

GATEWAY REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2013

**Library
7:30 P.M.**

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

I. OPENING OF MEETING

BLANDFORD
Michele Crane

CHESTER
Shirley Winer
Martha Otterbeck

HUNTINGTON
Ron Damon
William Hathaway
Jeff Wyand

MIDDLEFIELD
Sarah Foley

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
Jason Finnie, High, Jr. High School Principal
Wendy Long, District Grant Writer
Alice Taverna, Pupil Services Director

OTHERS: _____

7:35 p.m. II. PUBLIC INPUT FOR ITEMS NOT LISTED ON AGENDA

III. STUDENT COUNCIL INPUT

IV. CONSENT ITEMS 11/13/13 (Enc.)

Mr. Damon made a motion seconded by Mrs. Levreault to accept the minutes of November 13, 2013.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 9 Nays Abatain 4 Absent

V. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS/RECOGNITIONS

A. Holiday Presentation

- Mrs. Eliason asked Dr. Hopson to thank Mrs. Beauregard and Mrs. Guertin and let them know how much we appreciated the performance.

B. High School Update/Jr. High School Update – Jason Finnie

- The Band and Chorus perform on Monday. They will perform for students and faculty on the last day of school before the holiday break.
- Fifty-nine percent of our high school students made the honor role. Jr. High had good and excellent effort awards. They held a breakfast and had a guest speaker. Small business innovation helps find funding for the event. Sixty-six percent of the students were a part of it.
- The Gateway Education Foundation helped fund the Keystone Arches program. Mrs. Winer said they studied bridge building and then they built bridges. The whole class was able to participate. They gave a presentation to parents and community members. Students spoke about the history of their towns. Both Pat Diefendorf and Dawne Piers-Gamble headed the project.

- Seven students, one from each town, accepted nominations for project 51. It's a state-wide event for community service.
- Junior high – NHS students have volunteered to tutor the 8th grade students.
- Junior high – middle school after school program was granted to the junior high as well. Average student attendance is 15.
- Junior high – new courses, Introduction to technology and engineering is a huge success. There is also a new advanced wood technologies class in the high school.
- Curriculum –The high school is actively investigating a new schedule that offers more flexibility especially for students that need extra help, and preparation for college and career readiness.
- Working with DSAC to find ways to target interventions and developing common informative assessments. They are ramping up in preparing for the upcoming NEASC study.
- One focus has been training teachers in the new evaluation system. They have been working hard to integrate that with other professional development. Five hours of state mandated training is required.
- Mrs. Eliason said during the adhoc committee meeting in November, Mr. Finnie mentioned having a liaison for each of the schools. It would help school committee have a better relationship with our schools. We might have one or two liaisons from school committee for each school. Mrs. Coburn would come up with a schedule of events the liaison might attend. Anyone interested should see Mrs. Eliason at the end of the meeting.
- Mrs. Kennedy said we can be the go between for the school, the committee, and the towns.
- Mr. Finnie said conversations would be welcome. Sometimes it's hard to digest everything that is going on.

VI. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Student Representative - None

B. School Committee

- Mrs. Kennedy handed out paperwork from the division of local mandates. This is the presentation that was given at the joint conference. The other thing that she will give us is a list of other schools and towns that have requested relief. It is really important for us to look into. Mrs. Kennedy will also give us the forms to submit.
- Mrs. Kennedy was invited to go down to the PARCC Next meeting– the one thing that came out of it is PARCC is not ready for prime time. There are two classes that are being test classes. It is up to the school committee to decide whether we will go with PARCC or MCAS. It is more of an evaluation of the teacher and not the kids.
- Mrs. Laurie said so what Mrs. Kennedy is saying is that there are forms available for us to fill out to get reimbursed for some of the mandates.
- Mrs. Eliason said a group of 10 people can get together and submit a request. There are restrictions on what types of laws, and they have to be enacted after a certain date. Something similar happened for vocational transportation. Ms. Fisk had supplied us with a list of unfunded mandates put together by MASC.
- Mr. Wyand asked what the average time is to get results.
- Mrs. Kennedy said it can take anywhere from a few months to a year.
- Mr. Wyand asked when they make a decision, is it from then forward or is it for a period of time.
- Mrs. Kennedy does not know. She thinks it's a period of time.

C. Chairperson

- We will have our picture taken for the yearbook ad at the next meeting. Mrs. Buikus is still collecting money for the yearbook ad.

D. Superintendent – Central Office Update (Enc.)

- Everything is on the agenda, but we need an executive session for negotiations.

E. Business Manager

- On the agenda

F. Administration

- Tomorrow is Valley Gives day. Mrs. Long hopes you will consider giving to the foundation. The more we receive tomorrow the more we will be able to support our staff.

- We won a grant from Mass Ag InThe Classroom that will support a school garden headed by students who have learning disabilities. Not sure where it is going to go at this point. Hoping to get Jacob's Ladder Business Association involved and team up with the food services department.

VII. AD HOC COMMITTEE REPORTING

A. Superintendent's Evaluation Subcommittee

- Mrs. Levreault thanked everyone who did the survey. We had twelve out of fifteen. In January the survey results will go out to everyone. A survey will go out to the towns this year. We are hoping to get suggestions from them.

B. Finance Subcommittee

- Mrs. Kennedy said the next finance meeting is December 18th. They will start working on the budget. Ms. Fisk said you will have revenue and assessments. There will be no budget numbers for expenditures.

C. Policy Subcommittee

- Mr. Damon said they had a meeting scheduled and it failed. They will get together after this meeting to set a date.

D. School Committee Goals Subcommittee -Student Performance Goals

- Met tonight. The idea we want to bring is to have all of our schools become level 2 schools or above. Mrs. Buikus asked for copies of the report cards and the letter that went out for the January meeting.
- Mrs. Eliason said our lowest ranking is a level 3. We want to set a goal to make all our schools a level 2 or above.
- Mr. Wyand is concerned that level two doesn't really fit into a five level. (has failed to close the gap to become level 1 is the description)
- Mrs. Eliason agrees. They thought level 2 sounded better than the description. We will flush it out and bring it back to the committee for endorsement.
- Mr. Wyand is concerned about the fact that Littleville was the worst school but the whole school is categorized as being the worst.
- Mrs. Eliason said we decided to shoot for across the board because schools change from year to year.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

A. Supervision/Evaluation Update (Enc.)

- School committee has the changes approved by the teachers union. If school committee votes for this tonight, it gets us moving and we will start this in September.
- Mrs. Eliason asked about the 90 days for removal working. What is the practical point of the language?
- Dr. Hopson said we could decide whatever we want, but the 90 days is what the GTA wants.
- Mrs. Winer asked how anyone is going to have time to do this evaluation.
- Dr. Hopson said the only thing that is going to help is we eliminated larger observations and replaced them with smaller observations. It switches from our 4 year to cycle to 50% of staff every year. The teacher format is essentially the same as the superintendent's evaluation.
- Mr. Finnie said the idea is to incorporate it with everything else we are doing so it's easier to have documentation.
- Mrs. Blocker said we will also be giving a guide to each staff member so it helps with evidence.
- Mr. Wyand asked what are we doing now or what has been done in the past.
- Dr. Hopson said the current system we use now was adopted by school committee and GTA about thirty years ago and it is based on effective teaching principals. It is looking at standardizing lesson plans, standards, etc. The state is to some degree standardizing what you do and the timeframe in which it is done. A current teacher with tenure has 3 evaluations, and there is a three year cycle. The new teacher has 3 clinical evaluations each year for three years. The new cycle is one year on, one off.
- Mr. Wyand asked how does what the teachers and administrators came up with fit into those state law regulations, does the state law trumps ours.
- Dr. Hopson said eventually, this will become part of the teachers' contract.
- Mr. Wyand said essentially everyone will be slightly different, but will follow the state standards.
- Mrs. Laurie asked if private and charter schools required to use this as well.
- Dr. Hopson said only charter schools, not private.

Mrs. Levreault made a motion seconded by Mrs. Kennedy to approve the Supervision and Evaluation Document as amended by the GTA.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 12 Nays Abstain 1 Absent

B. School Committee Goals – Tabled until January meeting

IX. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

A. Negotiations – Executive Session

X. OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Future Agenda Items

XI. INFORMATION

Information

Penny Social November 22
 Annual brunch and concert for Sr. Citizens
 Superintendent's Corner November 8, 2013
 Buttons mark Gateway 50th
 Gateway schools close for Thanksgiving
 All Class Reunion November 30
 Littleville's Annual Holiday Bazaar
 Students Pledge to recycle
 Third graders collecting for Soldier's Home
 Cyndi Jensen: Mass Ag Teacher of the Year!
 Superintendent's Corner November 15, 2013
 College Awareness Week At Gateway
 Foundation sets donation goals
 5th Anniversary Calendar filling up!
 Bus accident in Huntington
 Superintendent's Corner November 22, 2013
 Littleville launches 'Great Bedtime Story' PJ Drive
 Students showcase local history/engineering project
 First term honor roll for high school
 Valley Gives Day is 12/12/13!
 Superintendent's Corner December 2, 2013
 Former Gateway standout runner visits children to say thanks!
 Gateway's Grandparent & Grandfriend Day
 December School Committee Meeting
 December brings student concert season!

Warrants

AP# 1037 \$97,218.14 PR# 11 \$384,417.93
 AP# 1042 \$155,537.59

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

10/23/13 Executive Session Minutes (Enc.)

Mrs. Winer made a motion seconded by Mrs. Kennedy to go into executive session at or before 9:30 for the purpose of negotiations and review of past executive session minutes, not to return to open session.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 12 Nays Abstain Absent 1 (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Ruth, Sarah, Shirley, Sandra, Anne-Marie, Ron, Martha, Jeff, Mary Ann, Sue, Bill Gretchen

Absent: Michele

XIII. ADJOURNMENT – *Mr. Damon made a motion seconded by Mrs. Levreault to adjourn at 10:05 p.m.*

Respectfully Submitted,
Stacy L Stewart,
School Committee Secretary