

GATEWAY REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The Gateway Regional School District will provide an exemplary education that challenges all students in an instructional setting appropriate to their needs.

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3, 2021

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/77361840587?pwd=U0Vkn2dMZ1kzL3UxczB6RGEyeXFUZz09>

Meeting ID: 773 6184 0587

Passcode: 29s6L6

7:00 P.M.

(A PORTION OF THIS MEETING MAY BE HELD IN EXECUTIVE SESSION)

I. OPENING OF MEETING

<u>BLANDFORD</u>	<u>CHESTER</u>	<u>HUNTINGTON</u>	<u>MIDDLEFIELD</u>
Michele Crane	Jason Forgue	David Lubbers	Sarah Foley
Terri Garfield		Edward Renauld	

<u>MONTGOMERY</u>	<u>RUSSELL</u>	<u>SECRETARY</u>
Madelyn Austin	Tara Balboni	Stacy Stewart
	Sarah Page	
	Lyndsey Papillon	

<u>CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION</u>	<u>ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL</u>
Dr. David B. Hopson, Superintendent	Martha Clark, High/Middle AP
Stephanie Fisk, Asst. Superintendent	Megan Coburn, Chs,Lit Principal
	Jason Finnie, Middle/High Principal
<u>STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES</u>	Kurt Garivaltis, Pupil Services Director
Brian Forgue	Deanna LeBlanc, Curriculum Director
	Darlene Rehor, Elementary AP

OTHERS: Linda Coffey, Val Zeh, Jim Duggan, Shelbi Macri, Alexis Batra, Megan, Tamarin, Adair, Josh Garcia, Elizabeth Hamoui, Cara Letendre, Bob Daley, Jackie Surgure, Romana Thieme, Amy Porter, Nick Balboni, Persa Batra

I. FY '22 Budget Hearing

- Mrs. Crane called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
- Shelbi Macri is recording the meeting.
- Dr. Hopson started to go over the budget. He went over the census for the upcoming budget.
- Nick Balboni asked if March 1 is the official census.
- Dr. Hopson said yes, March 1 is the official census for the budget. It shows assessments based on both the statutory and alternate. Blandford and Middlefield have a decrease, and Chester, Huntington, Montgomery, and Russell have an increase.
- The alternate method is a 1.78% increase to towns due to revenue and all six towns have to vote for it. It would be nice to see which direction the towns would like to head before next week's meeting which is the budget adoption.
- Nick Balboni asked what is the difference between alternate and overall.
- Dr. Hopson said assessments are based upon what the district takes in and the budget. The state revenue has not increased that much; the revenue hasn't grown so the state is picking up less of the budget. (supporting schools and gateways population) We did receive \$30 more per student, however the cost actually increases more than \$30 per student.
- Andy Myers asked if we are expecting more stimulus funds.
- Dr. Hopson said we are expecting SR2 funds but they are intended for things like after school and extended school programs.
- Cara Letendere said Blandford is supporting the alternative assessment, but it is becoming harder to support it when other towns are only supporting it when it benefits them.
- Mr. Fogue said it is safe to say Chester is with them this year.
- Dr. Hopson isn't sure whether Middlefield will accept the alternate method or not. Also, he isn't sure if Montgomery and Russell will support it again this year.
- Nick Balboni said Russell usually votes whatever way is cheaper.
- Mr. Renauld said the tough sell here is there is some animosity in town about how they pass it when it doesn't benefit them. The other towns are not taking the hit when they are not saving money.
- Nick Balboni agrees with him, it is a tough sell. Looking at what Russell has done historically, it is what is cheapest. Montgomery seems not to want to do it at all.
- Cara Letendre said either way, she hopes both are on the warrant.
- Ruth Kennedy said Russell has always given the town a choice.
- David Lubbers said he is respecting what they are doing on the superintendent's search. Is the salary going to change. He thinks teachers need more money.

- Dr. Hopson said the teachers are in negotiations, and the school committee is going to have to negotiate with the new superintendent.
- Mr. Lubbers believes teachers should get a little more in a percent increase than administrators.
- Mrs. Foley asked if this presentation would be sent to us.
- Dr. Hopson said it will be on cleargov and on the website.
- Dr. Hopson said we probably won't know exact numbers until June.
- Ms. Fisk said this is in the initial stages as far as revenue and will be updated when we get revenue.
- Mr. Forgue asked if there are any rumors in terms of revenue.
- Dr. Hopson said the Governor's budget will probably last in the House and Senate. There will be money for schools in Chapter 70 reform, but those who are being held harmless won't see more revenue.
- Mr. Forgue asked if those that are in school are getting more?
- Dr. Hopson said for every day you don't meet the 180 days, 1/180th gets taken away.
- Andy Myers asked about vocational students.
- Dr. Hopson said we have an estimate, however we have a couple of students who we are up in the air about which parents they live with.
- Ruth Kennedy how much covid aide we received.
- Ms. Fisk said SR1 was about \$190,000 and technology about \$36,000. That is it for this year.
- Dr. Hopson said SR1 money went for masks, marking distance products, equipment. Tech went to fund hot spots for students who didn't have internet access or poor internet; mainly Blandford and Russell.
- Ruth Kennedy with all kids learning from home. No win 1 or day How are they being tested, and how are they doing?
- Dr. Hopson said we will find out when we hold mcas testing in the spring. Probably not as well as in past years. It is interesting elementary students are coming back before mcas.
- Dr. Hopson said the school committee will take this up, next meeting and will decide statutory or alternative. Feedback from town would be nice. Thank You to Cara for asking blandies and to Chester for supporting the alternate method.
- Amy Porter asked if we are going to be held harmless for loss of students due to covid.
- Dr. Hopson said yes, but we are already held harmless Mr. Lubbers thanked Dr. Hopson for his service through all the years.
- Dr. Hopson said he has a few months to wrap things up.

III. ADJOURNMENT at 9 p.m. unless extended by majority vote.

Mrs. Foley made a motion seconded by Mrs. Balboni to adjourn at 7:30 p.m.

