial affairs of the School, monitor the creation and preservation of all financial records and accounts, initiate financial statements to be prepared, be the custodian of the funds and securities of the School, and shall oversee and assist in the preparation of the budget for presentation to the Board. The Treasurer shall make a report of the finances of the Corporation at each meeting and shall make financial information available to individual Board members upon request. The Treasurer shall have such other powers and

duties as the Board may determine and shall perform such duties as are customary and incident to the office of Treasurer of a Corporation. In the absence of the Chair, Vice-chair, and Secretary, the Treasurer shall assume the responsibilities of the Chair.

If any of the offices shall become vacant for any reason, the remaining Board members shall elect a successor to hold such office for the remainder of the unexpired term, provided that all Board members have been notified at least seven calendar days prior to any meeting at which a Board officer vacancy will be filled.

### *Section 10 - Vacancies*

When a vacancy on the Board is created during a Trustee's term, the Secretary may receive nominations per the Board Nomination Policy. These nominations will be sent out to all Board members at least two weeks in advance of an official meeting to consider the same.

#### *Section 10.1 - Nomination Policy*

The Nomination Policy shall consist of having the person interested in serving a term to:

- Attend at least one board meeting; and
- Fill out an application form, including signing a statement acknowledging his or her understanding of an agreement to the Conflict of Interest policy.

All newly appointed Board members shall review training and introductory materials including the following:

- BOT Member contact sheet
- Charter/bylaws
- GSAA Operating Protocols and Organizational Chart
- Descriptions of Committees with membership
- At least the last 2 recent month's board meeting minutes
- Most current financial reports

### *Section 11- Resignation, Termination, and Absences*

Resignation from the Board should be in writing and submitted to the Secretary. Additionally, a Board member may be terminated from the Board due to excessive absences, defined as being absent without excuse from the Chair for more than one-fourth of official meetings. A Board member may be terminated from the Board for other reasons upon a vote in favor of termination by three-fourths of all the remaining Trustees provided that notice of intention to remove such Trustee is set forth in the meeting notice seven calendar days prior to that meeting. Any such Trustee shall be entitled to appear before the full Board and be heard at such meeting.

### *Section 12 - Special or Emergency Meetings*

Special meetings of the Board shall be called by the Chair or by the Secretary upon receipt of written requests from one-third of the Board members. Notices of special meetings shall be sent out by the Secretary to each Trustee at least one week in advance, unless exigent circumstances exist, in which case 48 hours shall be sufficient.

### *Section 13 - Telephonic or Electronic Attendance*

Pursuant to statute, a Trustee may only attend a meeting electronically or otherwise when attending in person is not "reasonably practical." In that circumstance, a member may participate and vote by telephone, provided that all participants, whether present in person or telephonically, are able to hear and speak to all other participants throughout the meeting by conference telephone or similar equipment and further provided that those participating remotely can be reasonably identified, have identified any other persons at the same location with them, and have stated for the record the reason they cannot appear in person. Attendance other than in person is discouraged.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **COMMITTEES**

The Board may create committees of the Board members as needed, including but not limited to finance, curriculum, personnel, etc. The Treasurer shall be a member of the finance committee.

The Board may create committees, including advisory committees. Committee members other than Board members may be appointed by the Board and shall serve at the pleasure of the Board. Appointment to the Board of Trustees and/or the Finance Committee shall be subject to a satisfactory criminal background check and any other requirement the Board deems necessary.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **HEAD OF SCHOOL**

Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 7 herein, the Board hires the Head of School. The Head of School is the Board's delegate for day-to-day responsibilities for the School operations, including carrying out the goals and policies of GSAA as established by the Board and GSAA Charter, which delegation of authority can be rescinded by a vote of the Board. The Head of School shall be a non-voting, *ex-officio* member of the Board and shall attend all official Board



meetings, report on the status and progress of GSAA, answer questions of the Board members, and carry out all duties of the job description. The Board may designate other duties to the Head of School as it determines appropriate.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **GENERAL PROVISIONS**

#### *Section 1 - Authority to Sign*

The Board may authorize any Trustee or Trustees to sign contracts and other documents on behalf of GSAA, in addition to the Chair as provided herein above. Such authorization shall be delegated at an official meeting and shall be in writing. The Treasurer and the Chair are authorized to sign all checks, drafts, and other orders for payment on behalf of GSAA, in accordance with the Financial Control Policy.

#### *Section 2 - Authority to Accept Gifts, Contributions, Bequests, and Devises*

Pursuant to statute, the Board may solicit and accept on behalf of the School any gift, contribution, bequest, or devise for any purpose consistent with the School's mission.

#### *Section 3 - Organization Records*

There shall be kept in the administrative office of GSAA correct books of the accounts and transactions of GSAA and Board, including an official record of meeting minutes GSAA Charter, and up-to-date Bylaws.

#### *Section 4 - Fiscal Year*

The Corporation's fiscal year shall end on June 30, and the ensuing fiscal year shall commence on the following day, or the fiscal year may commence and end on such other days as the Board shall determine.

## **ARTICLE V111**

### **LIABILITY AND DEFENSE AND INDEMNIFICATION OF TRUSTEES AND OFFICERS**

No Trustee or Officer shall be personally liable for any debt, liability, or obligation of GSAA. Further limits on liability contained in the GSAA Charter are incorporated herein by reference. Except to the extent prohibited by RSA 292:2, V-a or other applicable law, the School shall defend and indemnify any Trustee made, or threatened to be made, a party to, or called as a

witness in, or asked to provide information in connection with any threatened or pending action, proceeding, hearing, or investigation or any appeal therein, where such Trustee or officer is or has been made or threatened to be a party or summoned to give evidence, by reason of the fact that he or she is or was a Trustee or officer acting within the scope of his or her duties, against all judgments, fines, amounts paid in settlement, and reasonable expenses including attorney's fees actually and necessarily occurred in the defense against or as a result of such action, proceeding, hearing, investigation, or appeal therein.

No defense and indemnification shall be provided under this Article in any action or proceeding brought by or on behalf of the School to procure a judgment or a remedy, whether civil or criminal. Further, no defense and indemnification shall be provided under this Article where the Trustee acted in bad faith or contrary to his or her fiduciary duty, or where the Trustee has been a knowing participant to any transaction from which any Trustee derives an improper personal benefit, or has committed a knowing violation of the law, or has committed an act or gross, wanton, or willful negligence.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **AMENDMENTS**

These Bylaws may be amended when necessary by a two-thirds majority of the Board of Trustees. Proposed amendments must be submitted to the Secretary and sent out to the Board two weeks prior to a meeting at which a vote on the amendments is to be held.

**ARTICLE XI**  
**CERTIFICATION**

These Bylaws were approved at a meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of the signers of the GSAA Charter on February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

Donald Erdbrink

February 13, 2018

Board Chair

Date