

GATEWAY REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES****WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2014****Library
7:30 P.M.****(A PORTION OF THIS MEETING MAY BE HELD IN EXECUTIVE SESSION)****I. OPENING OF MEETING**BLANDFORDMichele Crane
Jim KronholmCHESTERShirley Winer
Martha OtterbeckHUNTINGTONWilliam Hathaway
Jeff WyandMIDDLEFIELD

Sarah Foley

MONTGOMERYAnne Marie Buikus
Sandra HaasRUSSELLRuth Kennedy
Mary Ann LaurieWORTHINGTONSue Levreault
Gretchen EliasonSECRETARY

Stacy Stewart

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATIONDr. David B. Hopson, Superintendent
Stephanie Fisk, Business & FinanceADMINISTRATIVE COUNCILAmy Fouracre, Chs, Lit, MS Assistant Principal
Joanne Blocker, Director of Academics
Megan Coburn, Chs, Lit, MS Principal
Jason Finnie, High, Jr. High School Principal
Wendy Long, District Grant Writer
Anthony Sabonis, High/Jr. High Assistant Principal
Alice Taverna, Pupil Services DirectorSTUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

OTHERS: _____

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

- Mr. McVeigh asked about the status of the budget blog. He has been trying to post and respond for three weeks and cannot seem to get it to work.
- Dr. Hopson explained how to get to it and said he would look into it. If Mr. McVeigh is still having trouble he can come in and we can help him with it.
- Peter Francis from the Republican will be recording the meeting.
- Mr. McVeigh would like there to be an educational blog too. He would like people to be able to ask questions, rather than always having information come from the come top down. He stated Dr. Hopson and Mrs. Long are doing their jobs by putting information out.

III. STUDENT COUNCIL INPUT**IV. CONSENT ITEMS****V. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS/RECOGNITIONS****A. FY '15 Budget Presentation – Principals**

- Mrs. Eliason reminded everyone that Mrs. Blocker and Ms. Taverna gave their presentations last week and the principals are giving their presentations this week. She also thanked the administrators for putting these presentations together.
- Mrs. Coburn gave an elementary/middle school budget presentation.
- Mrs. Laurie asked what language they were learning. Megan said the program is called Sketch Up and they were using a lot of math language and she doesn't think they even realize it.
- Mrs. Levreault asked if Chester students would be able to come to Littleville for tutoring in the summer.

- Mrs. Coburn said Mrs. Blocker is looking at having a title I program in Chester.
- Mrs. Eliason thinks bringing students in early for assessments is interesting. Would it be the classroom teachers who come in to administer the assessments?
- Mrs. Coburn said we would probably post internally for facilitators. The students that don't come in can always be taken care of by the reading specialist once school starts.
- Mrs. Eliason asked where the money comes from.
- Ms. Fisk said it's under tutoring.
- Mrs. Winer asked if we will wait a year to assess them again.
- Mrs. Coburn said we assess all students in the fall, then again in the winter to see where those students are and to make sure students are making effective progress.
- Mr. Finnie gave a Jr. high and high school budget presentation.
- Mrs. Winer asked about study Island.
- Mr. Finnie said it's a tool used to provide more opportunities for students who need pull out remediation.
- Mrs. Kennedy asked if what is being done about the kids that are thinking about leaving school. What is being done to get them to stay?
- Mr. Finnie said they are finding ways to promote career readiness. Being more hands on; intro to technology and woodshop are two examples. Guidance works with them during advisory. A suggestion is to organize advisory by career interest.
- Mrs. Eliason asked if Mr. Finnie could talk about online learning
- Mr. Finnie said a lot of the classes are languages. Some are technology and entrepreneurial. It continues to grow. There are around fifteen students taking online courses per semester.
- Mrs. Eliason asked if the students were working on individual laptops. She notices our line item is down.
- Mr. Finnie said yes they come here to the library.
- Mrs. Laurie said students can't do online learning at home, it is a blocked off period during the day correct.
- Mr. Finnie said most are full time students here only taking one online course. We do have students who participate in dual enrollment.
- Mrs. Kennedy notices there are a lot of purchases of pencils and erasers, throughout the year. But there are also notes that go home saying they need them. Is there any way to know how many. Can we budget and then ask if we run out.
- Mrs. Coburn said when the bid list comes out we try to order all our core supplies. We do use them, and some students literally eat them. We go through them so quickly.
- Mrs. Kennedy asked if it would help to put more in the budget to help fund them.
- Mrs. Coburn said supplies are necessary. It would help.

VI. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Student Representative

- John Wyand said as part of student school climate they have had training on healthy relationships, and they have two teaching classes next week. NHS is going to elementary schools to read to students for Dr. Seuss day.

B. School Committee

- Mrs. Kennedy understands everyone received an invitation to the PARCC meeting on Saturday, March 15 at 9:00 a.m. at Smith Vocational. She is planning on attending and hopes others will join her.

C. Chairperson

- Mrs. Eliason reminded school committee that one of our goals is that everyone take the ethics training. She feels if you take it you will understand conflict of interest. She thinks it is being used incorrectly. Another goal is to take MASC's charting the course. It is a state requirement to take within the first year of being elected, but we have added veteran members should take it every 8 years.

D. Superintendent – Central Office Update (Enc.)

- Dr. Hopson said we are going to start a committee to come up with district determined measures. We held a drill today. It was a lockdown drill that only took about 10 minutes. The drill went well.
- Mrs. Laurie said students noticed there was a number system echoing through the halls.
- Dr. Hopson said it is a distress noise, to let staff know there is something going on.

E. Business Manager – None**F. Administration**

- Wendy Long told us about March madness Monday's. Anyone who bought a button can work out in the Wellness Center for free on Mondays in March. Alumni chorus will be performing. In May she will be working with the booster club. More 50th anniversary activities will happen and in June with Graduation. Buttons are available in the security booth and are \$5.00.

VII. AD HOC COMMITTEE REPORTING**A. Superintendent's Evaluation Subcommittee**

- Town official surveys went out to select boards, finance, and town administrators.

B. Finance Subcommittee

- Mrs. Kennedy said they met tonight. They went through the budget by line item and received answers from Ms. Fisk. They are ready for the public hearing. She is hoping everyone will come on down. They won't meet again till the end of March.
- Mrs. Foley asked about the GHS athletic trips line item.
- Ms. Fisk said it covers all trips to away games and meets. It will come out of the revolving account.
- Mrs. Laurie asked about the difference in lunch monitors.
- Ms. Fisk said they cover lunches and the lunch of the security monitor.
- Mr. Finnie said one of the duties of the guidance is to cover the lunch room.

C. Policy Subcommittee

- Still waiting for dates for the next meeting. They will be discussing field trip and school committee reorganization.

D. Legislative Liaison

- Mrs. Kennedy asked to have legislative updates added to the adhoc reporting section.
- Monday, Mrs. Kennedy went up to Lenox to talk to Senator Downing and Representative Pignatelli and they discussed the Worthington withdrawal and other things. It is still on hold right now. Looking into the process specifically how it will affect the other towns. She asked about unfunded mandates they are aware of them and want to do something about it. They were interested in changing the formulas for assessments. They would be open to us to send unfunded mandates.

E. School Committee Goals Subcommittee- None**VIII. OLD BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS****A. Open meeting Law Violation Complaint**

- Mrs. Eliason read the letter that was send to Mr. van Werkooven

B. Parking Fees For Walkers

- Mrs. Eliason explained this is for students who are not eligible to ride the bus because they are walkers. Should they pay a lesser fee?
- Dr. Hopson said right now they are not paying because we need to make a decision.
- Mrs. Levreault said when we looked at parking fees we looked at a lot different options.
- Mr. Kronholm said it would be simpler if we didn't have any parking fees.

Mrs. Laurie made a motion to eliminate all parking fees – there was no second.

- Dr. Hopson agrees with Mrs. Laurie, however, if you are going to eliminate parking fees you should eliminate all fees. This is just a way to self sustain some of these things. When we did this, Mrs. Kennedy was there, at the time it was a flat fee. They met with student council and came up with a way to reduce the cost for students, if they get good grades, have no tardies etc.
- Mrs. Eliason said we revised it. At first you got a rebate if you weren't late, then you were eligible if you were not late and made honors as an incentive for students to lessen the burden.
- Mrs. Kennedy asked how much of the \$10,000 is rebated.
- Ms. Fisk will get her a figure.
- Mrs. Winer said part of the problem is we pay for a seat on the bus, they don't use.

- Dr. Hopson said the walkers don't have a seat on the bus. His recommendation is to charge walkers half.
- Mrs. Foley said, so it is paying for a seat on the bus and for maintenance to the grounds.
- Mr. Wyand said what if we waive the fee, but if they are tardy they have to pay.
- Mr. Finnie wouldn't want to make anything around parking a consequence.
- Mrs. Levreault understands why the parking was initiated, but you have to look at repair and upkeep. Parking at school is a privilege. Students are entitled to refunds. We do have to use it and line it. Everyone should have to pay for parking.
- Mrs. Laurie said we are going to have to maintain the parking lot no matter what.
- Mrs. Eliason reminded everyone if they have a student parking they should disclose it.
- Mrs. Otterbeck's daughter is too cheap to pay to park. She feels it is a privilege to have a car and park.

Mr. Kronholm made a motion seconded by Mrs. Levreault to have one universal policy/fee for students who drive.

- Mrs. Kennedy said if you make it universal you are including everyone. Mrs. Kennedy feels the student council should have a change to weigh in on this.
- Mrs. Coffey said one of the reasons the parkers need to drive is because the sidewalks are not clear.
- Dr. Hopson said once they start driving, they will most likely continue to drive.
- Mrs. Foley asked why the sidewalks aren't cleared.
- Dr. Hopson said it is a town/state issue. Huntington has been winging back the snow banks. Our sidewalks are clear.
- We are changing the word universal to consistent.

Mr. Kronholm made a motion seconded by Mrs. Levreault to have one consistent policy/fee for students who drive.

Motion Carried VOTE) Yeas 11 Nays 2 Abstain Absent

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C. Mid-Year Superintendent's Formative Assessment Review

- Mrs. Eliason said she has no way to score impact on learning.
- Dr. Hopson said as the state comes through with how they are going to use district determined measures there will be ways to look at that. There will be a specific ways to measure this.
- Mrs. Eliason said what I do not know as a school committee member – how that analysis – how many action plans were developed.
- Dr. Hopson said that is input on formative assessments. Here is what we are looking for to better instruction.
- Mrs. Eliason said we need to look at a five year and ten year capital plan.
- Mrs. Eliason is not sure what the status is on core curriculum. It is hard to know what the full scope is maybe we need a progress bar. Training opportunities who administrators.
- Mrs. Blocker said we are developing a 7 year plan which she will be share. She also she has actions plans.
- Mrs. Eliason said at the end of year, how do we know if teacher evaluations have been done?
- Mrs. Eliason asked if there are any other plans besides the new math curriculum
- Mrs. Eliason asked about the educational leader promotes safe effective learning , she does not have a grasp on these tools.
- Dr. Hopson said it is part of school committee's job.
- Mrs. Eliason asked about human resources. Pupil services mentioned four new staff members. How are we dealing with turnover?
- There seems to be a concern with staff turnover. Is it due to pay scale, are people just not happy. There seems to be a lot of staff turnover. Maybe it would be helpful if it was broken down year by year.
- Dr. Hopson said happy people don't leave for pay. Happy people can be happy anywhere. There are retirements, some get experience and then move closer to home with bigger pay.
- Mrs. Laurie asked if we would take into consideration, the hiring of teachers who don't live so far away.
- Dr. Hopson said we hire the best staff we can. We hope they live close, and if they don't maybe they will move here.
- Mrs. Winer said it would be helpful if it is salary we need to do something about it. It is a function of the type of survey it is. There will be questions we can't answer.
- Mrs. Laurie suggested have Dr. Hopson send written responses to all of Mrs. Eliason's questions to save time.

- Mrs. Eliason said we do have a mid-year management meeting as part of the superintendent's evaluation. We need to think about what questions we need to ask Dr. Hopson in a mid-year review.
- Mrs. Kronholm asked what Dr. Hopson would add if there was a five % increase in the budget.
- Dr. Hopson would go back to the administrators. He doesn't always know what they need. He relies on working with the administrators and the GTA to bring a better education to students.
- Dr. Hopson said a statement that is broad is useless, he would like more. For 19 years we have been looking at how school committee evaluates themselves, the state has an evaluation process for teachers, and administrators, but not the school committee.
- Mrs. Eliason said we did talk about goals, we did say we would do an end of year report to the towns,
- Mrs. Winer doesn't recall voting on that. Not that it is not good; it is more of a report to ourselves.
- Mrs. Laurie asked if it was a self-evaluation or is it done by the administration.
- Dr. Hopson said we talked about school committee communicating with the towns, how do we communicate with each other, the towns, how do we work together to move the district forward. The key should be students.

A. Negotiations

IX. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

A. Model UN Field Trip Request – Nick Vooy's

- Nick Vooy's said it is a simulation to solving world problems. They pick a country, go to conferences, and meet students from all over the world. In March they are looking to go to Boston. It is an overnight on Friday and Saturday night. There will be roughly four hundred students attending. They work on networking and public speaking. He has a very special group right now. Funding is not an issue thanks to the Gateway education foundation.
- Mrs. Laurie how many students and chaperones?
- Mr. Vooy's said eleven students and he is the only chaperone.
- Mrs. Laurie asked him to consider taking a female chaperone as well.
- Move to old business for a vote at the next meeting.

B. Leave of Absence Extension for Julie Case Hall

- Dr. Hopson read the letter at the last meeting. He would like us to vote at this meeting since she is almost at the end of her return time. She will come back if the committee does not approve the request
- Mrs. Foley asked if the substitute will stay.
- Dr. Hopson said yes.

Mrs. Levreault made a motion seconded by Mrs. Kennedy to suspend the two-meeting rule to vote on the leave of absence extension.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 13 Nays Abstain Absent

Mrs. Levreault made a motion seconded by Mrs. Kennedy to approve the extension of an unpaid leave of absence for Julie Case Hall leave Ruth second.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 13 Nays Abstain Absent

C. Town Representative to Negotiations (Enc.)

- Mrs. Eliason read Attorney Dupere's letter explaining M.G.L. c. 150 E s.1 and 603 CMR 41.04 which outlines the having a town representative on the negotiations subcommittee.
- Mrs. Eliason said the question is will Mr. Jacques be on the at the table negotiations team; the one we voted in November.
- Dr. Hopson said the law states he sits on the committee to vote. Because we are collaborative bargaining we need to get the GTA to approve Mr. Jacques to sit at the table.
- Dr. Hopson said you can waive the two-meeting rule to put him on the negotiations subcommittee.
- Mrs. Kennedy wants to make sure it is clear that there is no fault to the select boards for not being on the committee earlier. We should have notified the select boards before negotiations started.

Mrs. Buikus made a motion seconded by Mrs. Kennedy to suspend the two-meeting rule.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 13 Nays Abstain Absent

Mrs. Kennedy made a motion seconded by Mrs. Buikus to appoint Mr. Jacques to the negotiations subcommittee.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 13 Nays Abstain Absent

- We will vote again regarding the at the table committee at the next meeting.

X. OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Future Agenda Items

Field Trip Policy

XI. INFORMATION

Information

Preschoolers enact "The Mitten"

2014 Vocational school application process announced for Gateway students

Superintendent's Corner February 7, 2014

National school counseling week

Alumni Band takes the stage

Get to know Gateway Regional High School!

Warrants

AP# 1068 \$178,151.52

PR# 16 \$372,734.68

9:00-10 p.m. XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION
or earlier

XIII. ADJOURNMENT *Mrs. Kennedy made a motion seconded by Mrs. Levreault to adjourn at 9:40 p.m.*

Respectfully Submitted,
Stacy L Stewart,
School Committee Secretary