

GATEWAY REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8, 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 8:10 p.m.
Diane Dunn

HUNTINGTON

MIDDLEFIELD
Sarah Foley

MONTGOMERY
Madelyn Austin

RUSSELL
Tara Balboni
Heather Morgan
Lyndsey Papillon

SECRETARY
Stacy Stewart

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

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL
Megan Coburn, Chs,Lit Principal
Jason Finnie, High/Middle Principal
Wendy Long, District Grant Writer

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

OTHERS: Michael Forand

- Mrs. Crane opened the meeting at 7:04 p.m.
- The reporter and Mrs. Austin are recording the meeting.

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

III. STUDENT COUNCIL INPUT

- Anna Pless said on March 2nd NHS participated in Dr. Seuss’ Read across America. They went to the elementary schools and read to the students. There are some new clubs; the feminism club, GIVE (get involved value everyone) club, and the equality and social justice club. Last Friday was the middle school concert and spaghetti supper. Classes in the high school are working on their spring display cases. The All State Festival is this week. The play is coming up on March 17 and 18. It starts at 6:30 on Friday 6 on Saturday. This is the first musical in 10 years.

IV. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS/RECOGNITIONS - None

V. BUDGET

A. FY ’18 Budget Adoption - Moved to later in the meeting when we have enough members to vote on the budget.

7:45 VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS/ACTION ITEM

A. Policies: Minutes and EEA (Student Transportation Services), EEAA (Walkers and Riders), EEAE (School Bus Safety Program), EEAJ (Motor Vehicle Idling on School Grounds), EEBE (Instruction to Bidders), EFC (Free and Reduced Price Food Services), GCE (Substitute Employment) (Enc.)

- Mrs. Crane explained that all the information is in other policies and guidelines.

Mrs. Dunn made a motion seconded by Mrs. Winer to delete policy EEBE (Instruction to Bidders)

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

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Heather, Lyndsey, Shirley, Michele

Mrs. Dunn made a motion seconded by Mrs. Winer to approve the remaining policies EEA (Student Transportation Services), EEAA (Walkers and Riders), EEAE (School Bus Safety Program), EEAJ (Motor Vehicle Idling on School Grounds), EFC (Free and Reduced Price Food Services), GCE (Substitute Employment)

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

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Heather, Lyndsey, Shirley, Michele

B. FY 17 Winter Grant Opportunities

Mrs. Papillon made a motion seconded by Mrs. Garfield to approve the winter grant opportunities as presented.

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

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Heather, Lyndsey, Shirley, Michele

C. MARS Recommendations

- Dr. Hopson talked about the MARS recommendations. A great many are in process or there is money set aside in the budget for next year. Regarding staffing we are looking at sharing ideas and getting input from the towns. We are looking at long-range capital needs and working with the towns. Is there something we can do with the budget process, a subset of school committee or the whole committee that would start meeting in September? We would contact the towns to get a representative for these meetings. Often administrators don't have a good handle that early. The budget changes pretty dramatically from when they start putting it together to the time it's handed out in February. School Committee should think about if they want to make it a subcommittee or include the whole committee.
- Mrs. Winer asked what he meant by having the selectmen. She is against having a separate subcommittee.
- Dr. Hopson said that is why he is suggesting the two options.
- Mrs. Crane thought regarding those four or so meetings starting in September we could do business the first half hour or so and then go into a big block of budget and complete more school committee business after depending on the time when budget is over. It also doesn't add meetings.
- Mrs. Austin asked how we propose getting people to come to the meetings.
- Dr. Hopson said once school committee decides, a letter would go out to the towns for them to select a representative.
- Mrs. Dunn thinks we should get the towns to committee 3 or 4 people to commit to all four meetings. We would give them all the stuff we get. So we aren't doing things over and over.
- Mrs. Crane agrees.
- Dr. Hopson said the other things we looked at were sharing and regionalization. A super-region is probably less viable than sharing services. He is in discussion with a superintendent about sharing a food services director. MARS suggested sharing the positions we don't have. Mike Buoniconti was looking at positions like payroll (things in his district), but we already have that person doing many things – payroll, insurance, human resources, etc. Administrators are working on having teachers become more empowered. Mr. Finnie had developed some job descriptions for testing coordinators. We will be holding a 2025 meeting just for just staff next week, hoping to get ideas.
- Mrs. Winer asked what a super-region is.
- Dr. Hopson said we would have a school system from CT to VT, because we would have to combine with so many to get just under 5,000 students. We work with the collaborative for educational services. We

have been talking with them to see if it would be worth it to join. If we were to join school committee would have a seat on the board and the superintendent would have seat on the board.

- Dr. Hopson said we've done the transportation study. Kurt has been working very hard to get students back in and keep them in. He would like to add this to the budget for the next meeting. Administrators added what they needed and Dr. Hopson tied them to the school committee goals. About half were high priority. Very few were low priority.

VII. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

A. Student Activities Accounts Guidelines (Enc.)

- Mrs. Crane said this is something we forgot to add to the agenda last time.
- Ms. Fisk said it pulls together all the procedures we are already using. It is to protect student funds. Warrant signing committee has a separate warrant as well now.
- Move to Old business.

VIII. CONSENT ITEMS 2/8/17 (Enc.)

Mrs. Dunn made a motion seconded by Mrs. Foley to approve the minutes of 2/8/17.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 8 Nays Abstain 1 Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Lyndsey, Shirley, Michele.

Abstain: Heather

IX. COMMUNICATIONS

A. School Committee

B. Chairperson

- Mrs. Crane said Mrs. Buikus has resigned from the committee. Our committee of fifteen is down to thirteen, so we need to have people from Middlefield and Montgomery. Tonight really shows us how much we really need to have a full committee.

C. Superintendent

Central Office Update (Enc.)

- Dr. Hopson said we need an executive session for union negotiations: paraprofessionals.
- We are starting to put together a calendar for next year. Recommendation is to stay here for the meetings. Chrome books work here with consistent internet and there is not a lot of attendance anyplace else but here. It will be consistent. Put an optional meeting for next year in March – we don't necessarily need to use.

D. Business Manager

- Ms. Fisk said the new used van is out of the welding shop. They fixed the door where it was rusted on the bottom. It will be registered and we should be using it for special education transportation.
- Today, Ms. Fisk received a draft report of the auditor report – so we will get that to school committee and see when they can come to do a presentation. The new firm picked up six new clients this year. They anticipate it being quicker next year.

E. Administration

- Mrs. Long said the Red Cross is having a blood drive on March 17 from 11-4. Spring sports tryouts start Monday March 20 – softball and baseball. There is a new fundraiser being held by the freshmen class -first annual chili challenge on March 31. There will be a dollar admission to try it all. The deadline to register to compete is March 21. Dawson Atkins wrote a press release being published on the front page of the Republican. Tuesday three of the cast members from 'Into the Woods' are going to Westfield state for a half hour radio interview. Mrs. Crane is coming in to help coach them.

X. COMMITTEE REPORTING

A. Superintendent's Evaluation

- Next meeting 4/26/17 at 6:00 p.m. – Superintendent's Office

B. Legislative Liaison

- Mrs. Papillon said she received an email from MASC a few weeks ago. A commission was formed to look at foundation budget review. They came up with recommendations and there is finally a bill to help implement those recommendations. Hopefully it will have an impact on our minimum.

C. Policy Subcommittee - None

D. Building Liaisons

- Ms. Balboni said the middle school the concert was great.

Mrs. Foley made a motion seconded by Mrs. Papillon to go into executive session for the purposed of union negotiations: paraprofessionals to return to open session at or before 8:15 p.m.

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

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Heather, Lyndsey, Shirley, Michele

Went into executive session 7:49 p.m.

Returned to open session at 8:00 p.m.

Mrs. Dunn made a motion seconded by Mrs. Papillon to take a 15-minute recess.

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

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Heather, Lyndsey, Shirley, Michele

Mrs. Otterbeck arrived at 8:10 p.m.

Budget

- Dr. Hopson handed out the new revised local contributions based on the March 1 census.
- Huntington and Russell have gone up a tad. School committee will be voting the bottom line of the budget. As we get the House, Senate, and final budget from the state, we will make updates. We have 15 members that are supposed to be on the committee, so we need 10 yes votes. If we can't approve a budget tonight, we will need a special meeting next week.
- Mrs. Foley asked about the change in populations, did her town lose students.
- Dr. Hopson said students keep enrolling at the elementary level. Ask Mrs. Coburn.
- Mrs. Coburn said she has three students enroll from Russell since March 1.
- Dr. Hopson said we have to send the statutory or the regional agreement as a school committee, but we can provide the five-year. If the towns want to look at that, and a town votes for the five year rolling average and all towns vote yes, we can move it forward and bring it to DOR.
- Dr. Hopson said only statutory doesn't have to be done yearly. Russell and Huntington have been hit really hard. The five-year rolling average takes the spikes out.
- Mrs. McVeigh said one of the ideas was that when you vote it you would vote for a 5-year period, so it would require special legislation.
- Dr. Hopson asked if the towns' would vote at annual town meeting, and then would it go to legislation.
- Mrs. McVeigh doesn't know. It may take longer than our couple of months but it is worth looking at.
- Mrs. Winer said the three route 20 towns have 75% of the populations.
- Mrs. McVeigh said the budget would be voted every year, but the formula wouldn't change.
- Dr. Hopson said Andy's other suggestion was just adding the assessment to the current amount allowing towns to know what to expect. Russell is paying \$5,000 less per pupil than Blandford.
- Mrs. Foley asked for the cost per student to send a student to Westfield or Smith Vocational.
- Mrs. McVeigh said Westfield is \$11,000 and Smith is \$17,000. That's for regular education tuition. There is a stipend for special education.
- Mrs. Foley asked about the per pupil cost by town.
- Ms. Fisk didn't know off the top of her head.
- Ms. Fisk said the 391 grant which funds our preschool will be reduced by 1/3 over the next three years and will be gone.
- Mrs. Crane said we need to vote on the teachers' salary line item without Mrs. Papillon here in the room. She has filed a disclosure and will recues herself as she has immediate family members working in the district.

- Mrs. Papillon recues herself and left the room.

Mrs. Otterbeck made a motion seconded by Mrs. Balboni to approve the Chester teachers' salary line item of \$344,572 and the middle school nurses' salary line item of \$54,873.

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

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Heather, Martha, Shirley, Michele

Absent: Lyndsey

Mrs. Otterbeck made a motion seconded by Mrs. Balboni to approve the total FY '18 budget of \$16,095,514.

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

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Heather, Lyndsey, Martha, Shirley, Michele.

XI. OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Future Agenda Items

XII. INFORMATION

Information

February School Committee meeting

Senior Nights for winter athletes quickly approach

Superintendent's Corner January 28, 2017

Warrant6

AP#1057 \$206,766.33

PR# 17 \$344,513.72

AP#1058 \$61.30

PR# 18 \$325,072.12

8:35-9 p.m. XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION or earlier

Mrs. Foley made a motion seconded by Mrs. Papillon to go into executive session for the purposed of union negotiations: paraprofessionals to return to open session at or before 8:15 p.m.

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

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Heather, Lyndsey, Shirley, Michele

A. Union Negotiations – Paraprofessionals

B. Litigation: Kennedy, et al. v. Commonwealth of Massachusetts, et al. - No.:HSCV2014-00210

XIX. ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Foley made a motion seconded by Mrs. Dunn to adjourn at 8:35 p.m.

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

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

Respectfully Submitted,
Stacy L Stewart
School Committee Secretary