

GATEWAY REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7, 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
Ron Damon
Jeff Wyand

MIDDLEFIELD
Sarah Foley

MONTGOMERY
Madelyn Austin

RUSSELL
Tara Balboni
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: _____

- Mrs. Crane opened the meeting at 7:06
- Mrs. Austin and the reporter are recording the meeting.

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

III. STUDENT COUNCIL INPUT

- Megan Crane said two weeks ago was Spring Fling. It had to be held inside due to the weather. Yearbooks came in the same day. Student elections are Friday.

IV. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS/RECOGNITIONS

A. 2019 Senior Trip to Walt Disney World Presentation – Megan Crane, Jessie Garriepy

- This trip to Florida would be the 30th year. The maximum cost will be \$1,400. A deposit of \$350 will be due by September 15. They have 17 students interested in going. This is a spring trip usually in May.
- Mrs. Crane said this will be on the next agenda for a vote.

B. PBL Presentation – Dawne Piers-Gamble

- Mr. Finnie said the PBL presentation was sent to school committee because Mrs. Piers-Gamble could not be here. He briefly went over the presentation. He stated they will be facing challenges next year with

scheduling and logistics, but the focus is collaboration and cross curricular work. He is committed to the middle school model, project based learning and student needs.

C. NEASC Survey Presentation – Jeri Beauregard, Mike Forand

- Not necessary, there was enough participation in the NEASC survey.

D. Blizzard Bag Survey Findings

- Dr. Hopson said the only negative responses from teachers were the middle school teachers. The students were fine with it. The presentation Dr. Hopson gave to other schools, was presented to the state, and will also be presented at the Berkshire Superintendent's Roundtable.

7:45 V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS/ACTION ITEM

A. Move to establish a Facilitated Budget Discussion with the six towns as recommended by the MARS Report with participation open to school committee members, town select board and fincom representatives from each town and that the cost of an outside facilitator be shared equally among all seven entities.

- Dr. Hopson said the MARS report and a motion would give us the scope. Jay Barry and Steve Hemman said they would facilitate it for a small fee – \$400 each to facilitate it.
- Dr. Hopson would suggest when making the motion the school committee expend no more than \$1,000. (7,000 total if each town puts money in too). The DOR may be interested in helping facilitate as well. Dr. Hopson would suggest someone from the district also.

Mrs. Otterbeck made a motion seconded by Mrs. Foley to establish a Facilitated Budget Discussion with the six towns as recommended by the MARS Report with participation open to school committee members, town select board and fincom representatives from each town and that the cost of an outside facilitator be shared equally among all seven entities. The school committee allocates up to \$1,000 for this purpose.

- Dr. Hopson said DOR came in with the Lt Governor to give a presentation at Stanton Hall. DOR is looking at, with the support of the compact group, other sustainable means to move forward. It is not a bad idea, because the DOR can clear up any confusing numbers from the towns to make finances clear. It would be good for the towns to have a capital improvement plan. All the towns need to do capital planning individually. Working together with the school might make it easier to plan it all out over say 20 years.
- Dr. Hopson said we have fewer students but we have students with higher needs. We haven't had visually impaired students in years. They will require two full-time staff members.
- Mrs. Dunn said this is in addition to the budget meetings with select board and/or finance members.
- Dr. Hopson said this facilitated discussion is offering a way to look at different ways to look at budget.
- Mrs. Dunn asked where GTAC fit into all of this.
- Dr. Hopson said they could be part of the budget discussion.
- Mrs. Crane and Mrs. Garfield met with their select board. Her board was supportive and said they would get back to school committee before the end of July. We need to be able to have back and forth communication.
- Mrs. Otterbeck said she Mrs. Winer and Mrs. Dunn are working on meeting with their select board.
- Mrs. Foley contacted her selectwoman.
- Mrs. Balboni and Mrs. Papillon contacted their select board too.
- Mrs. Balboni is amazed how much miss-information is out there.
- Mrs. Foley asked if towns would have to have a special town meeting to approve their \$1,000.
- Mrs. Papillon asked what happens if some towns jump on and others don't.
- Dr. Hopson yes, they may have to have a special town meeting. He also said it wouldn't make sense to do it with a few towns.

Mrs. Otterbeck made a motion seconded by Mrs. Foley to establish a Facilitated Budget Discussion with the six towns as recommended by the MARS Report with participation open to school committee members, town select board and fincom representatives from each town and that the cost of an outside facilitator be shared equally among all seven entities. The school committee allocates up to \$1,000 for this purpose.

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

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

B. Request for Leave of Absence

- Dr. Hopson said Jodi Cabral-Croke indicated she was having doubts about finding a long-term sub for one year, but that he and Mrs. Coburn are supporting the leave of absence requested by Mrs. Sudnick. She is furthering her education and doesn't feel like she can go to school, work and be a mom. She would really like the leave.

Mrs. Balboni made a motion seconded by Mrs. Foley to approve a one-year leave of absence to Mrs. Sudnick the Littleville Nurse.

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

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

C. Recommendation to approve Summer Grant List

Mrs. Otterbeck made a motion seconded by Mrs. Foley to approve the Summer Grant List.

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

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

D. Superintendent requests authorization for the District Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer under provisions of M.G.L., Chapter 71 Section 16 (9) and with the approval of the Chairperson for the Gateway Regional Committee, to incur temporary debt (borrow from time to time) in anticipation of revenue to be received from any source for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2017. This is for short-term borrowing in case assessments are not received in time, etc.

Mr. Damon made a motion seconded Mrs. Garfield to approve the following motion: Superintendent requests authorization for the District Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer under provisions of M.G.L., Chapter 71 Section 16 (9) and with the approval of the Chairperson for the Gateway Regional Committee, to incur temporary debt (borrow from time to time) in anticipation of revenue to be received from any source for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2017.

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

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

E. Recommendation to Participate in the National School Lunch Program.**D. Recommendation to approve Charging Privileges/Procedures.**

Mrs. Otterbeck made a motion seconded by Mrs. Foley to approve both the recommendation to participate in the National School Lunch Program and the Charging Privileges/Procedures.

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

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

F. Approval of Superintendent's attendance at ASBO.

Mrs. Balboni made a motion seconded by Mrs. Papillon to approve the superintendent's attendance at ASBO.

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

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

VI. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS**A. Banners/Advertising Policy and Regulations**

- Mrs. Crane and Dr. Hopson worked with Attorney Russell Dupree on the policy. Policy met tonight and voted to move those forward for approval. The booster club wants to try this as a new way of advertising. This new policy will allow us to allow them. School committee has the latitude to say no to some things. Policy thought it was well written as a mechanism for the booster club to try this. It would have to be approved separately if another group wanted to try this.
- Mrs. Winer isn't sure how this is going to work.
- Dr. Hopson referred to John VanHeynigen.
- John VanHeynigen said they would have a standard banner size and sponsorship would be included in the price of the banner. They would be put up before the game and taken down after. They have talked about different price levels. It may be by the season, or the year.
- Dr. Hopson told him if they had a cost structure, we would go with it.
- Mrs. Garfield said they are uniform in size, where would they be placed.
- Mr. VanHeynigen said on ends by the goal posts, the booster club shack, and the booster announcing booth, on the dug outs, etc.
- Mrs. Dunn said so the ad would be collected and then forwarded to Dr. Hopson.
- Mrs. Otterbeck asked if they have a vendor set up to make them.
- Mr. VanHeynigen said that Mr. Foley has looked into a few.
- Mrs. Crane asked how you would do it for basketball.
- Mr. VanHeynigen said that is different, they will meet with the school to figure that out.
- This will be on the agenda for next meeting.

B. Approval of 2019 Senior Class Trip To Walt Disney World

- The trip is usually scheduled as soon as senior AP exams are over. It will probably be closer to \$1,400 because plane tickets are expensive. They also pick educational programs to participate in.
- Mrs. Austin asked if we shop around for rates.
- Dr. Hopson said it is actually more to do a group rate on flights. They get huge discounts at Disney, and they can do things in the parks that others can't. He does all the planning directly through Disney.

C. Acceptance of Chapter 40D, Section 13D. Establishment of a Reserve Fund for Future Payments of Accrued Liabilities for Compensated Absences (Audit recommendation)

- Ms. Fisk said this would be for severance payments we are obligated to pay by union contracts. If everyone who could retire retired at the same time it would cost about \$300,000. We have had instances where we have waived that. One of the transfers you will see is in separation costs. We want to put the money left over when people don't retire into this account.
- Mrs. Crane asked if we would hold this aside only for this.
- Ms. Fisk said yes. It has its own account. Hopefully we will have some nice build up in a few years.

D. Fourth quarter transfers

- Ms. Fisk said she may have to come with a couple more. We tried a new way to advertise with school choice, buy running two school choice ads this year. One was elementary and the other middle and high school. Ms. Fisk went over the transfers. This will be on the agenda for a vote at the next meeting.

VII. CONSENT ITEMS 5/24/17 (Enc.)

Mr. Damon made a motion seconded by Garfield to approve the minutes of 5/24/17.

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

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Ron, Sarah, Terri, Lyndsey, Martha, Shirley, Michele

Abstain: Diane

VIII. COMMUNICATIONS

A. School Committee

- Mrs. Otterbeck said graduation was lovely. Everyone looked great in their blue gowns. Caps were nicely decorated. The drone was interesting.

B. Chairperson

School Committee Goals Update

- Mrs. Crane said that Mrs. Rousseau from Huntington has resigned. We have several openings and we really need to try to fill them.
- School committee goals were sent out again. Members should feel free to update them if they see something amiss.

C. Superintendent

Central Office Update (Enc.)

- Dr. Hopson said Russell and Huntington did not approve the budget. Chester needs to approve it in order to have a budget. If Chester doesn't approve it, we will have to have another meeting after this. We should actually go out with a higher budget because we've had some increases. So we may need to end up about the same. You have three choices; increase, keep the same budget or decrease it and send it back to the towns. For example we have increases we didn't know we had, we could send a budget back that is higher to reflect the increase. There are places like a half time nurse which we could cut. Without cutting staff we may be able to make up about \$30,000.00
- Mr. Damon said if any of us know someone from Chester that can help get people to go out and vote, they should be contacted.
- Dr. Hopson said there will be an all-call Friday night.

D. Business Manager - none

E. Administration

- Mr. Finnie handed out a letter that will be going out with report cards. Because of the Chrome book initiative and the one to one program, students don't need to have cell phones in the classroom. This is not a no tolerance initiative. They will still be able to use them during the day when they are not in a classroom. The idea is to reduce distractions. Very rarely are the phones used for curriculum-based reasons.
- Mrs. Balboni asked if it will be clear to the kids what is expected.
- Mr. Finnie said yes. They will be meeting with students at the beginning of the school year.
- Mrs. Long said the last day of school is next week.

IX. COMMITTEE REPORTING

A. Superintendent's Evaluation

- Mrs. Crane said that Dr. Hopson sent out the survey results and the final report. You will be asked to vote on it at the next meeting. The next scheduled evaluation committee will be before the August meeting.

B. Legislative Liaison

- Mrs. Papillon said she doesn't have much to report just the information from the emails everyone gets.
- Dr. Hopson said the Senate budget includes a line item for small rural schools.

C. Policy Subcommittee

- No meeting set yet.

D. Building Liaisons

- Mrs. Balboni said the concerts were great. Also, the 6th grade released trout into the river.

X. OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Future Agenda Items

XI. INFORMATION

Information

Seniors share tips for planning next steps
 Veteran shares first-hand experience on war with 8th graders
 Superintendent's Corner May 26, 2017

Warrants

AP#1086 \$65,274.31
 AP#1087 \$25,260.41
 AP#1089 \$33,038.49

PR# 24 \$382,446.03

**8:35-9 p.m. XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION - None
or earlier**

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

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Otterbeck made a motion seconded by Mrs. Foley to adjourn at 8:23 p.m.

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

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

Respectfully Submitted,
Stacy L Stewart,
School Committee Secretary