

Approved

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 22, 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
Terri Garfield

CHESTER
Jason Forgue
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
Stephanie Fisk, Business & Finance

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

OTHERS: Peter Spotts, Andy Myers, Derrick Mason, Ruth Kennedy, Mike LaFleur

- Mrs. Otterbeck opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

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

III. STUDENT COUNCIL INPUT

- Robert Austin updated the committee on upcoming year end student activities.

IV. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS/RECOGNITION

A. Costa Rica Trip Return Presentation

- Becca Herman, Sarah Camarco and Mrs. Debra Robbins were here to show a video and talk about their trip.
- Becca has never been out of the country. She was a little nervous. The culture is so different than what we are used to. They helped clean up after meals in their host houses. She hopes to chaperone the trip in future years.
- Sarah said it was very eye opening to see how other cultures live. It teaches you to enjoy life and nature. Nature conservation is so important.
- Mrs. Balboni asked how often the trip happens.
- The girls replied every two years.

- Mrs. Robbins learned a whole lot about herself. Their meals were cooked on a wood stove. They got to collect the eggs and burry the eggs of the sea turtles.
- Mrs. Otterbeck asked if they went to the school.
- Becca said yes, only a couple of students were there because it was Easter.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

A. Waiver Request for Retirement Benefits

Mrs. Nazzaro made a motion seconded by Mrs. Page to approve the waiver request for retirement benefits.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 9 Nays Abstain Absent 2 (Roll Call Vote)

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

Absent: Jason, Darlene

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.

- Mr. Myers doesn't think we put out enough information as to why we chose the alternate method.
- Mrs. McVeigh said we did a lot of talking about what we did and why we did it. She has no problem reiterating it on a yearly basis but it is only going to select board and finance.
- Andy Myers said all he is saying is when we first approve it that information got a little ahead of us. Not all of the town officials come.
- Mrs. McVeigh disagrees. Ms. Fisk got all the information out on a timely basis.
- Andy Myers said the numbers were sent, but not the reason why we chose the alternate method. It is a reasonable increase this year. When we go back to statutory it will be different.
- Mrs. Winer agrees with Andy being part of the older population, you need to hear about it every year for a while. She agrees with continuing the practice about the statutory and alternative method.
- Andy Myers wants the reasons why you voted that method when you vote a specific method.
- Mrs. Otterbeck said you want it to be part of the process ongoing.
- Andy Myers said yes.
- Mrs. Nazzaro recognizes that for several reasons it may be enough, between now and next year.
- Mrs. McVeigh said when she goes to these meetings and Montgomery people don't show up or send their town officials it's frustrating.
- Mrs. Nazzaro understands that, but if we are getting frustrated, it is not doing anyone any good.
- Mrs. Garfield said for the most part for the town officials and the people in this room it is fine, but the general town's people gloss over when they see budget numbers. Maybe we need to do a deeper presentation.
- Andy Myers said last year some other people were allowed to speak, but this year Montgomery didn't allow anyone else to speak.
- Ms. Fisk said she gave a quick synopsis at the meeting and it was a done deal before the meeting. We can all agree we can put out more information.
- Mrs. McVeigh is just frustrated with how it was presented at the town of Montgomery on Monday. Their select board just wants to pay the least amount. One official pitted one town per pupil cost against another.
- Derrick Mason said by the time you get to an annual town meeting it is way late in the game. The work has to be done way in advance. At the time the finance and select boards are meeting school committee needs to show up.
- Mrs. Balboni respectfully said that has happened all year long, she has been at meetings and they haven't come yet. At every single one of these meetings we've been doing our part. We are at a point where a couple of towns are not interested in participating.
- Ruth Kennedy has to take issue. She is chairman of finance. Nick is on finance not school committee. Your job is the school and his is the town and then the school committee.

Mrs. McVeigh made a motion seconded by Mrs. Page 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.

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

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

C. Continue Meeting in Facilitated Discussions with MARS

- Mrs. Otterbeck said we discussed at the last meeting continuing with MARS in hope that the district and the towns remain working together with moving the towns and the district forward.
- Ms. Fisk would recommend we table this if we don't have buy in from all towns. We should wait until after tomorrows facilitated discussion meeting.
- Mrs. Papillon has asked about whether it is worth it if all towns are not participating.
- Mrs. Balboni thinks it is a great thing, but if we don't have every town on board does it lose its value.
- Mrs. Winer agrees.
- Ms. Fisk said it has been great for two years.
- Mrs. McVeigh will volunteer to meet with all the towns. She suggests we calculate all the fees without those two towns. She thinks MARS can help this group as well as town officials as we look at options. It will be helpful so everyone can understand fully if there is a restructure of the district. Town officials need to participate early on. Maybe we can send a letter to the Country Journal.
- Mrs. Winer wonders how much it has been published.
- Mrs. McVeigh said there has been no formal letter from the school committee to the media.
- Mr. Welch agrees that sending something to the Country Journal could be helpful.
- Mrs. Otterbeck said we can table this, discuss it tomorrow at MARS and bring it back up at the next school committee meeting.
- Mrs. McVeigh said we will discuss it and then she will meet with the towns.
- Mr. Forgue asked if there was anything budgeted this year.
- Ms. Fisk said no we used rural school aide.

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.

Mrs. McVeigh made a motion seconded by Mrs. Foley to approve the following: 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.

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

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

E. Approval of Student Activity Accounts - 2019

Mrs. Foley made a motion seconded by Mrs. Balboni to approve the student activity accounts.

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

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

7:30 VI. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

A. Motion to participate in the National School Lunch Program

- This is an annual vote.

B. JFABD – Homeless Students– delete line 5 “awaiting foster care placement” per DESE

- Changes are per DESE.

VII. CONSENT ITEMS 5/8/19 (Enc)

Mrs. Foley made a motion seconded by Mrs. Nazzaro to approve the minutes of 5/8/19.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 10 Nays 1 Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

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

Abstain: Jason

XIII. COMMUNICATIONS
A. School Committee

- Mrs. Foley said the senior trip to Florida seems to be going well.

B. Chairperson

Superintendent's Evaluation Survey is due 5/22/19

C. Superintendent

Central Office Update (Enc.)

D. Business Manager

- Ms. Fisk said Blandford and Middlefield passed the alternate method and Montgomery passed the statutory method. Blandford also passed the regional agreement. There is slightly more in transportation. 1.5 million has been added for rural schools in the senate ways and means. It will be rare if we see a budget signed by the Governor by July 1.

E. Administration - None
F. Town

- Mike LaFleur has been looking for information and he found a bunch a letters in his mailbox dated almost a year ago. He hears all of this talk about email. He feels every town official should be on the list.
- Ms. Fisk said that the towns do not notify us when there is a change in town officials
- Mrs. McVeigh suggests having generic emails such as town administrator so it doesn't matter who it is. They do it that way for select board and finance as well.
- Mr. Welch feels we could be a little more proactive. Maybe when we draft something we come up with a way that gets it a little more visibility.
- Mrs. Otterbeck said we will put this on the next agenda for a new business item. How to make a better system for notifying the community and town officials about what is going on. Jane Thielan should contact Stacy Stewart with contact emails.

Regional Agreement –

- Mrs. McVeigh said Huntington sent it out to KP Law who represents four of the six towns. MARS put every one of the changes in the agreement. They were more clarifications. There were sections that were referred to that no longer existed. The one change that did have to be made was when Steve Hemman asked a question on how we determined the assessments for the member towns. It talked about receiving education as member towns' expense. It has been changed to talk about receiving at the districts expense. It now covers voke and outgoing school choice; all of our students. This is a really good agreement. Huntington will still have it on their warrant. We will have them approve the most recent document. She talked to Blandford today. Their select board has voted on the latest red lined version. Now they have a copy with KP laws revisions.
- Middlefield has a special town meeting in June for the regional agreement.
- Ms. Fisk asked if there was a special town meeting if Montgomery.
- Mike LaFleur didn't know when it was.

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

Superintendent's Corner May 3, 2019
 "Screenagers" event at Gateway
 SEPAC sponsors parent workshop on social emotional learning
 "In every head is a world"
 "Grab and Go Breakfast" now at Chester
 Upcoming baseball senior night
 Fall sports sign-ups are now open
 Schools closed for Memorial Day Final Day of School Announced
 Superintendent's Corner May 10, 2019
 Littleville Musical and Art Show May 16

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

Warrant

AP#1085	\$61.42	PR#023	\$384,457.84
AP#1084	\$118,643.46		

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

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

Mrs. Foley made a motion seconded by Mrs. Papillon to adjourn at 8:20 p.m.

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

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

Respectfully Submitted,
 Stacy L Stewart,
 School Committee Secretary