

**GATEWAY REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

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

All visitors attending the school committee meeting should sign in at the security booth.

**JOINT BUDGET/REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2019**

**Middle School 112/114  
7:00 P.M.**

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

**I. OPENING OF MEETING**

BLANDFORD  
Michele Crane  
Terri Garfield

CHESTER  
Jason Forgue  
Martha Otterbeck  
Shirley Winer

HUNTINGTON

MIDDLEFIELD  
Sarah Foley

MONTGOMERY  
Madelyn Austin

RUSSELL  
Tara Balboni  
Sarah Page  
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, Middle/High Principal  
Kurt Garivaltis, Pupil Services Director

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES  
Brian Forgue

OTHERS: Mike LeFleur, Joe Kearns, Reporter: Shelby Macri, Ruth Harper, Jim Duggan, Andy Myers, Cara Letendre, Barbara Huntoon, Ruth Kennedy

**II. PUBLIC INPUT FOR ITEMS NOT LISTED ON AGENDA (3 Minute Limit)**

- Brian Forgue asked about setting up a stabilization fund, perhaps some extra money could go into stabilization to fix the roof and the leak in the girls' bathroom.
- Mrs. Crane said she talked to Mr. Quinn and they have had several people to come in to fix the problem.

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**III. STUDENT COUNCIL INPUT**

- Brian Forgue said winter sports are starting. Basketball and wrestling are having tryouts. The high school is having spirit week and reindeer games next week. They sold t-shirts for reindeer games. They have had many graduation fundraisers over the past couple of months. High school concert is tomorrow night.
- Mrs. Crane thanked him for coming even though there was a snow day today.

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#### IV. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS/RECOGNITION

##### A. Superintendent's Search Recommendation

- Mrs. Crane said the information was linked in the central office.
- Dr. Hopson said the evaluation committee has been talking about it. There are 44 open superintendence's. The last two schools appointed their assistant superintendent, and the Cape just appointed a principal. School committee has a lot of choices. They could do an in-house search and still find out what the community wanted.
- Mrs. Crane asked Mrs. LeClair if she would work with the communities. If you did it in house, you would save about \$25,000. She said the overall feeling is that we have unique needs and if we tailor it the way we want, we will do better, rather than getting national candidates. State study. We want someone with experience in central office, small rural schools, and in Massachusetts. Free and low cost advertising would be helpful. The search would begin in next school year.
- Ruth Kennedy said she went to a couple of conferences where she brought bought paperwork for regarding superintendent searches. She said the Massachusetts Association for School Committees would help for free. They describe exactly what is needed. That is the way other schools do it. We pay them to do such things.
- Dr. Hopson said MASC will help in the search.
- Mr. Forgue thinks it is a disservice to it in-house.
- Dr. Hopson said instead of advertising in national leadership and you would still use MASC and MASS. It is just the school committee is doing it instead of a search firm. A subcommittee does initial interviews, only when you get to the finalist it goes to the full committee. You are still opening it to outside candidates.
- Mr. Forgue just felt like we had a direction we wanted to go in already.
- Mrs. Crane said these are recommendations, and this will be voted on at the next meetings, there is plenty of time if you have other ideas.
- Mr. Forgue thinks we can solve those uniqueness's in the advertising, which should weed out those who aren't really interested.
- Andy Myers said this is an opportunity, such as rural schools sharing opportunities.
- Mrs. Balboni said you mentioned 44 openings how many schools are there statewide.
- Dr. Hopson said around 300. In this area, there wasn't anyone retiring, and now there are 4.
- Mrs. Crane asked everyone look at the recommendations. Feel free to email or talk to anyone on the subcommittee or Dr. Hopson if you have questions. Come back ready to discuss at the next meeting.

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#### V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

##### A. Recommendation for the Gateway Regional School Committee to approve the September 25, 2019 revised and amended agreement of the Collaborative for Educational Services.

**(Move that the Gateway Regional School Committee approves the September 25, 2019 revised and amended Agreement of the Collaborative for Educational Services)**

*Mr. Forgue made a motion seconded by Mrs. Foley to move that the Gateway Regional School Committee approves the September 25, 2019 revised and amended Agreement of the Collaborative for Educational Services.*

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

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Sarah F., Jason, Terri, Sarah P., Lyndsey, Shirley, Michele

Absent: Martha

##### B. IJOA – Field Trip Policy Revision

- Dr. Hopson said we added if a chaperone gets \$50 they have to fill out disclosure forms.

*Mrs. Papillon made a motion seconded by Mrs. Foley to approve the field trip policy revision to IJOA.*

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

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Sarah F., Jason, Terri, Sarah P., Lyndsey, Shirley, Michele

Absent: Martha

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**7:30 VI. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS - None**


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**VII. JOINT BUDGET SESSION WITH TOWN OFFICIALS**
**A. FY '21 Budget – Central Office**

- Ms. Fisk gave a Power Point presentation.
- Mrs. Winer asked about homeless where do they go.
- Ms. Fisk said we bring students home who are in foster care etc.
- Mrs. Austin asked how many 7D drivers we will need.
- Ms. Fisk said we currently have the transportation coordinator driving half the day. If you are certified to drive an 8 passenger van you can't drive a 14 passenger minibus. We are pushing the registry to get that changed.
- Mr. Forgue asked did you mention at a past meeting there might be another company bidding on transportation.
- Ms. Fisk said yes.
- Jason Forgue asked if we were still talking about extending the length of payback for SBA.
- Dr. Hopson thinks that the MARS guys were going to look into it.
- Cara Letendre asked what the user fees are.
- Ms. Fisk said they are \$132.00 regular, \$100.00 for reduced lunch, and \$66.00 for free lunch. There is a family cap.
- Cara Letendre asked if we were in line with other schools.
- Mr. Forgue what portion is bussing.
- Ms. Fisk thinks it's about \$40,000 and we cover about \$20,000 in the budget.
- Mrs. Foley asked if it is a separate contract.
- Ms. Fisk said yes, but if you only have on bidder, that is hard.
- Dr. Hopson said user fees cost less than 20% of the cost of the program.
- Mr. Forgue asked is it allowed by state law to assess a fee by sport.
- Ms. Fisk said yes. Sports such as hockey and football.
- Barbara Huntoon asked how much does a ticket taker make.
- Ms. Fisk said \$25.
- Ms. Fisk said if revenue stays the same in FY'21 that 2.53% is 4% in assessments. Rural school said is included in it at \$249,000.
- Andy Myers said 4% is not doable in the towns.
- Ms. Fisk said transportation is a big unknown, homeless and special education transportation is increasing. Health insurance is taking a hit.

Mrs. Otterbeck arrived at 7:51 p.m.

- Dr. Hopson said this budget is essentially level services. The schools that are held harmless are not going to see any help this year. The only change to legislation is there will be a commission to study rural schools. We figured in \$225,000 but there is no guarantee that will happen.
- Barbara Huntoon asked about homeless transportation.
- Mr. Garivaltis said we had a student, for protective reasons, who lived with a staff member, and now the foster home is in Holyoke, so we are the school of origin, we are on the hook for transportation. If the child remains in Holyoke after this year they register in Holyoke, if they go home, it's in Huntington.
- Ms. Fisk said we are trying to maximize the money we receive from Medicaid. Totally the cost is the same, but we are moving.
- Ms. Fisk said your assessments are 9.5 million the budget is 16 million.
- Andy Myers said if the state is not coming up with the extra it is not going to work.
- Ms. Fisk said the early education childcare grant was huge, then they reduced it, \$30,000 is what it has been for the last 3 years and this is the last year.
- Mr. Forgue said land value is going down, but the tax rates are going up. Where is some of that rural schools money being used?
- Ms. Fisk said you can't save it for a rainy day. You have to spend it in a year.
- Mr. Forgue asked how she estimates transportation.
- Ms. Fisk said looking ahead at students coming into preschool, when we get the route sheets from van pool she pushes them hard to push them to get students on a reasonable route. We just reduced one as of January

2. She has never seen homeless like this. It was funded through Title I at \$9,000 for years and now we are over \$30,000.

- Mr. Garivaltis said we had a total of 26 last year. To average it out it is between 3 and 5 per year.
- Cara Letendre if we had more foster care providers in the district would it help.
- Mr. Garivaltis said yes, but you may also get more special education students from other areas that require additional programming.
- Mr. Garivaltis said under every student succeeds act, it is a student lives with someone else that is not family, crashes on a couch, lives in a place that has no electricity, running water, etc. He read the official regulation.
- Dr. Hopson said we will have a line item budget in January.

## VIII. CONSENT ITEMS 11/13/19 (Enc)

*Mrs. Foley made a motion seconded by Mrs. Balboni to approve the minutes of 11/13/19.*

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

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Sarah F., Jason, Terri, Sarah P., Lyndsey, Shirley, Michele

Abstain: Martha

## IX. COMMUNICATIONS

### A. School Committee

- Mr. Forgue said schools match wits next Saturday December 21 against Southwick.
- Mrs. Page said the ms school conference.

### B. Chairperson – School Committee Ethics Follow-up, Yearbook Ad

- Mrs. Crane reminded everyone to complete their ethics exam.
- The Yearbook ad is \$14. Cash or check is accepted. If you write a check make it payable to GRSD. She will be working with Chloe to take a picture again.
- Mrs. Crane met with Mr. Quinn about stuff that is going well and the hot items.

### C. Superintendent

Central Office Update (Enc.)

- None

### D. Business Manager

- None

### E. Administration

- Mr. Finnie said the senior citizen brunch was well attended and went well. National Honor Society students were the greeters and servers.
- Mrs. Coburn said Grand friends went well at both Littleville and Chester.
- Barbara Huntoon said the one in Chester was wonderful.

### F. Town

- None

## X. COMMITTEE REPORTING

- A. Superintendent's Evaluation –Next Meeting 1/8/20, 2/5/20
- B. Legislative Liaison - None
- C. Policy Subcommittee - None
- D. Building Liaisons - None

## XI. OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

### Future Agenda Items

## XII. INFORMATION

### Information

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

**Warrant**

AP#1035 \$17.14	PR#011 \$387,436.65
AP#1034 \$250,813.21	PR#010 \$379,340.28

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

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**XIV. ADJOURNMENT**

*Mr. Forgue made a motion seconded by Mr. Austin to adjourn 8:17 p.m.*

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

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Sarah F., Jason, Terri, Sarah P., Lyndsey, Martha, Shirley, Michele

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Respectfully Submitted,  
Stacy L Stewart,  
School Committee Secretary