

**GATEWAY REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22, 2017**

**Middle School 112/114**

**7:00 P.M.**

All visitors 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  
Kara Rousseau  
Jeff Wyand – 7:10 p.m.

MIDDLEFIELD

MONTGOMERY  
Madelyn Austin

RUSSELL  
Tara Balboni  
Lyndsey Papillon

SECRETARY  
Stacy Stewart

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

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL  
Wendy Long, District Grant Writer

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

OTHERS: \_\_\_\_\_

**7:05 p.m. II. PUBLIC INPUT (3 Minute Limit) - None**

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**III. STUDENT COUNCIL INPUT**

- Anna Pless said student council held a blood drive. The “Into the Woods” performance was Friday and Saturday night and it was incredible. Spring sports tryouts start this week. The choir is going to competition this weekend. The concert band is going the following weekend. Costa Rica is less than a month way.

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**IV. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS/RECOGNITIONS - None**

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**V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS/ACTION ITEM**

**A. Student Activities Accounts Guidelines**

*Mrs. Otterbeck made a motion seconded by Mrs. Papillon to approve the Student Activities Accounts Guidebook.*

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

*Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Diane, Terri, Lyndsey, Martha, Kara, Shirley, Michele*

*Absent: Jeff*

**B. MARS Recommendations**

- Dr. Hopson said there are a lot of action items, what we should be doing to move forward. There are a number of items that address the MARS recommendations; teacher stipend and curriculum work. There are days being added for the Pupil Services Director and secretary. We believe we found someone who can help us with the life skills classroom age grouping. We bought a van for work study students. The second position we are hoping to fill will work with our visually impaired students teaching them Braille and to move around the building and campus. This would alleviate three contracted services positions. We haven't had any visually impaired students for years and now we have a few.
- The court yard renovations will start in April. We've been updating security. We've also been looking ahead with school committee in terms of a curriculum director and technology director. We will have to replace eventually unless we can share services. We have a tentative agreement to share a food services director. We need to have an administrative plan. Some of this is in the budget and some we need to work out.
- Dr. Hopson handed out a projected school committee calendar that will help us with the budget process.
- We are looking to simplify district improvement plans and review communications plan. We continue to research chapter 74 programs. Dr. Hopson spent some time with Smith Vocational. They have changed the way they are doing things and it has been difficult for parents, students and the district.
- Looking at the school committee calendar; if it is approved and we adopt meeting as a whole committee for budget, that is a step forward.
- Dr. Hopson said we will have town boards select someone to participate in the budget process at school committee to get the process going and get input from the towns. The indication was to make it part of the whole committee.
- Mrs. Winer said it may be a lot of information for towns' people. They know a lot about town finance but not necessarily school finance. She asked about the court yard.
- Ms. Fisk said it is in the MARS report. They suggested an upgrade to make it more useable for staff and students with less maintenance.
- Mrs. Winer asked out sharing a food services director will work.
- Dr. Hopson said right now the sticking point is the evaluation piece. The breakfast program will be required in both. They will essentially bill us for hours. Both Mrs. McCaul and the other school feel it is doable to have one person. The other district is about 40/45 minutes away. The school you are sharing with has to be similar.
- Mrs. Crane asked what type of action is needed.
- Dr. Hopson said if you want to adopt the proposed schedule of meetings, it will start a new format for the budget process. We should do it earlier rather than later so the towns have time to appoint someone. Get the letter process started. We could still go to the towns this year and meet with selectmen and finance.
- Bill Levakis said the Blandford finance committee mentioned it to the select board. That is the way he believes Blandford wants to go. He didn't sense any resistance.
- Mrs. Winer should we take that information to our.
- Dr. Hopson said Blandford select board requested it to share it with other select boards. Russell was interested in it as well.
- Mrs. Crane asked if we can take it up in April. We discussed the meetings would be here. The goal would be to have one or two people from each town to communicate so it goes smoother. During those nights we would do our unfinished and new business first.
- Dr. Hopson said it is important to continue to look at the list. We need to look at school committee goals, and how they are put in place by administration and how they fit with the MARS recommendations and Gateway 2025. Next week is 2<sup>nd</sup> round for staff 2025 and then we hope to do another one with the community. He will put together a strategic plan.
- Mrs. Crane looked at the MARS recommendations along with school committee goals. She asked everyone to be ready to talk about it in April.

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## VI. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

### A. Gowns for Graduation

- Dr. Hopson sent out the process that took place that resulted in this proposal. There were some inappropriate functions taken on by the class advisor, which gave way for the students to express their views. Mr. Finnie wanted to have school committee make a decision.
- Dr. Hopson said Mr. Finnie's recommendation was to let students choose. This year and go to a single color after that.

- Dr. Hopson's recommendation would be to go to one color this year. Mr. Finnie is also asking for a decision tonight.
- Dawson Atkin a junior and president of GSA said the original proposal was to go to one color this year, but seniors weren't with it. One color is cheaper to order and it represents unity. This year's seniors would be the last class to have two colors. Every other class would have one. Gender equality is a separation of the sexes. Sometimes it implies one is above another. The State has put out best practices as one color. As a school committee it is your job to protect the students. He shared an example of a student who felt pressured into choosing a certain color because they weren't comfortable in a certain situation where some family knew they identified as another gender, but not all. He also shared an example of a guest speaker at the last GSA meeting in a similar situation.
- Mr. Wyand asked for the statistics for the seniors
- Dr. Hopson gave them the figures.
- Mr. Wyand feels we should go with a choice this year because more students wanted to have a choice this year.
- Mrs. Balboni said it is about 50/50 for those who want a change to those who want to stay the same.
- Mrs. Dunn suggested going with the recommendation.
- Anna Pless said when we first started talking about this issue it was casual and she thinks they all know it should go to one color. Personally she thinks we should go with one color.

***Mr. Wyand made a motion seconded by Mrs. Otterbeck to suspend the two-meeting rule to vote on the change with caps and gowns.***

***Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 10 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)***

***Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Diane, Terri, Lyndsey, Martha, Kara, Shirley, Jeff, Michele***

- Dr. Hopson said three choices are no change, allow this year's class to choose, or go to one color.

***Mrs. Balboni made a motion seconded by Mrs. Rousseau to change graduation caps and gowns to the color blue from this year forward.***

- Mr. Wyand thinks school colors are important.
- Anna Pless feels the students thought it would be blue.
- Mrs. Otterbeck feels it is too late to choose one color for the seniors. We are two months from graduation. Can they choose their color white or blue?
- Mrs. Garfield agrees with Mrs. Otterbeck; let them choose this year.
- Mr. Wyand agrees with them both.
- Mrs. Dunn agrees with them too.
- Dr. Hopson said you have only partially resolved. You could receive a complaint this year.
- Mrs. Rousseau said most people will choose the blue. There won't be many white. It promotes the unity.
- Mr. Wyand said if you leave a choice then the majority will have the blue. It is their graduation they deserve to have it that way.
- Mrs. Winer said if you gave them the choice, there will be girls who where blue and it will put an onus on both colors.
- Mrs. Dunn asked why they don't they wear blue and gold.
- Mrs. Long gave the history.
- Dr. Hopson said the problem with letting students choose is the transgender issue is going to be much different then. You have to keep in mind the one or two students who feel uncomfortable.
- Mr. Wyand said at this point it is down to a legality point.
- Dr. Hopson said if no one complains GSA is okay with doing multiple colors this year. But all it takes is one complaint. You have to give any student credit for choosing what they feel.
- Mrs. Balboni said even a student t doesn't come forward, it is important to respect them.

***Mrs. Balboni made a motion seconded by Mrs. Rousseau to change graduation caps and gowns to the color blue from this year forward.***

***Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 7 Nays 3 Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)***

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Lyndsey, Kara, Shirley, Jeff, Michele

Nays: Diane, Terri, Martha

**B. Establishment of Student Activity Account – Outdoor Club**

- Move to old business for a vote at the next meeting.

**VII. CONSENT ITEMS** 3/1/17, 3/8/17 (Enc.)

*Mrs. Garfield made a motion seconded by Mrs. Papillon to approve the minutes of 3/1/17.*

*Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 7 Nays Abstain 3 Absent (Roll Call Vote)*

Yeas: Madelyn, Diane, Terri, Lyndsey, Martha, Shirley, Michele

Abstain: Tara, Kara, Jeff

*Mrs. Balboni made a motion seconded by Mrs. Garfield to approve the minutes of 3/8/17.*

*Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 8 Nays Abstain 2 Absent (Roll Call Vote)*

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Diane, Terri, Lyndsey, Martha, Shirley, Michele

Abstain: Kara, Jeff

**VIII. COMMUNICATIONS**

**A. School Committee**

- Both Mrs. Papillon and Mrs. Balboni said the play was awesome.
- Mrs. Winer said it was great. The kids all sang so much differently then they talk.
- Mrs. Garfield said this is a play that is done at the college level. They have to memorize all of this. They are using 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.
- Mrs. Winer said this play was much like our political situation. Things don't always go the way you want them to.
- Mrs. Papillon said the live band was great too.
- Mrs. Garfield said maybe they could do an afternoon performance.

**B. Chairperson**

- Mrs. Crane reminded everyone of the email requesting volunteers to sit on the Carmel scholarship.
- Mrs. Stewart will send an email the Mrs. Iglesias in guidance saying Mrs. Austin and Mrs. Dunn have volunteered.

**C. Superintendent**

Central Office Update (Enc.)

- Dr. Hopson said hopefully the paraprofessionals voted their contract.

**D. Business Manager - None**

**E. Administration**

- Mrs. Long said through April 5 the students from project 351 participating in a state wide service project. Starting tomorrow morning there will be a crib for donations located in the main entrance. Everything collected will be shipped to Boston on April 5<sup>th</sup>. The Cabaret is coming up March 30 at 7 p.m. 6 p.m. is the early college planning workshop. The following night is the chili challenge.

**IX. COMMITTEE REPORTING**

**A. Superintendent's Evaluation**

- Superintendent's evaluation will meet before the next school committee meeting.

**B. Legislative Liaison – None**

**C. Policy Subcommittee - None**

**D. Building Liaisons**

- Mrs. Balboni said practice has begun for the middle school's Peter Pan production.

## X. OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

### Future Agenda Items

## XI. INFORMATION

### Information

Hartley earns Level I SNA Certification  
 Second term honor roll for high school  
 Gators chomp into post season  
 Gateway early-release March 7  
 March School Committee Meetings  
 8<sup>th</sup> graders study math, science and history behind "Hidden Figures"  
 Middle School Term 2 Effort Awards  
 Superintendent's Corner February 27, 2017  
 Blood drive at Gateway March 17  
 Gateway Drama Department goes Into the Woods  
 NHS members lead annual "Seussabration"  
 Spring sports at Gateway  
 Superintendent's Corner March 6, 2017  
 Education Foundation March board meeting  
 Early College Planning Night workshop for 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> graders and families  
 Superintendent's Corner March 10, 2017  
 Gateway's Model UN team at UMASS  
 Community members help launch Outdoor Club at Gateway HS  
 Mestek retiree tells students 'never stop learning'

### Warrant6

AP#1061 \$47,794.52	PR# 19 \$390,239.15
AP#1055 \$44.59	

## XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

- Union Negotiations – Paraprofessionals
- Litigation: Kennedy, et al. v. Commonwealth of Massachusetts, et al. - No.:HSCV2014-00210

## XIII. ADJOURNMENT

*Mrs. Otterbeck made a motion seconded by Mrs. Winer to adjourn at 8:07 p.m.*

*Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 10 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)*

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Diane, Terri, Lyndsey, Martha, Kara, Shirley, Jeff, Michele

Respectfully Submitted,  
 Stacy L Stewart,  
 School Committee Secretary