

GATEWAY REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2014

**Blandford Elementary School Building
7:30 P.M.**

(A PORTION OF THIS MEETING MAY BE HELD IN EXECUTIVE SESSION)

I. OPENING OF MEETING

BLANDFORD
Michele Crane
Terri Garfield

CHESTER
Shirley Winer
Martha Otterbeck

HUNTINGTON
Ron Damon
Jeff Wyand

MIDDLEFIELD
Sarah Foley
Noreen Suriner

MONTGOMERY
Anne Marie Buikus
Sandra Haas

RUSSELL
Ruth Kennedy
Mary Ann Laurie

WORTHINGTON
Sue Levreault
Gretchen Eliason

SECRETARY
Stacy Stewart

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION
Dr. David B. Hopson, Superintendent
Stephanie Fisk, Business & Finance

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL
Joanne Blocker, Director of Academics
Alice Taverna, Pupil Services Director

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

7:35 p.m. II. PUBLIC INPUT FOR ITEMS NOT LISTED ON AGENDA (3 Minute Limit)

A. None

III. STUDENT COUNCIL INPUT

- Brennan Foley said they held elections the results are as follows: Freshmen: President Ryley Carleton, Vice President, Alex Auclair; Secretary, Olivia Clark; Student Council Reps, Jessica VanHeynigen, Joe Dubour, Dawson Alton. Sophomores: President, Trevor Bruno; Vice President, Gabrielle Goralcyk; Treasurer, Diana Tereschuck; Student Council: Anna Pless, Gabrielle Gorakzyk, Rachel LeBarron, Kurstyn Seidnitzer. Juniors: President, Davis Britland; Vice President, Jenna Margarites; Secretary Allison Garriepy; Student Council: Alivia Galipeau, Alyssa Moreau, Brennan Foley, Ben VanHeynigen. Seniors: President, Cory Bisbee; Vice President, Casey Pease; Treasurer, Tyler Kornacki; Student Council: Caroline Booth, Alison Fisk, Charlotte LeBarron, Jessie Walton. Student Council President is Cory Bisbe.
- Fall day is Friday and students will wear red, yellow, orange and brown. They will host a Halloween day around Halloween. Brennan is selling pies for a fundraiser.

IV. CONSENT ITEMS 9/10/14(Enc.)

Mr. Damon made a motion seconded by Ms. Suriner to approve the minutes of 9/10/14 with corrections.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 11 Nays Abstain 3 Absent

V. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS/RECOGNITIONS

A. Model UN Field Trip To CT – Nick Vooyo

- Nick Vooyo apologized for missing the deadline. He is requesting to take seven students to the Model UN Conference at UCONN. It is a three-day conference, roughly the same size as the one they went to in Boston. It is a little less as they will commute for the three days. Students will carpool. They would get permission from their parents. Students will be funding the trips themselves. The student activity account is paying for the overall school fee.
- Mrs. Levreault asked what the policy is for students driving to events. Students are not allowed to drive themselves to athletic events.
- Dr. Hopson said we don't normally, but there is a form parents can sign to waive that.
- Mrs. Otterbeck asked for the dates of the trip.
- Nick Vooyo said November 7, 8, 9. They looked at having parents carpool too, but since they are mostly seniors and juniors, they could drive themselves.
- Mrs. Eliason would like him to look into it. She thinks this is a great experience, but young drivers are inexperienced.

B. Budget Overview/History

- Dr. Hopson and Ms. Fisk gave a budget presentation. The PowerPoint will be put on the website.
- Mrs. Eliason said minimum town assessment spreadsheets can be downloaded off the DESE website. It is confusing. They come up with a figure you should pay, can afford, and the difference. Then they throw that all away, and they look at what you gave us last year and multiply it by 4% and that is what you pay.
- Mrs. Foley asked why is homeless transportation reimbursement so much less than special education transportation.
- Ms. Fisk said it depends each year. It's a state formula.
- Mrs. Eliason said vocational education transportation is paid for by the towns. And it is 6 or 7 % reimbursement.
- Ms. Laurie asked if we can see major revolving accounts as part of the budget process this year.
- Ms. Fisk said yes.
- Ms. Laurie asked if everyone pays the same fee to use the building.
- Dr. Hopson said no. Town organizations don't pay, organizations working for students pay one fee and everyone else pays another.
- Mrs. McVeigh thanked us for starting budget early. For presentations this detailed she would request they be put on the website a couple of days before the meeting. Not just budget presentations, but the many other good presentations that are also given.
- Dr. Hopson said it was a good suggestion however, this presentation wasn't finished until today.
- Ms. Laurie thanked Dr. Hopson and Ms. Fisk for the presentation. She said we aren't here to discuss the budget tonight; we will in future meetings.

VI. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Student Representative - None

B. School Committee

- Mrs. Kennedy said as the delegate for the conference, she has received a lot of information. She would like to put the different sessions on the website for everyone to look at. She would like people to come up with questions. If she can't go to one of the sessions she can ask the leaders of those sessions any questions we might have.
- Mrs. Crane stated that all school committee members receive the information in the mail as well.
- Ms. Laurie has been thinking about the budget process. She handed out a sheet of some ideas. She would like everyone to look at this and think about things from the bottom up.
- Mrs. Garfield and Ms. Suriner talked about the Charting the Course workshop they attended. They said it was interesting, informative, and overwhelming.
- Mrs. Garfield wishes she had the information earlier.
- Ms. Suriner was glad there was discussion about contract length, budgeting roles of the committee, the relationship of the superintendent with the committee, etc. There was a lot of dialogue. Their questions were heard and input was given.
- Mrs. Crane said it was a smaller group this time, only 20 or 25. There was a different feel of the day. It is overwhelming even being that it was a refresher for her. It would be interesting to see how other school committees run their meetings.

C. Chairperson

- Mrs. Crane said the new MGL books are in Mrs. Stewart's office. She will bring a stack of them at the first meeting in the library. If you need one sooner, please her know or stop by her office and pick on up. She is still looking for liaisons. Mrs. Foley will take the high school, Mr. Wyand will take maintenance, welding and wood shop, Mrs. Winer will take Chester, Mrs. Kennedy will take Littleville, and Mrs. Otterbeck will take curriculum.
- Mrs. Kennedy said she will start to set up tables at the open houses to give information to parents. It will make school committee available to the parents.

D. Superintendent – Central Office Update (Enc.)

- Dr. Hopson asked if anyone has anything to share for teacher negotiations, if so we need an executive session.
- Dr. Hopson and Ms. Fisk just got back from the MASBO Conference. They both go to different sessions with business managers and superintendents from all over the world. He brought back some useful information he will be looking to implement.

E. Business Manager - Quarterly Report (Enc.), Adult Ed Flyer (Enc.)

- Ms. Fisk said the 4th quarter report was in your packet. This year's first quarter will be out next month. This is how we finished the last year: Accounts under spent are sped transportation and tuition services. We were able house some of the students here. Instructional changes were staffing changes. Title I money was only reduced a little. Revenue was close to the same. A new change is that we can have a regional transportation revolving account instead putting it in E & D. This should leave our E & D around \$597,000 about 3.5% of our budget.
- Mrs. Eliason asked about extraordinary maintenance. Was there something we didn't do or did we just come in under budget.
- Ms. Fisk said we were hoping to get the second phase of the well in. We will probably have a meeting with DEP within the next month. We also did the epoxy floor in the café and had good prices.
- Mr. Wyand asked about the well and how much of that was put aside for the well repair. Instead of putting the money into E & D, can we put it in a separate account.
- Ms. Fisk said it should be a capital expense. Because the year is closed, you wouldn't be able to vote to move it into stabilization now. These figures are going to the Department of Revenue.
- Mr. Wyand said we've talked about the capital improvement, could we put in another account.
- Ms. Fisk said you could have if you did it prior to the end of the year.
- Mrs. Eliason asked about the current IMP instructional software. We only used 65% of the budget.
- Ms. Fisk said there are a number of others and there was an allocation for iPad apps. The administration has taken a hard look at what people are really using.
- Mrs. Levreault said in district professional development we had \$10,000, did we lose a day.
- Ms. Fisk said we thought the Title I was going to be reduced and that didn't happen. We budgeted for Title II to be cut and that didn't happen.
- Ms. Fisk said the Adult Education Flyer was in your packet. It is on the website, it went home in red folders, will be on a table at the Jr. High, High, and Middle school open houses, it was sent to town halls, in breaking news, and a press release. There is no deadline. There are only a couple starting in the beginning of October. We were a little off target with Southern Hilltown Adult Education.

F. Administration

- Mrs. Blocker said October 14 is our second big professional development workshop day. She finalized offerings today. Now we have to set up. We have eighteen presenters this year.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTING

A. Superintendent's Evaluation

- They will meet before the next meeting.

B. Finance Subcommittee

- Discussion later on in the agenda.

C. Legislative Liaison

- Nothing new at this time.

D. Policy Subcommittee

- They have not met.

E. School Committee Goals Subcommittee

- Nothing at this time.

F. Community Curriculum Committee

- Mr. Mason said they have not met. They are planning to meet in the future and will be reviewing work to date. He would like to meet with Ms. Fisk and Ms. Klemaszewski of Southern Hilltown Adult Education to see how they can support and complement each other. Ms. Fisk has been doing a great job and they would like to help move that process forward. Jacobs ladder Association will have a table at the Huntington Fall Festival and SHAEC will also be there, he is not sure if Gateway is planning to go. They will distribute flyers for Gateway if it will help. The festival is October 4 and 5.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS**A. First Semester Field Trips**

Broadway Play Jr. High/High
Washington DC Music Competition

Mr. Damon made a motion seconded by Mrs. Levreault to approve the two field trips presented.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 14 Nays Abstain Absent

- Ms. Suriner would agree she is cautious about student drivers for the Model UN field trip.
- Move to old business for a vote at the next meeting.

B. Line Item Transfers

Ms. Suriner made a motion seconded by Mrs. Kennedy to approve the line item transfers.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 13 Nays 1 Abstain Absent

C. Finance Committee Discussion (Enc.)

- Mrs. Crane said Ms. Fisk shared with us an updated budget timeline. We had discussed having dates where 7-730 would be the time for budget development so that everyone would hear it and town officials would be invited, although they are always welcome.
- Mrs. Crane asked for a motion for or against.
- Mrs. Winer asked if it has to be either or.
- Ms. Fisk said this group would address all the same things as the finance subcommittee in the past, but during the budget process if we can get the information out to 15 members verses 5 members it would be helpful. The more people who understand and hear the information, the better off we are.
- Mrs. Crane said if we continued the finance, they would meet at another time.
- Mrs. Kennedy doesn't want to go with every other month. We have things we haven't finished and things she wants to initiate. She doesn't want to disband the finance subcommittee.
- Ms. Suriner said if we do go with the committee as a whole we have to understand we will spend a lot of time on the budget. It is going to consume a lot of time. She is all for it she just wants people to know in advance.
- Mrs. Winer said last year it was close to 50 % of the committee on the subcommittee. There was still discussion at the meeting that didn't come to the whole committee. It's just not possible.
- Mrs. Eliason doesn't think that revising the budget isn't compatible with the finance committee – there are lots of other things going on. There were some issues there isn't a resolution for yet. Mrs. McVeigh suggested salary bands and that is a big project. Finance was meeting with GTAC. they started working on vocational transportation reimbursement. Ms. Fisk worked with town administrators. She doesn't object to spreading out budget discussions. She is impartial as to whether it is one two-hour meeting or four half-hour sessions.
- Mrs. Winer said one of the problems with the finance subcommittee is she felt left out of discussion she couldn't duplicate.

- Mrs. Buikus said they hoped there would be one representative from each town. If someone from Chester had been on it they could have told the other member. It was pretty much localized. There were towns not represented.
- Mrs. Kennedy said everything we did was out in the open. They were open meetings. There was a member who last year praised the committee and now they want to disband it and she questions the motive. She is uncomfortable dissolving it and so is her town. If you want to know what we are doing come to a meeting.
- Ms. Fisk said this proposal doesn't take that away. It is intended for them to work together and get more people involved.
- Mrs. Kennedy doesn't want to see it disband. We have finance issues with the Worthington withdrawal. The two together would be ideal.
- Ms. Laurie agrees there should be both. She likes the 7:00 p.m. meeting time with the finance committee meeting on their own.
- Mrs. Foley asked if there are meeting minutes.
- Mrs. Buikus said yes.
- Mr. Mason said Russell just discussed this same issue and would like to see the finance committee the same as it is. It plays a valuable role. The entire school committee should be more involved.
- Mrs. Crane said at the moment we only have 3 members.
- Ms. Suriner is hearing two different functions. Worthington withdrawal, salary bands, etc., might not be able to be done as a whole group.

Mrs. Winer made a motion seconded by Mrs. Garfield to approve the schedule of meetings starting at 7:00 p.m. with a slot dedicated to budget as proposed by Ms. Fisk (December 10, January 14, 28, February 11, 25 and March 11)

- Mrs. Kennedy said we have a superintendent's evaluation subcommittee meeting on December 10.
- Mrs. Crane said the evaluation subcommittee could try to shorten those meetings changing to time to 6:30-7:00.

Mrs. Suriner made an amendment to remove the 7:30 end time to allow it to go until completed. No Second

- Mr. Wyand sees it as a bit of a contract as long as we are confident it doesn't bind the finance subcommittee.
- Dr. Hopson said it doesn't have anything to do with the finance committee.
- Mrs. McVeigh asked is the purpose of this to take the budget process away from finance.
- Mrs. Crane said how this came up was due to efficiency and repetition and providing an opportunity for everyone to hear the information. Its intent was so we aren't doing double work. It hasn't been completely efficient. It is the pleasure of the committee as to whether to have meetings from 7:00-7:30 p.m. or not.
- Mrs. Winer said it will be the first topic of school committee on the agenda.

Mrs. Levreault made an amendment seconded by Mr. Wyand that the finance committee continues the same as last year meeting separately.

- Mrs. Levreault asked if finance subcommittee could start at 6:30, address budget at 7:00 and then roll into the agenda at 7:30.
- Ms. Fisk said it is important that as many people hear the questions and the answers so everyone is getting the same information at the same time.
- Dr. Hopson suggested putting a dedicated budget on the agenda between presentations and communications on the dates that Ms. Fisk has suggested.

Mr. Damon left -9:39

Ms. Suriner made a motion seconded by Mrs. Winer to split the motion.

- Mrs. Levreault said we have a time line, is that the same as in the presentation.
- Dr. Hopson said not yet, it hasn't been voted. The reason why they disband to begin with because they were getting to repetitive. Ms. Fisk's intent is to have all members understand the budget.
- Mrs. Eliason said we never had any control or input in the budget, most of the work was focused on increasing school committee and townspeople understanding. That's why they did the chapter 70,

transportation reimbursement, primer, etc. Making sure they understood the budget was the plan. She is ambivalent about the plan.

Ms. Suriner made a motion seconded by Mrs. Winer to split the motion.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 9 Nays 4 Abstain Absent 1

Mrs. Winer made a motion seconded by Mrs. Garfield to approve the schedule of meetings starting at 7:00 p.m. with a slot dedicated to budget as proposed by Ms. Fisk (December 10, January 14, 28, February 11, 25 and March 11 and putting budget between presentations and communications)

Mrs. Levreault made an amendment to put budget presentation first and then presentations. No second.

- Mr. Wyand agrees with Dr. Hopson; people will come if it is on the agenda.
- Mrs. Eliason said you could allow the finance subcommittee to host an open forum.
- Ms. Suriner would like to make a decision before we talk about alternatives.
- Mrs. Winer made a motion seconded by Mrs. Garfield to approve the schedule of meetings starting at 7:00 p.m. with 7:00-7:30 dedicated to budget as proposed by Ms. Fisk (December 10, January 14, 28, February 11, 25 and March 11)

Mrs. Winer made a motion seconded by Mrs. Garfield to approve the schedule of meetings starting at 7:00 p.m. with a slot dedicated to budget as proposed by Ms. Fisk (December 10, January 14, 28, February 11, 25 and March 11 and putting budget between presentations and communications)

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 13 Nays Abstain Absent 1

Mrs. Levreault made a motion seconded by Mr. Wyand to have the finance subcommittee continue as last year.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 13 Nays Abstain Absent 1

Mrs. Levreault made a motion seconded by Mr. Wyand to extend the meeting till 10:20 p.m.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 10 Nays 3 Abstain Absent 1

D. Committee Self Evaluation

- Mrs. Crane said you all have the self evaluation. She would like to have a motion to approve the self-evaluation. The evaluation will be sent directly to Pat, then she comes back to us and gives us a report. Stacy will send out by email Pat's address. Do we want to go forward with it.
- Mrs. Eliason said we did this about five years ago and she thought there were some flaws in the presentation. She thought the scores were meaningless and that is was just a number.

Mrs. Laurie made a motion seconded by Mrs. Winer to approve taking the self-evaluation.

Motion Failed (VOTE) Yeas 3 Nays 5 Abstain 4 Absent 1

- Mrs. Winer asked if there was a way to change the self-evaluation
- Mrs. Levreault asked if Pat Correira was willing to allow us to change the survey to make it more suitable for us.

E. Boys' and Girls' State Discussion

- Hold for the next agenda

F. School Committee Reimbursement/Payments for Travel Discussion

- Hold for next agenda

G. School Committee/Superintendent Goals

- Hold for next agenda

H. Worthington Withdrawal

- Ms. Laurie asked if we could initiate getting an answer.

IX. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS - None

X. OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Future Agenda Items

XI. INFORMATION

Information

New staff at Gateway
 Gator Grins opens September 9
 PSATs on October 15
 Superintendent's Corner September 5, 2014
 After-School program starts September 22
 Media Advisory on Worthington Withdrawal
 Superintendent's Corner September 12, 2014
 White concludes career at Gateway
 Gateway newsletter available to parents, community
 School committee discusses future of finance sub-committee
 College planning night for seniors
 Gateway offers adult education
 Chromebook meeting September 23

Warrants

AP# 1019 \$41,351.24	PR# 6 \$369,802.39
AP# 1021 \$135,900.44	

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mrs. Foley made a motion seconded by Mr. Wyand to adjourn at 10:20 p.m.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT at 10 p.m. unless extended by majority vote.

Respectfully Submitted,
 Stacy L. Stewart,
 School Committee Secretary