

**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.

**BUDGET HEARING**

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6, 2019**

**Performing Arts Center  
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

HUNTINGTON  
Darlene McVeigh  
Melissa Nazzaro

MIDDLEFIELD  
Sarah Foley

MONTGOMERY

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  
Deanna LeBlanc, High/Middle Assistant Principal  
Wendy Long, District Grant Writer  
Darlene Rehor, Elementary Assistant Principal

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

OTHERS: Adare, Tameron, Joe Kearns, Andy Myers, Josh Garcia, Cara Letendre, Steph Conway, Mike LaFleur, Nick Balboni

**7:05 p.m. II. BUDGET HEARING FY '20**

- Dr. Hopson opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. and gave a FY '20 budget presentation that covered the following:
  - Actions to date
  - Priority Items in Budget – Elementary
  - Priority Items in Budget – Middle/High School
  - Priority Items in Budget – District
  - Priority Items not included in the budget
  - Preliminary Numbers
  - Assessments – Alternative Assessment Method
  - Next steps
- Mrs. McVeigh said we would approve the budget at next school committee meeting, but we are not approving the assessments.

- Dr. Hopson said the Governor's budget would be a 3.8% increase. School Committee would adopt the bottom line of the budget and adopt the method.
- Mrs. McVeigh said we are approving it based on anticipated revenue.
- Nick Balboni said each town would be voting the amount.
- Dr. Hopson said all six towns would have to approve the amount. From a town moderator's opinion, you only need one vote. Every town could have been having one vote for many years. It doesn't break it down it is 1.9% increase over last year.
- Mrs. McVeigh asked if the towns will be sent the assessments with the statutory rate as well.
- Dr. Hopson said if school committee so chooses. You should send it last year and this year.
- Andy Myers would suggest if the additional funding doesn't come, that we have a joint meeting with the town officials so we can come up with the best budget possible.
- Dr. Hopson said we would want to do that. Right now we are at a 1.9% increase to the towns based on the alternative assessment method.
- Mrs. McVeigh asked if we have any idea on the timing of the state budget.
- Dr. Hopson said this is going to be a difficult year. The CVSR (Connecticut Valley Superintendents' Roundtable) met with the legislators on Friday. There are three chapter 70 reform bills. All of them said it was important to factor in rural school funding. However, over the last 4 months the state revenue has been lower than anticipated. Hopefully it will increase in the next few months. Four legislators were not opposed to looking at new revenue sources. We may not get a budget till July.
- Cara Letendre asked if there has been any more news on the claw back.
- Dr. Hopson said Smitty Pignatelli is working on a bill that would fund us 1.1 million from pothole funds that would allow us to pay MSBA, but not till the following year or the four following years. He would suggest select board and town officials contact legislators and push for claw back and chapter 70 money.
- Mrs. McVeigh said there is a Rural Commonwealth meeting in Williamsburg focusing helping municipal leaders with how to lobby.
- Andy Myers said in all the meetings over the last few years, we've discussed declining enrollment. It is nice to see it leveling out a bit.

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### **III. ADJOURNMENT Meeting Adjourned at 7:26 p.m.**

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Respectfully Submitted,  
Stacy L Stewart  
School Committee Secretary