

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.

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, MAY 8, 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 Fogue
Martha Otterbeck
Shirley Winer

HUNTINGTON

Darlene McVeigh
Melissa Nazzaro
Aaron Welch

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

Wendy Long, District Grant Writer

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

OTHERS: Mike LaFleur

- Mrs. Crane opened the meeting at 7:08 p.m.

II. PUBLIC INPUT FOR ITEMS NOT LISTED ON AGENDA (3 Minute Limit) - None

III. STUDENT COUNCIL INPUT

- Robert Austin said the high school concert/choir performance is tomorrow at 6:30 p.m. Softball senior night is this Friday. Two weeks from Friday is the senior night for baseball. Showcase showdown is happening. The theme is “messages for the upcoming class”. The penny wars contest between grades is going on. Classes earn points by putting pennies in their own jar and sabotage other classes by putting silver in other class jars. Spring fling is coming up. They will participate in activities such as volleyball, marshmallow gun fights, etc. Seniors leave for Disney next week, then they have AP testing and finals. Friday and Saturday is the musical “Big Fish” which starts at 6 p.m. Dress rehearsal went great!

IV. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS/RECOGNITION

A. Assistant Superintendent

- Dr. Hopson said we had some questions at the last meeting from Derrick Mason. We changed the title of the Business manager to assistant superintendent of finance. The answers to his questions were included in

the packet. Ms. Fisk has her superintendent's certification and now can actually attend superintendent meetings.

Mrs. McVeigh arrived.

B. Superintendent Search

- Dr. Hopson said Mrs. McVeigh asked about this at the last meeting. He played around with a timeline which was included in the central office update. The group needs to decide if they want to go outside and hire search group. We will need to make the decision in the winter. You can hire an outside company in the spring if you choose to do so. It will allow you to have someone in place early. Generally you do some community research to see what the community wants. The first round is not open to the public, the finalists become public, then there are site visits, and the public session. You would negotiate sometime in May and Dr. Hopson will leave in August.
- Mrs. Winer said the last time we used a search group it wasn't very good. She wasn't very happy with any part of it, and wasn't happy with any of the candidates.
- Mrs. McVeigh said you can go through MASC.
- Dr. Hopson said yes, it is still considered an outside search.
- Mrs. Otterbeck asked if there are there local firms.
- Mrs. Nazzaro asked if they drum up applicants or do they actually participate in the interview process as well.
- Dr. Hopson said it is usually on a structured range. They can do what you want them to do.
- Mrs. Nazzaro said the school committee can be part of setting the parameters and part of the process of widdling down the candidates.
- Mrs. Crane asked what the prices range is.
- Dr. Hopson said the least is \$6,000 to \$8,000, and the highest could be \$50,000.
- Mrs. Nazzaro asked where do you advertise.
- Dr. Hopson said both MASS and MASC have a job boards. National search teams advertise in Education Week.
- Mrs. Winer said it is hard to know the vision and depth of knowledge of these candidates.
- Dr. Hopson said those are some of the reasons why you choose a search committee or not. We are a small school district, so you are probably not going to get an experienced superintendent.
- Mrs. Crane said so we can use this timeline as a guide.
- Mrs. McVeigh said we can also discuss this with MARS if we continue meeting with the group.
- Mrs. Nazzaro said the sooner we start the process the better so it doesn't look like we are rushing. You have a new generation of families in district now. This is going to be the biggest change that most families have gone through.
- Mrs. Crane said those of you with young kids really need to be involved. We need to all start thinking about this.
- Dr. Hopson said you have had a business manager who has been here for a long time. His goals for next year are to help us through this process, regional agreement process; policies are up to date and to help move the district forward.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

A. Motion to approve one-year extension Regional Transportation to Lecrenski Bros. Inc.

- Mrs. McVeigh asked what the increase is.
- Ms. Fisk said 1.7 %
- Mrs. Austin asked if there is going to be more than one bidder next time.
- Ms. Fisk doesn't know. Even if you get someone else to bid on it, it is usually sky high.

Mrs. Foley made a motion seconded by Mrs. Balboni to approve a one-year extension on the Regional Transportation to Lecrenski Bros., Inc.

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

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

B. Motion to approve FY' 19 Budget Transfers

Mrs. Otterbeck made a motion seconded by Mrs. Papillon to approve the FY '19 budget transfers.

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

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

C. Motion to approve the April - Safer Schools and Communities Grant

Mrs. Otterbeck made a motion seconded by Mrs. Garfield to approve the Safer Schools and Communities Grant.

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

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

D. The Gateway School Committee accepts Chester's FY '19 gift in the amount of \$17,290 and approves its transfer to defray the assessment amount for the town of Russell.

Mrs. Foley made a motion seconded by Mrs. Nazzaro to accept Chester's FY '19 Gift in the amount of \$17,290 and approve its transfer to defray the assessment amount for the town of Russell.

- Mrs. McVeigh asked if we think this is sufficient language.
- Mr. Crane believes so.

Mr. Forgue arrived.

Mrs. Foley made a motion seconded by Mrs. Nazzaro to accept Chester's FY '19 Gift in the amount of \$17,290 and approve its transfer to defray the assessment amount for the town of Russell.

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

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

7:30 VI. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

A. Waiver Request for Retirement Benefits

- Ms. Fisk said we had two teachers come in and ask to retire after the deadline. One of them admitted they totally forgot about it. One had the retirement board tell them they couldn't retire yet and then said they could. They have both been here a long time and have a lot of sick time.

B. Motion for the school committee to commit to a practice of sharing with the member towns the statutory amounts and the alternative assessment amounts when the budget is approved by the committee and assessment letters are sent to the towns.

- Mrs. Crane said we wanted to cement that this is our actual practice.
- Ms. Fisk said the treasurer sends out letters with the actual assessments. Are we anticipating sending another paper behind it with the statutory figure.
- Mrs. Foley said if one town approves it and another doesn't does it make it the other number.
- Dr. Hopson said it would have to come back to school committee and they would decide another budget.
- Mrs. McVeigh said last year they put the statutory amount on the warrant so they didn't have to have another meeting. They are putting the statutory number on there because it is higher.
- Mike LaFleur said Montgomery is not accepting the alternate assessment. The statutory amount is the lesser amount.
- Dr. Hopson said the statutory amount is \$100,000 and the alternate is \$105,000 so you are amending it by only authorizing the \$100,000. All six towns approved the alternate method.
- Mrs. Papillon said the wording should be what the school sent them. The towns making decisions to change the wording is where the problem is.
- Mike LaFleur said the finance committee is not recommending.

- Mrs. Crane said we worked really hard making an alternate method as a shock absorber over a long-term process. It was miraculous we were able to come up with this.
- Mrs. Page doesn't understand why the town officials aren't the driving source.
- Mrs. Garfield asked Mr. LaFleur what the difference is between the alternate and statutory amount.
- Ms. Fisk said statutory is \$907,000 and the alternate is \$934,000
- Dr. Hopson said the swing is \$36,000 from last year to this year that you can plan. But when you take the savings one year and you don't want to pay the savings the following year. There is nothing to say the swing won't go up another \$20,000 next year. This idea came from town officials, not the school or school committee.
- Ms. Fisk said the nice piece about the discussion last year is each town was going to split the cost of the preschool program.
- Dr. Hopson said both the regional agreement and the budget passed unanimously in Blandford.
- Mrs. McVeigh asked how since K&P just finished their review yesterday. She doesn't even understand what they wanted for changes.
- Dr. Hopson said the finance and select board were both in favor of it. The selling point was if the school committee lawyers and DESE lawyers approved it, they were okay with it.
- Mrs. McVeigh asked what happens if there are major changes.
- Dr. Hopson said Blandford will have to go back and vote again.
- Ms. Fisk said for a town like Middlefield if they have to deal with statutory, they have an 11% increase.
- Mrs. Nazzaro said part of leveling it is so one town isn't pitted against another when families move into the district. We need to attract families. Right now when a town receives a few new families they have a big increase. We want to make all of our communities be family friendly and not get penalized. This is a bigger issue. What are we doing to get new people to move into the communities? It is shortsighted if we don't keep the greater community in mind.

C. Continue Meeting in Facilitated Discussions with MARS

- Mrs. Crane asked if we budgeted for it.
- Ms. Fisk said no, but we didn't for this year either.
- Dr. Hopson said we decided as a group the district would pay 50% and the towns paid the other 50%.
- Dr. Hopson said if you have two towns that aren't willing to come to the meetings do you continue to meet.
- Mike LaFleur said they did vote to appropriate the money for the economic developer. He said Mike Morrissey didn't want to pay for the economic developer, because there was no contract and they weren't getting services. Montgomery is a bedroom community, they have no economic development. Mike said she came out and pretty much said she couldn't do much for them.
- Mrs. Crane said there needs to be a bigger broader discussion.
- Dr. Hopson asked if they have MARS as a line item.
- Mike LaFleur doesn't know, because Dan Jacques just got voted out.

D. Superintendent requests authorization for the District Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer under the provisions of M.G.L., Chapter 71, Section 16 (9), and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Gateway Regional Committee, to incur temporary debt, (borrow from time to time) in anticipation of revenue to be received from and source for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2019. This is for short term borrowing in case assessments are not received on time, etc.

- This is an annual motion

E. Approval of Student Activity Accounts - 2019 (Enc.)

- Mrs. Papillon asked if there is supposed to be one for 2025.
- Ms. Fisk said no and the 2018 will come off next year.

VII. CONSENT ITEMS 4/24/19 (Enc)

Mrs. Foley made a motion seconded by Mrs. Otterbeck to approve the minutes of 4/24/19.

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

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

XIII. COMMUNICATIONS

A. School Committee

- Mrs. Nazzaro put in another plug for school play.

B. Chairperson

- Mrs. Crane reminded everyone to please complete your superintendent's survey. It needs to be done by May 22. There will be a meeting on the 22nd. It will not be a joint budget meeting.
- Dr. Hopson said the senate ways and means doesn't include rural school aide. He guesses the various state associates will move forward with a lawsuit.
- Mrs. McVeigh said the senate shifted more toward education. The budget is closer to the governor's budget and is less.
- Mrs. Crane said the senior awards will be June 5th and graduation is June 7th.

C. Superintendent

Central Office Update (Enc.)

- None

D. Business Manager

- Ms. Fisk said rural school is level funded at 1.5 million. There is a slight bit more in regional transportation, and chapter 70. Rural school aide is \$157,000. If chapter 70 goes up we will decrease assessments.

E. Administration - None

F. Town - None

IX. COMMITTEE REPORTING

A. Superintendent's Evaluation –Next Meeting 6/12/19

B. Legislative Liaison - none

C. Policy Subcommittee - none

D. Building Liaisons - none

X. OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Future Agenda Items

XI. INFORMATION

Information

April School Committee Meeting

Schools to close for spring break

Reminder GRHS is offering ASVAB Exam

Key's Foundation grants 2 defibrillators to Gateway

High school band student earn Bronx medal at MICCA

National Honor Society inducts 13 members

Parents: Don't miss "Screenagers" at Gateway on April 30

Preschool Screening and registration for the fall

Superintendent's Corner April 12, 2019

Gateway staff to be honored by School Committee

Kindergarten and Preschool Screenings reminder

Reminder: "Screenagers" at Gateway on April 30

Wild & Scenic Film Festival at Gateway Regional High School

Big talent for Big Fish

Gateway musicians bring back hardware from 3-day competition trip; Spring Concert Next Week!

Upcoming Softball Senior Night

Students experience life after school

Second Quarter Honor Roll for High School

Gateway Middle School Effort Awards for Term 2

Superintendent's Corner April 26, 2019

School Committee meetings in May

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

Warrant

AP#1076	\$286,872.85	PR#021	\$386,881.16
AP#1077	\$51.37	PR#022	\$355,120.10
AP#1078	\$51.37		
AP#1083	\$133,795.02		

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

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Foley made a motion seconded by Mrs. Page to adjourn at 8:45 p.m.

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

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

**Respectfully Submitted,
Stacy L Stewart,
School Committee Secretary**