

GATEWAY REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 2016

Room 214/216 Jr. High School

7:30 P.M.

All those attending the school committee meeting should sign in at the security booth.

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

I. OPENING OF MEETING

BLANDFORD
Michele Crane
Terri Garfield

CHESTER
Martha Otterbeck
Diane Dunn

HUNTINGTON
Ron Damon
William Hathaway

MIDDLEFIELD
Sarah Foley

MONTGOMERY
Madelyn Austin

RUSSELL
Ruth Kennedy
Tara Balboni
Heather Morgan

SECRETARY
Stacy Stewart

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

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL
Joanne Blocker, Director of Academics
Megan Coburn, Chs,Lit,Ms Principal
Jason Finnie, High/Jr. High Principal
Sara Laing, Chs,Lit, Ms Assistant Principal
Wendy Long, District Grant Writer
Anthony Sabonis, High/Jr. High Assistant Principal
Alice Taverna, Pupil Services Director

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

7:35 p.m. II. PUBLIC INPUT (3 Minute Limit) - None

- Mrs. Crane opened the meeting at 7:30 p.m.
- Mrs. Austin is recording the meeting.

III. STUDENT COUNCIL INPUT

- Brennan Foley said the junior members of NHS were inducted tonight. The band flower sale ended yesterday. Anna Pless is here as a new member of student council tonight.
- Mrs. Crane asked about the video Brennan was making and asked if school committee could see it.

IV. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS/RECOGNITIONS - None

7:45 V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS/ACTION ITEM

A. Grant Approval of Potential Spring/Summer Grants

Mr. Damon made a motion seconded by Mrs. Kennedy to approve the spring/summer grants.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 9 Nays Abstain Absent 1 (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Ron, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Bill, Ruth, Martha, Michele
Absent: Heather

B. Kindergarten Date Waiver Request

- Mrs. Coburn said Mrs. Maciver's son is currently in our preschool is very bright and would do fine in Kindergarten. We are down to two kindergarten teachers and it's hard to gage numbers since not all of them come from in district. The census has 55 age appropriate kids on it. She is looking for guidance, should we follow the policy or take each student case by case.
- Dr. Hopson asked what would be the limit if you opened school choice, what is the number you want to see.
- Mrs. Coburn said twenty would be max and now we have twenty.
- Mrs. Balboni said we'd also be opening the doors to some very young kids, who may be very bright, but young.
- Mrs. Coburn said she has five on a school choice list to come in from Worthington. She told them they had to wait till middle of summer to find out if they are accepted.
- Mrs. Dunn asked if it would be harmful for a child to wait if they were ready.
- Mrs. Coburn said that is a parent decision.
- Mrs. Papillon asked if there is a way to amend the policy and make a date range.
- Mrs. Kennedy said there are state and school policies we follow their policies. We can jeri-rig it a little bit.
- Dr. Hopson suggested considering Mrs. Coburn's suggestion to hold the class size around twenty and maybe have parents wait till the start of school. Then, if there are five, Mrs. Coburn can give an overview as to who is most appropriate.
- Mrs. McVeigh asked how big the Kindergarten class in Chester is.
- Mrs. Coburn said nineteen.
- Mrs. McVeigh asked if a parent could send them there.
- Dr. Hopson said yes.

Mr. Damon made a motion seconded by Mrs. Kennedy to approve the current request based upon the child being in our preschool and ready, based upon room and enrollment.

- Mrs. Balboni said every town has a deadline, which is why she was against it last time. There is a deadline for the reason. It opens things up if you make exceptions.
- Mrs. Dunn said if we approve the motion as Dr. Hopson had suggested, we would we have to go through this for every child.
- Dr. Hopson said you are the only one who can waive policy. This would be the only one at this point. Then when school starts you would have to consider it again.
- Mrs. Kennedy said it is a burden on parents having to wait till the beginning of the year. We do have a deadline. She would like to withdraw the motion.
- Mrs. Garfield asked if people are calling from out of district or in district.
- Ms. Coburn said in district.
- Mrs. Otterbeck said it feels like we have more than one item here; the current request and then what to do about the overall policy.
- Dr. Hopson said I you can vote the current motion, allowing the current applicant to go and taking the rest on a case by case basis, or you can vote it down and uphold the policy.
- Mrs. Foley said she is a parent who was once in this position. Brennan made the cut off and she held him out for a variety of reasons and she is glad she did.
- Mrs. Coburn said as a parent of preschoolers it is a lot of planning, she would feel bad asking them to wait till August/September. There is a lot of work.
- Mr. Damon said if this motion is voted down, we are saying age is the only factor in starting school. He would go with the parent's position rather than age.
- Ms. Taverna said this has been brought up every year, and whatever you decide today is going to come back again next year.
- Mrs. Maciver said she understands it's convenient to stick with the policy, but that each student should be considered on a case by case basis. She would be okay with waiting to hear in August or September.
- Mrs. Austin asked was it true this committee approved a child last year.
- Mrs. Balboni said yes it was a school choice student.
- Dr. Hopson you are approving this child, but you are allowing
- Mrs. Morgan asked if this is going to create a lot more work for Mrs. Coburn.
- Mrs. Coburn went to the teachers today. Some students are recommended and others aren't. Parents sometimes see their child as they want to see them, not how they are. In Mrs. Maciver's case, we've tested her child. The other kids are not people we have tested, it's just the observation.
- Mrs. Morgan said there would have to be something that says why this child is ready.

- Mrs. Coburn said tests don't cover everything. They are 4-year olds taking the test.
- Mrs. Crane is concerned we are busting at the seams.

Mr. Damon made a motion seconded by Mrs. Kennedy to approve the current request based upon the child being in our preschool and ready, based upon room and enrollment.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 3 Nays 8 Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Ron, Bill, Martha

Nays: Madelyn, Tara, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Ruth, Heather, Michele

- Mrs. Crane explained that the motion failed and the Mrs. Maciver's son had been denied.
- Casey Grant asked if this means they will deny all other students.
- Dr. Hopson said parents would have to bring it forward and see how the committee votes.

C. Revenue Update/Revisit of FY '17 Budget

- Dr. Hopson would recommend school committee vote to use anticipated revenue to lower assessments. If the revenue doesn't appear we will have to adjust the budget.
- Ms. Fisk said if we receive more in Chapter 70 it automatically goes back to the towns. If we receive additional regional transportation reimbursement, we can move the excess into the transportation revolving account.
- Mrs. McVeigh asked how are you going to cover what Worthington has no intention of paying.
- Ms. Fisk said that is part of the litigation.
- Dr. Hopson said we will have to make it up and there will be less money in E & D at the end of the year.
- Mrs. Kennedy said this is strictly based on the house, which could go down or could go up. What happens if what the towns have to pay increases?
- Dr. Hopson said we would have to adjust the budget, or go back to the towns. This happens every year. We won't have senate numbers until late May. As Ms. Fisk said if Chapter 70 goes up it reduces assessments. If regional transportation goes up we can set it aside in the transportation revolving account.
- Ms. Fisk said that is part of the reason they allow us to have the transportation revolving account.
- Mr. Damon said over the number of years, we have taken a vote to give money back. We've already said we were going to do this.

Mrs. Balboni made a motion seconded by Mrs. Otterbeck approve the lowered FY '17 budget assessments based on the House Budget.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 11 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Ron, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Bill, Ruth, Heather, Martha, Michele

8:15 - VI. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

A. FY '17 School Calendar

- It is similar to past years and has been approved by the teachers.. It cuts down the early releases and there are two half days for parent-teacher conferences.

Mrs. Kennedy made a motion seconded by Mrs. Foley to go into executive session at or before 8:45 p.m. for the purpose of Union Negotiations: Teachers' Union, Cafeteria Workers' Union, Custodians' Union and Litigation: Kennedy, et al. v. Commonwealth of Massachusetts, et al. - No.:HSCV2014-00210, not to return to open session.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 11 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Ron, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Bill, Ruth, Heather, Martha, Michele

VII. CONSENT ITEMS 3/23/16

Mr. Damon made a motion seconded by Mrs. Kennedy to approve the minutes of 3/23/16 subject to corrections.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 9 Nays Abstain 2 Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Ron, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Ruth, Martha, Michele

Abstain: Bill, Heather

VIII. COMMUNICATIONS

A. School Committee

- Mrs. Kennedy went to a breakfast with Senator Rosenberg. The consensus is that our end to the state gets less money. We are looking for solutions. She learned a lot, it was worth attending, and she met a lot of contacts.
- Mrs. Balboni said at the next meeting she will have a sign-up sheet for food and refreshments for the May 25th recognition night. It will be held from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.
- Mrs. Garfield and Mrs. Foley and she went to a Jr. high school student council meeting. They had great discussions. Kudos to the leadership team for doing all the work to consolidate the schools and create all those schedules.
- Mrs. Dunn ran into Andy Meyers. He was interested in creating an outdoor club. She told him he should contact Mr. Finnie.
- Mrs. Otterbeck said everyone did a wonderful job on the plays.
- Mrs. Foley said the band had a great cabaret and NHS induction tonight.

B. Chairperson

- Mrs. Crane said Mrs. Corriera will be here to go over the evaluation. She will talk about the training etc.
- Mrs. Crane said Mrs. Iglesias is looking for two members on May 23rd at 10:00 a.m. to participate in the selection process for the Richard D. Carmel scholarship. Please let her know if you are interested. Mrs. Austin and Mrs. Dunn have volunteered if they are available..

C. Superintendent - Central Office Update

- Dr. Hopson said we are interviewing in May for the Pupil Services Director position.. All candidates have signed up for appropriate times.

D. Business Manager

- Ms. Fisk said we received info from Massachusetts Association of Pupil Transportation looking at doing studies on special education transportation and if there is a match they would be willing to come out.

E. Administration

FY '16 Title I Review Response Letter

- Mrs. Coburn said tomorrow night is the Chester Elementary play – Lets Eat. Friday is the middle and Jr. high talent show.
- Mrs. Long said she usually send an auto dialer letting parents know when annual town meetings are scheduled. It was suggested having a school committee member send an auto dialer call out for their town. Mrs. Balboni will do Russell, Mrs. Garfield will do Blandford, Mrs. Foley will do Middlefield, Madelyn will do Montgomery.
- Mrs. Long said this is the third year that the foundation has funded the Chester musical. There will be a display about the foundation at the musical.
- May 7th is the Ford drive for your school event. 10-12 new vehicles will be available to test drive. The foundation receives \$20 for every verified driver. Student council is holding a bake sale and Model UN is holding a sandwich sale. You can also help by putting up flyers.
- Title I Program Review – Mrs. Long said we submitted all of our information and we received a letter saying we passed the review with no findings. We will be invited next year to lead training.

IX. COMMITTEE REPORTING

A. Superintendent's Evaluation

- Met tonight. The survey will be handed out at the next meeting in paper form. The evaluation information will be provided in the packet.

B. Legislative Liaison

- None

C. Policy Subcommittee

- Taking a break right now, but will start up again during the next school year.

D. Building Liaisons

- Mrs. Otterbeck went to the 2025 session. It was similar to the first one, good conversation and proactive.
- Mrs. Crane said Mrs. Long's communication council is looking at action items. They should have a more definitive schedule next year.
- Mrs. Kennedy would like to see 2025 get involved with the task force. They want to pull us in, but 2025 doesn't seem to want to come to the task force. We are really going down the same path. It would be nice to get the two together communicating.

X. OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA**Future Agenda Items**

School Committee Evaluation Presentation – Pat Corriera – May 11

XI. INFORMATION**Information**

Class of '18 Coffee Fundraiser
 Early College planning nigh workshop at Gateway
 Correction on Model UN Donation
 Project 351 Ambassadors Launch Service Project
 Author Sonia Ellis unveils new book to Gateway students
 Superintendent's Corner March 18, 2016
 Talk and Play Workshop at Gateway
 Gateway '2025' to reconvene April 12
 April School Committee Meeting
 Early release in March
 High school offering ASVAB Exam
 Annual "CABARET" at Gateway April 6
 Charlie and the Chocolate Factory at Gateway
 Superintendent's Corner March 24, 2016
 Importance of "Talk and Play" at Gateway

Warrant

AP#1071 \$75,266.24

PR# 020 \$368,322.67

AP#1076 \$72.16

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

or earlier

- Union Negotiations: Teachers' Union, Cafeteria Workers' Union, Custodians' Union
- Litigation: Kennedy, et al. v. Commonwealth of Massachusetts, et al. - No.:HSCV2014-00210

Mrs. Kennedy made a motion seconded by Mrs. Foley to go into executive session at or before 8:45 p.m. for the purpose of Union Negotiations: Teachers' Union, Cafeteria Workers' Union, Custodians' Union and Litigation: Kennedy, et al. v. Commonwealth of Massachusetts, et al. - No.:HSCV2014-00210, not to return to open session.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 11 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Ron, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Bill, Ruth, Heather, Martha, Michele

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Damon made a motion seconded by Mrs. Foley to adjourn at 8:57 p.m.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 11 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Ron, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Bill, Ruth, Heather, Martha, Michele

Respectfully Submitted,
 Stacy L Stewart,
 School Committee Secretary