

GATEWAY REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 22, 2016

Gateway Library

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

Shirley Winer
Martha Otterbeck
Diane Dunn

HUNTINGTON

Ron Damon
Jeff Wyand

MIDDLEFIELD

Sarah Foley

MONTGOMERY

Anne-Marie Buikus
Madelyn Austin

RUSSELL

Tara Balboni
Lyndsey Papillon

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
Wendy Long, District Grant Writer
Alice Taverna, Pupil Services Director

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

OTHERS: _____

7:35 p.m. II. PUBLIC INPUT (3 Minute Limit)

- Mrs. Crane opened the meeting at 7:32 p.m.
- Mrs. Austin, Mrs. Buikus, Mrs. Kennedy and the reporter are recording the meeting.
- Mrs. Crane gave the information on MASC’s Joint Conference. School committee members who would like to go should let Mrs. Stewart know at the next meeting, so we can take advantage of the early bird special pricing.
- Mrs. Crane asked if everyone would be able to attend the July meeting for reorganization purposes. Mrs. Foley cannot attend.
- Mrs. Stewart will email the dates of the MASC School Committee Training.

III. STUDENT COUNCIL INPUT - None

IV. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS/RECOGNITIONS

A. Whole Child/21st Century Skills

- Mrs. Coburn gave a presentation on 21st Century Learning in the classroom for the elementary.
- There will be a new science lab special/Math Interventionist class for grades 3-5
- Mrs. Otterbeck asked if it would be in Chester as well.
- Mrs. Coburn said yes.
- Mini courses will continue at Chester and Littleville next year.
- Mrs. Winer asked how the kids get home.

- Mrs. Coburn said parents pick them up by 4:30 p.m. Most students who attend the mini courses usually go to wrap around.
- Instead of Gatorroo, Littleville and Chester had musicals this year.
- There are social skills groups targeted towards the students who have social skills on their IEP's. The adjustment counselors create them so the students don't realize they are learning those skills.
- There is also an Autism social skills group.
- Mr. Finnie gave his presentation for the middle and high schools.
- The High school is focusing on college and career readiness, communication, collaboration and critical thinking.
- There will be a directed study. It will consist of goal setting and facilitated self assessment.
- Mr. Wyand asked if credits are earned.
- Mr. Finnie said yes. It is a pass/fail class. It also helps with 10th grade remediation for MCAS and PARCC.
- Mrs. Buikus asked if we have three or four years of math.
- Mr. Finnie said four.
- Mrs. Austin asked if all 9th graders take this directed study.
- Mr. Finnie said they will identify the students and then schedule them in, unless they opt out for another elective.
- Middle School is moving to a 7 period schedule, also having a skills period
- They are continuing to support growth of the whole child by having building level student assistance teams that also work on social skills.
- Mrs. Winer asked if having 33 high and 35 junior high school students in those groups is a large number.
- Mr. Finnie said it is much higher than usual. They are continuing to focus on the whole child through DDMs that go beyond MCAS and PARCC.
- There are a total of 674 students participating in Co-curricular & Extra-curricular activities. (some are in more than one)
- Mr. Wyand asked if we are teaching to the standard for metal fabrication and welding.
- Mr. Finnie said Paul Atkinson is coming from the private sector and having taught in a school before. The simulator breaks down the weld in a virtual way, before we put the materials in their hands.
- Dr. Hopson thinks that Jim Koehler taught to industry standard as well.
- Mr. Wyand asked if we are we planning to get it accredited.
- Mr. Finnie said students receive a certificate with their hours. It is a chapter 74 program. They can take it to the industry or further their education.

7:45 V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS/ACTION ITEM

A. Recommendation to Hire Pupil Services Director

- Dr. Hopson introduced Kurt Garivaltis and went over the hiring process. We brought two finalists for a school visit and we are bringing Kurt forward. He asked if anyone had any questions.
- Mrs. Crane had the opportunity to have lunch with him and supports the superintendent's recommendation.
- Mrs. Winer asked him to tell us briefly about his approach.
- Kurt said he has spent 25 years working with students with disabilities and their families in small rural schools with small classrooms in order to be hands on. This is where he wants to be.
- Mrs. Dunn asked of the 25 years how many were in the classroom where he was responsible for the students.
- Kurt said he spent just under 10 years as a special education director. He has tutored. He didn't come up through the ranks as a special education teacher. He helped set up Housatonic and then ran it for 5 years.
- Ms. Taverna said when she was the special education director in Lee she called Kurt in consultation many times.
- Mrs. Balboni asked what about working with special education students attracted you to the profession.
- Kurt said he had a sister who had Down syndrome, who is no longer with us. His family is also involved in the same types of public service jobs, so it is all he has known.
- Mrs. Buikus referenced the memo from Dr. Hopson. She doesn't have anything negative to say about it, but before we consider Kurt we should let the parents/public know. She feels we should wait to vote until the next meeting.
- Dr. Hopson said Kurt has agreed to put the memo in the next superintendent's corner.
- Ms. Taverna said Kurt knows what he is doing and she supports him. She wouldn't put the children in the district at risk.

- Kurt shared his struggles. It started with a snowmobile accident in 2006. From 2006-2011 he was prescribed opiates. He developed a problem. He was arrested for being in possession of a pill. The doctor had stopped prescribing the medication and he found himself in a predicament. It is a part of who he is and he believes it makes him more qualified.
- Mrs. Otterbeck asked how he handles those kinds of questions since people can Google it.
- Kurt said he doesn't go around talking about it, but is open about it when people ask.
- Mrs. Garfield said sometimes our greatest weaknesses can be our greatest strengths and teach us compassion.
- Mrs. Buikus said his story is remarkable, but we should make sure it is out there first before we give our stamp of approval.
- Mr. Wyand asked Kurt to talk a little about his last employment.
- Kurt said he was the director of marketing at Eagleton when it was raided. DESE asked him to step in and become the program director for education. He and DESE closed the school over a 3 month period. It was the most trying professional time for him. We had to move 70 plus students.
- Mr. Wyand said it was in the news this week. He asked if Kurt was a plaintiff or defendant in any of this.
- Kurt said he was not in any way implicated in any wrong doing. He was not really at the facility, he was recruiting.
- Mrs. Dunn asked while he was doing that was he in direct contact with students.
- Kurt said he would fly out and interview students and administration would decide who was and wasn't appropriate for the school.
- Ms. Taverna said he wasn't working directly with the students, he was recruiting.
- Mrs. Dunn asked Ms. Taverna how many years she spent working in the classroom with students.
- Ms. Taverna said about 10 years.
- Mrs. Papillon asked what certifications he currently holds.
- Kurt said he holds a professional certification as a special education administrator in all levels. It was suspended and he went through a reinstatement process. He had to meet with a forensic scientist. When that was completed the license was reinstated.

Mr. Damon made a motion seconded by Mrs. Winer to suspend the two-meeting rule.

- What would be the impact if we wait till the next meeting?
- Dr. Hopson said just that we would lose the next week until the July meeting. Either way we should put the memo out. It would be a matter of voting before or after.
- Mrs. Buikus thinks we should wait until the memo goes out if it is being put on them.
- Dr. Hopson said it is by statute, and is usually based on the superintendent's recommendation.
- Mrs. Crane said the pupil services director is one of the three hires that the school committee votes on. One is the superintendent. The others are the business manager and the pupil services director.
- Mr. Wyand would agree with Mrs. Buikus. Putting this off gives us time.
- Mrs. Dunn said perceptions are important. We don't want the community and parents to think they are being steamrolled.
- Mrs. Foley asked if there is some sort of compromise if we decide not to vote on this tonight. Could we have a special meeting?
- Dr. Hopson said the survey said 43% of parents read the Country Journal. It won't be published until next Thursday, so the 13th would be the earliest.
- Mrs. Balboni said if the vote is for full disclosure, we should wait before we vote even though many of us already know how we would vote.

Mr. Damon made a motion seconded by Mrs. Winer to suspend the two-meeting rule.

Motion Failed (VOTE) Yeas 2 Nays 10 Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Ron, Michele

Nays: Madelyn, Tara, Anne-Marie, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Lyndsey, Martha, Shirley, Jeff

- Move to the next agenda.
- Mrs. Garfield asked if the therapy is ongoing.
- Kurt said yes. It is continuous and meetings are a part of his life.

- Mrs. Crane noted the personal fortitude to come out on the other side and to be willing to be this candid and frank, knowing this experience is going to be public should be considered as people ask questions.
- Ruth Kennedy asked what Kurt considered disabilities.
- Kurt said there are there are all types. His resume will be put on the website.

VI. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS - None

VII. CONSENT ITEMS 6/8/16 (Enc.)

Mr. Damon made a motion seconded by Mrs. Otterbeck to approve the meeting minutes of 6/8/16.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 9 Nays Abstain 3 Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Anne-Marie, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Lyndsey, Shirley, Michele

Abstain: Ron, Martha, Jeff

Mr. Damon made a motion seconded by Mrs. Winer to go into executive session at or before 9:15 p.m. for the purpose of non-union negotiations and Litigation: Kennedy, et al. v. Commonwealth of Massachusetts, et al. - No.:HSCV2014-00210

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

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Anne-Marie, Ron, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Lyndsey, Martha, Shirley, Jeff, Michele

VIII. COMMUNICATIONS

A. School Committee

B. Chairperson

C. Superintendent

Central Office Update (Enc.)

- Dr. Hopson reminded everyone to contact your legislature regarding the shortfall in revenue, so they won't look at Chapter 71. The joint committee is trying to stay away from regional transportation.
- Dr. Hopson has been in contact with MARS and they should be putting in a quote for the consultant.
- Mrs. Buikus asked about the two students that might need to go out.
- Ms. Fisk said she has been working on special education cost reductions due to a child that was a school choice student half the year.

D. Business Manager

- Ms. Fisk said we are in full summer cleaning mode.

E. Administration

- Mrs. Long said four students attend girls' and boys' state at Stone Hill College. One of our girls (Rachel Lebaron) was nominated for the Samsung scholarship.

IX. COMMITTEE REPORTING

A. Superintendent's Evaluation

a. Evaluation Summary, Survey Results, Updated Goals (Enc.)

- Everyone received updated materials in the packet
- Goals will be on old business for next meeting.

B. Legislative Liaison - None

C. Policy Subcommittee - None

D. Building Liaisons – None

X. OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Future Agenda Items

XI. INFORMATION

Information

Parents surveyed on Gateway communications
 Middle School Orientation June 15
 Superintendent's Corner June 6, 2016
 Gateway Regional High School Senior Awards June 2016
 Margarites, Britland take top awards at Gateway
 Gateway graduates 64 on Booster Field

Warrant

AP#1090	\$32,416.15	PR# 025	\$433,117.33
AP#1092	\$60.09		
AP#1093	\$25,823.44		
AP#1095	\$137,531.93		

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

or earlier

- A. Negotiations: Non-Union, Administrators
- B. Litigation: Kennedy, et al. v. Commonwealth of Massachusetts, et al. - No.:HSCV2014-00210

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

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Anne-Marie, Ron, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Lyndsey, Martha, Shirley, Jeff, Michele

- Went into executive session at 9:05 p.m.
- Returned to open session at 9:48 p.m.
- The school committee voted the following motion in executive session.

Mr. Damon made a motion seconded by Mrs. Otterbeck to award non-union and administration a 1.25% increase with the stipulation to discuss salaries again in October so they will be included in the FY'18 budget.

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

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Anne-Marie, Ron, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Lyndsey, Martha, Shirley, Jeff, Michele

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Otterbeck made a motion seconded by Mr. Damon to adjourn at 9:49 p.m.

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

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Anne-Marie, Ron, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Lyndsey, Martha, Shirley, Jeff, Michele

Respectfully Submitted,
 Stacy L Stewart,
 School Committee Secretary