

**GATEWAY REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25, 2017**

**Middle School 112/114**

**7:00 P.M.**

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

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

**I. OPENING OF MEETING**

BLANDFORD  
Michele Crane  
Terri Garfield

CHESTER  
Shirley Winer  
Martha Otterbeck  
Diane Dunn

HUNTINGTON

MIDDLEFIELD  
Sarah Foley

MONTGOMERY  
Madelyn Austin  
Madelyn Aus

RUSSELL  
Tara Balboni  
Lyndsey Papillon

SECRETARY  
Stacy Stewart

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION  
Dr. David B. Hopson, Superintendent  
Stephanie Fisk, Business & Finance

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL  
Jason Finnie, High/Middle Principal  
Wendy, Long, District Grant Writer

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES  
Anna Pless

OTHERS: \_\_\_\_\_

- Mrs. Crane opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.
- Mrs. Austin and the reporter are recording the meeting.

**7:05 p.m. II. PUBLIC INPUT (3 Minute Limit)**

- Mrs. McVeigh asked about the Mars report.
- Mrs. Crane said we will be handing the report out later in the agenda.

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**III. STUDENT COUNCIL INPUT**

- Anna Pless said the semi-formal dance was a fun time. Sixty students attended. The band had a movie night. It was a success. The movie was free and they made money off of concessions. She and Dawson Atkin participated in the Western District Music Festival and auditioned for all-state. She got in. Student Council held flannel Friday. The senior class is preparing cards and flowers to sell for Valentine’s Day. Mid-terms went pretty well even with the snow day. Semester two has started and everyone seems rejuvenated. Blizzard bags are going pretty well. Seniors don’t like them.

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**IV. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS/RECOGNITIONS - None**

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**V. BUDGET**

**A. FY ’18 Budget**

- Ms. Fisk said expenditure side wise things are still holding the same. She is still looking at oil prices and transportation. Open enrollment is coming up. The Cherry sheets said we are held harmless, so Chapter 70 went up about \$20 per student. She needs to look at transportation a little harder. It is based on last year's end of year report. She would love to have 100% but it looks like 70-75% reimbursement. We need to make some revenue decisions regarding Worthington's obligation. We know they owe capital, but we need to look at health and retirement obligations. This probably depends on where we go legally as well. The biggest change we need to look at is two towns have a significant jump in their census. Russell has gone up 2.5% census wise and Huntington 1.4%. That is a big factor when we look at a five-year rolling average. We will start looking at a five year averages once we have revenue.
- Mrs. Crane said that is going to be the issue selling it the first few years.
- Ms. Fisk said she has never seen a jump like this before.
- Mrs. Winer asked if the governor gave us anything to be hopeful for in terms of rural schools.
- Ms. Fisk said they have not even tackled it. When you are a hold harmless school it doesn't really help you. You get your \$20 per student and that is it. Minimum contribution has gone down quite a bit. In the past few years they have changed the minimum at the last minute. MARS has been pushing for that to stop. It's unfair to regional school districts.
- Mrs. Austin asked what kind of bus we bought for \$1,500.
- Ms. Fisk said it is an 8 passenger van. It was on a government bid. She is in the process of bidding on another one. The idea is to bus students to work study as well as some of special education runs.
- Mrs. McVeigh said the minimum contribution for FY 18 compared to FY17 is about \$240,000 less. It would then roll down into the next category. If you are like Russell and you have an increase you are going to get 2.5% of that.
- Mrs. Papillon said Mrs. Coburn talked about the severe special needs students coming into the district.
- Ms. Fisk said right now we are contracting out with the services we currently use. We are posting for a paraprofessional with Braille services. We are getting almost all of the equipment Chicopee used.
- Mr. Finnie said Chicopee has been very generous.
- Ms. Fisk said Mr. Garivaltis is looking at full-time staff instead of contracting out.

#### 7:45 VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS/ACTION ITEM

##### A. Field Trips – 2<sup>nd</sup> Half of the Year

8<sup>th</sup> Grade trip to Philadelphia, PA and Washington, DC 4/11-13/17

5<sup>th</sup> Grade overnight to Becket-Chimney Corners 4/27-28/17

*Mrs. Otterbeck made a motion seconded by Mrs. Foley to approve both field trips.*

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

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Lyndsey, Martha, Shirley, Michele

##### B. School Committee Goals

- Mrs. Crane said the goals were put in packet as a pdf. Mrs. Crane will update them hopefully for the next meeting. She wanted to show everyone how we translated them.

#### 8:00 - VII. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

8:30 p.m.

##### A. FY '17 Budget Transfers (Enc.)

- Ms. Fisk said the majority of these are from finishing secretary negotiations. District ELL is the additional teacher we added. We originally put in only hours. Chester therapeutic services the case load was reviewed and we don't need an addition. Special education transportation decreased. The van, the library. In house field trips. School choice charter has increased. It will increase as we go. It will be a couple hundred thousand. We went from 2 to 6. We will see how that goes.
- Mrs. Austin asked do we get reimbursed. They said we were going to get 60,000 and I think we go 13,000.
- Mrs. Otterbeck asked when we get the final charter figures.
- Ms. Fisk said in December and then again in June. Tuition for Pioneer Valley Performing Arts is \$12,000 and Paulo Frere is \$14,000.
- Mrs. Foley asked if the school choice survey is done yearly.
- Mrs. Long said we do it yearly for people who choice to public schools. We never really gleamed anything useful out of charter or parochial schools.

**B. MARS Report**

- MARS reports were handed out for school committee. One was given to Mrs. McVeigh and three more are in central office for GTAC members.
- MARS will be here to give a presentation at the next meeting.

**VIII. CONSENT ITEMS** 12/11/17 (Enc.)

*Mrs. Otterbeck made a motion seconded by Mrs. Foley to approve the minutes of 12/11/16.*

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

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Lyndsey, Martha, Shirley, Michele

**IX. COMMUNICATIONS**

**A. School Committee** - None

**B. Chairperson** - None

**C. Superintendent** - None

Central Office Update (Enc.)

**D. Business Manager**

2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Report (Enc.)

**E. Administration**

- Mr. Finnie congratulated Anna Pless. He said that despite senior resentment the high school had an 85% completion rate and the middle school had an 83% completion rate for blizzard bags. For the high school 7% were considered absent and the middle school had 10% considered absent. He will be sending a Q and A with the report cards next week.
- Mrs. Crane said this week's seemed more organized.
- Mrs. Winer asked how you check the quality of the work.
- Jason said it is based on the teacher and the rubric.
- Mrs. Austin said they went over it in her son's class and he was really happy about it.
- Mrs. Balboni said it is like homework.
- Mrs. Crane said the process is going well for her children.
- Mrs. Balboni said two of her children had hands on lab type projects.
- Mrs. Long said her last questions regarding blizzard bags were why wasn't the half day of school a blizzard bag day and what is the last day of school. Her response was it was an exam day. She said Dr. Hopson addressed these it in this week's superintendent's corner.

**X. COMMITTEE REPORTING**

**A. Superintendent's Evaluation**

- The subcommittee is preparing questions for the February meeting.

**B. Legislative Liaison**

- Mrs. Papillon said there is not much to report right now. She is waiting on the confirmation with the changing of the guard to see what happens.

**C. Policy Subcommittee**

- They looked at bussing, student activities guide for money raising, quite a few policies and guide for the first meeting. Not super big changes. You will be able to see what the changes are.

**D. Building Liaisons**

- Mrs. Crane said she and Mr. Wyand met with met with building facilities. All is going well. The well is working well. They have been replacing light bulbs with LED lights to save kilowatts. They are talking about replacing some tile flooring with the epoxy flooring, just like in the cafeteria and middle school hallways. They will be sprucing up the courtyard as well. Mr. Hartley is going to take on that project. You will see it as a recommendation in the MARS report as well.

**XI. OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA**

**Future Agenda Items**

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**XII. INFORMATION**
**Information**

Free movie night at Gateway Regional School District  
 Holiday, two half-days coming up for Gateway  
 Gateway 8<sup>th</sup> graders selected for NAEP exam  
 Superintendent's Corner January 9, 2017  
 Reminder: Celtics tickets still on sale!  
 Nutritionist now available at Gateway SBHC  
 Superintendent's Corner January 16, 2017  
 Education Foundation January board meeting

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**Warrant**

AP#1050 \$59.24

PR# 15 \$351,680.67

AP#1051 \$246,268.25

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


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**XIX. ADJOURNMENT***Mrs. Otterbeck made a motion seconded by Mrs. Foley motion to adjourn 7:41 p.m.*

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

Yeas: Madelyn, Tara, Diane, Sarah, Terri, Lyndsey, Martha, Shirley, Michele

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Respectfully Submitted,  
 Stacy L Stewart  
 School Committee Secretary