

GATEWAY REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

JOINT BUDGET/REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14, 2018

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

Aaron Welch
Melissa Nazzaro

MIDDLEFIELD

Sarah Foley

MONTGOMERY

Madelyn Austin

RUSSELL

Tara Balboni
Paula Hepburn
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
Kurt Garivaltis, Pupil Services Director
Deanna LeBlanc, High/Middle Assistant Principal
Wendy Long, District Grant Writer
Darlene Rehor, Elementary Assistant Principal

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

OTHERS: Ruth Harper, Darlene McVeigh, John Baldasaro, Andy Myers, Barbara Huntoon, Cara Letendre, Kayla Brady, Dan Shea, Brennan Foley, Joe Kearns, Derrick Mason, Wayne Precanico, Melissa McCaul, Annie Pritchard, Eric McVey, Stephanie Conway, Jodie Cabral-Croke, Kate Forgue, Jason Forgue

- Mrs. Crane opened the meeting at 7:06 p.m.
- Peter Spotts is recording the meeting.

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

III. STUDENT COUNCIL INPUT - None

IV. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS/RECOGNITIONS - None

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

A. Policies (minutes included)

- DBD – Budget Planning
- DBJ – Budget Transfer Authority
- DD – Funding Proposals and Applications
- DGA – Authorized Signatures
- DJE – Procurement Requirements
- DK – Payment Procedures

- g. DKC – Expense Reimbursement
- h. EB – Safety Program
- i. EBB – First Aid

Mrs. Dunn made a motion seconded by Mrs. Balboni to approve the above polices a-i.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 11 Nays Abstain Absent 1 (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Paula, Melissa, Lyndsey, Aaron, Shirley, Michele
Absent: Martha

B. Extension of MARS Meetings

- Mrs. Crane reminded everyone that this would include money from all the towns.
- Mr. Baldasaro would love to see school committee consider this.
- Dr. Hopson said that MARS has indicated they are willing to move forward. We currently agreed upon \$1,000 per town and school.

Mr. Welch made a motion seconded by Mrs. Nazzaro to continue with the MARS meeting.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 11 Nays Abstain Absent 1 (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Paula, Melissa, Lyndsey, Aaron, Shirley, Michele
Absent: Martha

VI. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

A. Health Services Mission Statement: "Our mission is to enhance, support, and improve the overall health of students because healthy students learn."

- Mrs. Cabral Croke said this is new for the health department.
- Move to old business for a vote at the next meeting.

B. 2018-2019 School Calendar

- Dr. Hopson said this is the first draft of calendar. The association would like to move the two half days in January we will have that for the next meeting. It would only be those two days that would change.
- Move to old business for a vote at the next meeting.

C. ASBO Conference September 2018

- Dr. Hopson is asking permission to go to this one, since he didn't go to any last year. He would prefer this one over most superintendents' conferences. It is a much better.
- Move to old business for a vote at the next meeting.

D. Gant Opportunity

- Mrs. Long said DESE has posted the teen dating violence prevention grant and we have to apply prior to school committee's next meeting. We received it a few years ago in the amount of \$10,000. A survey is given to our students of why they do certain things and then we find out what other kids are doing and we correct the gap. At the end of the three years another survey is done to see if you've shortened the gap.

Mrs. Balboni made a motion seconded by Mrs. Papillon to suspend the two-meeting rule to vote on this grant opportunity.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 11 Nays Abstain Absent 1 (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Paula, Melissa, Lyndsey, Aaron, Shirley, Michele
Absent: Martha

Mrs. Winer made a motion seconded by Mrs. Foley to approve the social norms grant.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 11 Nays Abstain Absent 1 (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Paula, Melissa, Lyndsey, Aaron, Shirley, Michele
Absent: Martha

7:30 VII. JOINT BUDGET SESSION WITH TOWN OFFICIALS

A. FY '19 Line Item Budget Review

B. Proposed Amendment to the Regional Agreement in Calculating Assessments

C. FY '19 Budget Adoption

- Dr. Hopson said most folks have seen the line item, are there any questions
- Ms. Fisk said they are holding steady, oil is a little above of what he budgeted. She hasn't locked in. Everything else is holding steady. Always have changes in staffing and health insurance between now and July and September.
- Mrs. Winer asked what happened with our solar –
- Ms. Fisk said it came online December 15 we haven't seen any credits yet. They should come through in the next month from December through the end of this month. We are down to the auditorium for LED yet. 99% of the LED Lights we've changed out have been free. We will probably have to change the fixtures out completely.
- Mrs. McVeigh asked about the amounts in the athletic revolving account, school choice revolving account and transportation revolving account.
- Ms. Fisk said she had a balance of \$61,076 in athletic revolving, \$630,000 in school choice, and \$76,626 transportation revolving. Cherry sheets are level funded at \$628,298. She hasn't changed that yet since they are deleting busses. Unallocated E & D is \$801,000,

Mrs. Otterbeck arrived.

- Mr. Forgue asked what is in the athletic revolving
- Ms. Fisk said user fees and gate receipts.
- Mrs. Foley said the budget here is basic improvements and is a 1.9% increase.
- Mr. Baldasaro asked about the secretary.
- Dr. Hopson said last time we talked about special education, literacy and a secretary. The leadership decided on special education and literacy.
- Mr. Myers wanted to put a plug in the preschool again. There has been a big change. Adding all day preschool will stop that slide. We need to be competitive. We need to fight very hard to waive the claw back. It would highly promote gateway. We are looking at doing a free all day if we can fill that up we can come up with funds to support that. He would like to continue down that road.
- Dr. Hopson has no problem with supporting it but you'd have to put \$200,000 in the budget. If we got the money for claw back we could give it back, but we can't be here in January next year.
- Mr. Baldasaro said we have worked hard over last year maybe we need to petition legislators.
- Mr. Welch agrees. He asked if there is a mechanism where we can conditionally fund this. To keep the ball moving while working on some of these other issues.
- Mrs. Winer asked if there was a possibility to do something in Chester.
- Dr. Hopson said we have open slots now because we don't have enough to fill. Maybe it will fill if we have all day. You could put something in there for preschool.
- Mr. Baldasaro suggested using E & D as insurance
- Dr. Hopson said if you don't get it you will have to pay \$200,000 more the following year.
- Mr. Baldasaro said towns are willing to work with the school.
- Mrs. Austin asked for the PreK in Russell were we going to use the whole school or just a few classrooms.
- Dr. Hopson said we are only talking about 10% of the school.
- Mr. Precanico said we have our police department there, and emergency management is in a trailer. He wonders if it could be a mixed use building. Even though the state is not allowing a waiver for municipal buildings, it might be worth a shot.
- Mrs. Winer asked what happened with the numbers from the estimate.
- Dr. Hopson said we get more money from the state taking chapter 70. The question becomes do we have enough students to fill without taking away from the students currently in district.
- Mr. Garivaltis said he and Mrs. Coburn met with the early childhood person who said do not go just by the survey. The survey data is still coming in. It looks like people are interested in full-day preschool and we can't do mixed models. If we are going to do a trial model full-day preschool, he has serious concerns about having a stand along program in a building with regards to nursing staff, etc. Our two current programs run in current school buildings. What happens when students need a time out? There are needs

that can be pulled from other staff in the building. It is a great idea and we do need to invest in getting students in school as early as possible. If there is a real need for a full-day program maybe we run a trial in one of our current buildings.

- Mr. Welch said as a point of information on all the slots in Chester are half day. If we did full day would we be reducing those slots.
- Mrs. Balboni said Chester sounds like a good option, but some parents want to utilize before or after school options. Chester is not on the way to anything. It is out of the way for parents. Also, down the line is there a way to incorporate high school programming in an early childhood education setting – having high school students working with the kids.
- Dr. Hopson said those are some of the things Kurt and Megan have talked about. We currently have students who do that at Littleville.
- Mr. Garivaltis said it is an option to make it a vocational program. The idea of having a standalone is frightening.
- Mrs. Nazzaro said we need to listen to the subject matter experts. If we do this wrong, this would be a bigger failure than if we do this amazingly the next year. If the subject matter experts are concerned. She is a parent of a young preschool age student, so that concerns her. It will probably take a few years to reach its maxim and students will only be there for a couple of years.
- Mr. Baldasaro said if you wait till all the I's are dotted and T's are crossed it won't happen. There is risk in everything.
- Mrs. Nazzaro said we have only been talking about this since December and the model has changed three times.
- Mrs. Crane is not sure what Mr. Baldasaro wants. She said when you started coming to these meetings, you wanted a level funded budget, then it was level services with needs, now it \$200,000 plus for an all day Preschool.
- Mr. Baldasaro is not asking for a huge hike. He believes we could use state funding or E & D. He asked us to cut in order to show what it would look like.
- Mrs. Crane said she doesn't think that anyone here is asking to cut the preschool we still want to work toward making it work. She doesn't know if you can do it provisionally.
- Dr. Hopson said you would have to add a line item, but the problem is you wouldn't be able to fix it until the following year. If it doesn't work, we are looking at assessments going up another \$200,000. We haven't even discussed lease costs or maintenance and utilities.
- Mrs. Crane is concerned the voters at town meeting are going to have a hard enough time understanding what we are asking already.
- Mr. Baldasaro said all of them are going to try their best to get more people at town meeting this year.
- Mrs. Foley is hearing Kurt say he has concerns for the three and four year olds. As an educator that is deal breaker for her, especially the safety concerns.
- Mr. Garivaltis said we are talking about a teacher and a paraprofessional in the building alone. He has considered moving his office there.
- Mrs. Coburn what about a secretary. Who will open the door and answer the phone.
- Mrs. Balboni said if a kid runs, that is a problem. Is there time in the next year to move the program here.
- Mrs. Dunn worked in an elementary school for 12 years with those little kids the potential for disaster is awful if it's understaffed plus there are the special needs kids. It is a great idea and we need to do it, but we will gain more if we wait a year. One bad incident can set us back.
- Ms. Fisk said one of the discussions she has had with SBA is to spread the payments over 10 or 12 years, (we only have 6 years left) and give us an opportunity to buy time.
- Mrs. Austin said if we wait a year, what do we have to have for staff? Isn't it going to cost us just as much, no matter what when we start.
- Dr. Hopson said part of the cost is not paying SBA back. LTM has talked about making it an early educational program. We have a nurse leader who can spend part of her time there. Knowing how much we have to pay -what Russell would charge us and trying to alleviate claw back. You would have to put in \$230,000 from E & D and if we have to put in a secretary and/or security it will be more like \$280,000.
- Mr. Garivaltis said in addition to nurse, secretary, and security, there are special education students and they receive services such as t OT, PT, speech, and he is making an assumption that our current staff can handle 12-15 more students.
- Mr. Welch said MSBA forgiveness should be worked on regardless. We have a lot of resources here and an excellent program built by staff. He would like to see a proposal for a pilot program expanding it here with the cost. You are giving the community a positive. It's just that you are not sure we can do it in this budget.

- Mrs. Winer said assuring in the year we have coming up what can we do in that direction that would let people know about it.
- Mr. Baldasaro said if you think it is a good idea put some money and language in the budget for if we don't get relief from SBA. If you don't put that pressure on it you get absorbed in other things.
- Mr. Welch wouldn't have any problem with putting \$230,000 in this year and let the towns know we are moving forward.
- Mrs. Otterbeck asked can we do that and is that feasible where we are now. Can it be that contingent on certain things?
- Dr. Hopson said you would have to add a Russell preschool line item.
- Ms. Fisk said you could approve the budget and then approve the line item.
- Dr. Hopson said add the \$280,000 vote it as a separate line item. This would be the cost the school entered for the preschool and now we have to pay for it.
- Mrs. Dunn asked is it possible and legal vote on budget with a 1.9% increase, then put a rider or postscript on it with stipulations that way we could we vote on the regular budget tonight
- Mr. McVey said the risk we brought is the E & D line item needs to get paid back – you want that money back. It needs to be implemented with clauses or it's a big risk to the towns.
- Mr. Forgue said if you go through the process, in order to properly planning then you get worked
- Dr. Hopson said we all need to understand we would set up a timeline to work with SBA because we can't put people in place if it.
- Mrs. Papillon said when we started this discussion tonight we were using the smaller portion if we are not going to get claw back relieve.
- Mr. Welch and Mrs. Balboni said we need to apply pressure on the state.
- Mr. Forgue said proposing a \$280,000 increase in the budget, even if we get claw back of \$137,000 we are still in the hole by \$143,000.
- Dr. Hopson said both Mr. Myers and school's model is having more students to get money from the state. Full-day students only bring in half-day reimbursement, so we are probably looking at \$60,000 to 70,000.
- Mr. McVey said the Chapter 70 funds wouldn't come back to us until FY '20. We need to know how much will be coming out of E&D or from the towns the first year. Someone has to fund it.
- Mr. Myers said the key is there needs to be a change at Gateway to reverse the loss. We need to agree we are going to have a full-day preschool. Let's address Mr. Garivaltis' concerns with Mr. Welch's suggestions of refurbishing classrooms here.
- Mr. Forgue said shouldn't we wait for the surveys to come in.
- Mrs. Dunn said can we vote on the 1.9% budget. Then can we do a post script.
- Dr. Hopson said in order to move the budget forward we need to have a line item in the budget. School committee votes the bottom line.
- Ms. Fisk said we could offset it with school choice money so you won't have to increase your budget. If it doesn't go the money goes back into school choice. You are not talking about E & D so school committee doesn't need to vote it tonight.
- Dr. Hopson said you move forward with preschool under these conditions.
- Mr. Precanico asked how you let folks know that you are moving forward with a full-day preschool.
- Mr. Myers said we had an all day preschool task force and found out that some of our surrounding towns have full day preschool.
- Mrs. Otterbeck doesn't think any of us disagree. She thinks we get anxious about how we are going to do it. We really need help in the high school. We all want to save Gateway.
- Dr. Hopson said the amendment to the regional agreement for calculating assessments was in the central office update. It also included the letter signed by Dr. Hopson and Mrs. Crane. He read the last two paragraphs.

Mrs. Winer made a motion seconded by Mr. Welch to move forward the amendment to the towns for ratification and the committee agrees to the conditions set by the Commissioner.

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

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Paula, Melissa, Lyndsey, Martha, Aaron, Shirley, Michele

- Mrs. Crane and Mrs. Papillon have to leave the room when school committee votes on the 2000 and 3000 accounts before we vote on the total budget as they have immediate family members who are paid out of those accounts.

Mrs. Papillon excused herself

Mrs. Dunn made a motion seconded by Mrs. Otterbeck to approve the total 2000 account \$8,037,766.00

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 11 Nays Abstain Absent 1 (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Paula, Melissa, Martha, Aaron, Shirley, Michele

Absent: Lyndsey

Mrs. Otterbeck took over the meeting so Mrs. Crane could leave..

Mrs. Balboni made a motion seconded by Mrs. Foley to approve the total 3000 account \$1,811,384.00

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

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Paula, Melissa, Martha, Aaron, Shirley

Absent: Lyndsey, Michele

Both Mrs. Crane and Papillon returned.

Mrs. Foley made a motion seconded by Mrs. Nazzaro to approve the FY'19 Budget for a total of \$16,254,936.

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

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Paula, Melissa, Lyndsey, Martha, Aaron, Shirley, Michele

Mrs. Nazzaro made a motion seconded by Mr. Welch to set \$280,000 aside from a revolving account to pay for the Russell or other locations PreK subject to resolving MSB payback and administration safety concerns.

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

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Paula, Melissa, Lyndsey, Martha, Aaron, Shirley, Michele

VIII. CONSENT ITEMS 2/14/18 (Enc.)

Mrs. Foley made a motion seconded by Mrs. Otterbeck to approve the minutes of 2/14/18.

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

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

Abstain: Tara, Paula, Aaron

IX. COMMUNICATIONS

A. School Committee

- Mr. Welch said a committee member from Amherst emailed all of us to discuss transportation funding. Mr. Welch asked if it would be helpful to bring other select board committees.
- Mrs. McVeigh and Mr. Welch can attend the meeting at 7 p.m. tomorrow night.
- Mrs. Papillon said the middle school band concert last Friday night was amazing. They demonstrated how the band comes together pulling instruments out and then putting them all together.

B. Chairperson

- Mrs. Crane said the Cabaret is coming up. It was moved to April 3, 2018. 6:30 p.m.

C. Superintendent

Central Office Update (Enc.)

- Dr. Hopson thanked all the town select boards and finance committees for coming and working over the last couple of months. He hopes this continues given the fact we voted to move forward with MARS.
- Mr. Baldasaro would like to mirror that. No matter what happens there are doors that have been opened. It's a joint community agreement.

- Mrs. Huntoon said it no longer feels like an us versus them.
- Mr. Finnie said we had a “walk in” student led event. A couple of high school students shared information on how students can share their views to legislators. Some students that wanted to conserve the memory of the students lost and not the ban on weapons. All in all it went well.
- Dr. Hopson said this is what happens when high school administrators, special education, and Mrs. Long have a good working relationship with the students.

D. Business Manager

- Ms. Fisk said major audit and the student audit are complete. She is waiting for final paperwork and a date from them to give the presentation.

E. Administration

- Mrs. Long said the current GEF fundraiser is Gateway night at Springfield Thunderbird’s game. She left flyers for the committee.
- Dr. Hopson said as of tomorrow Mass 1 to 1 will done. The board took a vote to disband. All retained earning went to the Gateway Education Foundation. A check was written for \$84,854.89.

F. Town

X. COMMITTEE REPORTING

A. Superintendent’s Evaluation

- Next meeting is April 25, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.

B. Legislative Liaison – None

C. Policy Subcommittee

- Next meeting is March 28, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.

D. Building Liaisons - None

XI. OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Future Agenda Items

GYAA Building Use – April 25

XII. INFORMATION

Information

Communications Council plans activities
 Superintendent’s Corner February 8, 2018
 New Counselors at Gateway School-Based health Center
 Foundation approaches \$50,000 given to Gateway classrooms!
 Changing the conversation about ‘Guidance’
 Budget hearing on March 7
 Full Day PreK Survey
 Superintendent’s Corner February 16, 2018
 Gateway, Hampshire students working together
 MS Talent Show Coming Up
 Full Day PreK Survey
 Free Parent Training on Positive Discipline
 Save the date: Red Cross Blood Drive
 Falling in love with music-again!
 Students Deliver on Table for Montgomery Town Hall
 Superintendent’s Corner February 23, 2018
 Lots of love (and consent) on Valentine’s
 Save a life – donate March 16
 Gateway early release March 13
 March School Committee Meetings
 Superintendent’s Corner March 2, 2018

Senior athletes' final hurrah
7th graders show STEM results

The warrant signing committee had reviewed the following warrants, found them to be in order, and approved them.

Warrants

AP#1050 \$191,121.67

PR# 015 \$347,116.25

AP#1052 \$54,750.01

PR# 016 \$356,315.49

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

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

XIX. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Welch made a motion seconded by Mrs. Dunn to adjourn at 8:44 p.m.

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

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Paula, Melissa, Lyndsey, Martha, Aaron, Shirley, Michele

Respectfully Submitted,
Stacy L Stewart
School Committee Secretary