



Groton Dunstable Education Foundation

...helping our students "Reach for the Stars!"

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New Board Members allow GDEF to continue operations

- *Annual Giving Campaign to launch in November*
- *School grant award schedule restored*

The Groton Dunstable Education Foundation is pleased to announce it has appointed seven new volunteers to its board of directors, allowing it to continue its 11 year mission of supporting district schools through private enrichment grants. At an April meeting of the School Committee, GDEF had announced that it would be forced to suspend operation in a year if new volunteers didn't come forward to fill key board positions being vacated by the retirement of long-time members.

The Foundation also plans to reinstate its Annual Giving Campaign to raise new funds for grants, officially launching the fundraiser in November, and will restore its regular schedule of grant awards. Mini-grants for up to \$500 will continue to be awarded on an ongoing basis with applications accepted through the school year from September 1 through April 30, 2016. A larger cycle for grants over \$500 will be awarded in early March, with applications due January 31.

Long-time board member Bea Alice Loos has stepped into the role of president for this year following the retirement of Kerri Figueroa after 10 years on the board, and she'll be joined by newly elected Co-President Emily Davis of Groton, who worked as a science teacher at the district high school before leaving to care for her baby daughter. As a former recipient of GDEF grants, Emily said she "knows how important these grants can be in the classroom," and wants to be "involved in seeing GDEF succeed in the future."

Kristen Ferrara of Groton, who has four children in district schools this year, has been elected Director of Communications, while long-standing director Janet Sheffield will serve as co-director during a transition period. Kristen has extensive volunteer experience, serving as assistant director/producer of the Florence Roche School plays and on the board of directors for Crusader Youth Hockey. In her application, Kristen expressed her perspective that "GDEF fills an important gap by providing funding to creative and innovative teachers and staff."



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Former Florence Roche PTA Treasurer Beth O'Brien will be taking over the critical role of treasurer, working with Lorrie Morgan who has served in the capacity since 2005. Also joining GDEF's Board as Directors-at-Large are three Groton residents: Karen Sjoberg, who has worked in fundraising at Lowell General Hospital where she's a staff physician, and Natina Perotti, Jennifer Callahan, and Renae Cianciotto, all of whom have served in many volunteer capacities in the schools and community. Directors-at-Large assist in a variety of roles where needed, including grant administration, fundraising, events, and marketing.

Rounding out GDEF's 2015-2016 board are four returning members: Kathleen Barron, Giving Campaign Director; Barbara Keast, Secretary/Clerk; Claire Liliedahl, Director-at-Large and High School liaison; and Caitlin O'Brien, Director of Grants Disbursement and Swallow-Union liaison. New GDEF volunteer Mary Garcia will serve as liaison to Florence Roche School, while Laura Teeple will continue her role as liaison to the Middle School.

Since its founding in 2003, GDEF has funding 322 enrichment grants totaling over \$500,000 to all five schools in the Groton-Dunstable Regional School District, built community partnerships with local businesses to provide extra support for the schools, and engaged the broader community through fundraising events and its Annual Giving Campaign. For more information, please visit GDEF's booth at parent open houses hosted by the schools during September, or visit www.gdefinc.org where you can also sign up to receive Email newsletters. GDEF meets monthly during the school year with the first meeting scheduled for Wednesday, September 9, at 7 p.m. (check the website for location).