

GATEWAY REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2013

**Chester Elementary School
7:30 P.M.**

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

I. OPENING OF MEETING

BLANDFORD
Michele Crane
Jim Kronholm

CHESTER
Scott Warner
Shirley Winer
Martha Otterbeck

HUNTINGTON
Ron Damon
William Hathaway
Jeff Wyand

MIDDLEFIELD
Sarah Foley

MONTGOMERY
Anne Marie Buikus

RUSSELL
Ruth Kennedy

WORTHINGTON
Sue Levreault
Gretchen Eliason

SECRETARY
Stacy Stewart

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

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL
Joanne Blocker, Director of Academics
Megan Coburn, Chs, Lit, MS Principal
Wendy Long, District Grant Writer

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

OTHERS: _____

7:35 p.m. II. PUBLIC INPUT FOR ITEMS NOT LISTED ON AGENDA - None

III. STUDENT COUNCIL INPUT

- Lizzy Bean spoke about Spirit Days: October 18 is Pink day, October 30 is spooky day clothes have to be purple, orange or black, and Red white or blue day for November 8. The food drive starts November 15 and runs for two weeks. November 20 is double point day for bringing in a food item. It gets kids involved in the community. The student store will be opening and following the new Healthy Schools guidelines.

IV. CONSENT ITEMS 10/9/13 (Enc.)

Mr. Damon made a motion seconded by Mrs. Levreault to accept the minutes of 10/9/13.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 11 Nays abstain 2 Absent

V. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS/RECOGNITIONS

A. Technology Update

- PowerPoint by Dr. Hopson
- Mrs. Winer asked what it means since we have lost our director.
- Dr. Hopson said there is no one waiting in line, he and Ms. Fisk are making sure things are moving ahead. Their biggest problem is e-rate.
- Mrs. Winer asked, why we aren't looking for one.

- Dr. Hopson said he wants to wrap his head around what needs to be done, and if he can avoid paying that salary for a few months, he'd like to do so.
- Mrs. Eliason said we talked about technical problems with map testing. Did we get it straightened out or was it our bandwidth.
- Dr. Hopson said we believe it was them because of the emails from NWEa, but at this point we are still having a few issues at Littleville with the Go Math program. He is going to have Mr. Zinnack take a look at things to see if maybe there is an issue at Littleville. The state is having schools do speed testing to see the speed of the internet in each building.
- Mrs. Levreault asked if it was going to be a problem with the PARCC test since it is internet-based and timed.
- Dr. Hopson said it is online, but it is not timed. Junior high has been chosen to take a PARCC pilot test.
- Mrs. Foley asked if we volunteered or if we were randomly chosen.
- Dr. Hopson said schools were randomly chosen. Our kids are going to the PARCC test and the MCAS

B. MCAS Update

Gateway Student Assessments – PowerPoint given by Dave.

- Mrs. Kennedy asked why they are focusing so much on MCAS if we are going to change to PARCC.
- Dr. Hopson said the same growth model is going to be used for PARCC as it is for MCAS. We made more growth in Math than we did in ELA this year.
- Mrs. Foley said isn't it a trend that most schools are not so good at open response and they do better with multiple choice.
- Dr. Hopson said yes and it is a trend they do better in ELA then they do in Math.
- Mrs. Kennedy said there is no room for individual improvement. They are only comparing us to other schools and the state.
- Dr. Hopson said they do try to account for different backgrounds.
- Mrs. Winer asked do you use it to rank school, or students (PPI)
- Dr. Hopson said they do use it to rank students in the 10th grade. If you don't have that passing score you don't receive a diploma. A lot of our John and Abigail Adams recipients don't go to public schools.
- Mrs. Foley asked if the state compares male to female.
- Dr. Hopson said the state does have them and will give them to you if you want them.

Littleville and Chester Update – PowerPoint – Mrs. Coburn

- Chester and Littleville are combined. Those students who had a solid background in Math excelled after using the Go Math program. Those who didn't have a solid back ground didn't do as well. We need to look at using it a different way for those students.
- Mrs. Eliason asked if when we have classes like that, do look into support for the teacher.
- Mrs. Coburn said last year the teacher was out for part of the year, but also the class had some students with behavioral issues. Sometimes, you just have an immature class. It depends from year to year.
- Mrs. Otterbeck asked if Chester had Go Math.
- Mrs. Coburn said Chester's first and third grade had Go Math last year.
- Mrs. Foley said the MCAS long composition is more of a personal narrative/imaginative and MCAS and PARCC is more non-fiction.
- Mrs. Coburn said yes that is correct. However PARCC can be anything they want to come up with.

VI. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Student Representative

- John Wyand said the high school has a shortened day tomorrow for the Ed Webster presentation.

B. School Committee

- Mrs. Crane heard very exciting things about Mt. Everest and Ed Webster.
- Mrs. Coburn said he kept emphasizing the need to set goals. If you are accomplishing your goals easily they are too easy.
- Mrs. Kennedy received a phone call from Darlene McVeigh asking her read a letter she wrote about her disappointment in her Huntington School Committee members and the school committee as a whole in the budget process.
- Mrs. Kennedy said her daughter has some concerns about the Appalachian Mountain Club field trip. She didn't want to fill a form out that came from the AMC because it asks for private health information. This form has been used for three years. It asks for insurance information, last visit to emergency room, etc. Mrs. Kennedy has some real concerns since she has had her identity stolen. She showed the committee the

HIPPA laws. She feels that whether this is legal or not the school committee needs to change the policy to not go on field trips that require medical information be given to the organization.

- Dr. Hopson said this is only preliminary legal information, but Adam from Dupere Law Offices thinks we should fill it out but it is not mandatory. It doesn't violate HIPPA. Dr. Hopson also asked Linda Dugas and she felt it was okay. He understands where Ruth is coming from.
- Mrs. Foley asked if they required the form before the child attends the field trip.
- Mrs. Kennedy said yes and the trip was held up.
- Mrs. Foley asked if the nurse is required go on field trips.
- Dr. Hopson said yes, when there is a medical need.
- Mrs. Eliason said her daughter went on the field trip and she felt uncomfortable filling the form out. Sometimes forms aren't well designed. She understands where Mrs. Kennedy is coming from. It would be a good item for the policy committee to take up. The concern is that we don't know how the AMC is handling this information.
- Mrs. Kennedy said Dr. Hopson said school committee votes on this stuff all the time. Never in her dreams did she know there were forms like this. This is just something that came up. There is not blame on anyone.
- Mrs. Levreault asked if there was a liability form. The chimney corners requires one be fill one out.
- Mrs. Coburn said a lot of field trips cost a lot of money and we can't do that many fundraisers. It is nice to access local resources and we can afford to go. This is a great trip.
- Mrs. Eliason said the problem is the form and not that it is a bad trip. It is just a way to say that the school keeps medical information.
- Mrs. Coburn said their headquarters were not comfortable with letting a student go without the form.
- Dr. Hopson said we need to look at this and see how many field trips this will affect.
- Mrs. Kennedy said once we clarify things it will protect the students.
- Mrs. Eliason said hopefully this will make it easier for the administration.
- Mrs. Otterbeck said this seems to be the exception rather than the rule. Maybe there is a school form we could provide instead.
- Mrs. Buikus asked isn't a school permission slip filled out.
- Dr. Hopson said that is the way it is handled for 99% of the field trips. Until the policy committee takes this up we are just going around and around.
- Mrs. Foley said it is a good idea to look at it. Assuming this trip isn't going to happen for another year, this is our issue to work with them because we would like to continue to go.
- Mrs. Kennedy said we are not talking in circles and thanked every for their input.

C. Chairperson

- Having everyone attend Charting the course is one of our goals for new members in the first year and veteran members every 8 years. She hopes anyone who needs this will attend.

D. Superintendent – Central Office Update (Enc.)

- As soon as they vote on their changes for supervision and evaluation we will begin it.
- October 31 at 2:00 p.m. is the first scheduled negotiations meeting.

E. Business Manager - None

F. Administration

- Mrs. Blocker said October 15 was a great day of professional development. She thanked technology, custodial staff, and café staff for all their extra help.
- Mrs. Long said the Ed Webster community presentation is tomorrow at 7:00 p.m. It is a fascinating story. It is also a fundraiser for the foundation.

VII. AD HOC COMMITTEE REPORTING

A. Superintendent's Evaluation Subcommittee

- No meeting tonight. At next school committee meeting they will do a presentation regarding the superintendent's evaluation survey.

B. Finance Subcommittee

- Talked about what to do if the three towns don't vote the budget in. Talked about implementing instructional time. Ms. Fisk will help walk them through the budget. Mrs. Kennedy wants to ensure everyone has a copy of the budget primer.
- Pandora Hague agrees with Darlene McVeigh's letter. She thinks it is very poor that version 5.0 didn't go to the finance subcommittee before the full committee. As one of the towns that has not approved the budget, they are looking for the finance subcommittee to make changes. They subcommittee should be asking for all the administrators salaries and benefits packages, etc. Finance should look at this and compare it to other school systems. We are not paying enough for teachers. Why are students choosing voke and choicing out. Whathat can we offer to keep the students in our schools. We could work together.
- Mrs. Eliason said they presented the benchmark study. They were looking at per pupil administrative and instructional leadership costs. Instruction leadership costs were higher and per pupil costs were a little high. Some of it may be the recording. The other part they'd like to look at. They did ask for budget information but only got two responses. They are interested in going back to that so they should try harder. The committee appreciates how much time Pandora has spent at our meetings.
- Mrs. Winer said Ms. Fisk has a lot of information on other schools from working on budget.

C. Policy Subcommittee

- Has not met recently but will try and set up a meeting date.

D. School Committee Goals Subcommittee

- Student Performance Goals
- Need to pick one of two dates: October 30 in morning or November 13 at 5:30 before subcommittee meeting. Dave will send out a survey.
- Jim would like to discuss school committee goals again under old business for the next meeting.
 - Student Performance Goals

VIII. OLD BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

A. FY '14 Budget (Version 5.0) Update

- The three towns that have voted down the budget will be voting on the following dates: Chester November 12, Worthington November 19, and Russell November 14.

B. Supervision/Evaluation Update – None

Mrs. Eliason asked for an executive session:

Mrs. Kennedy made a motion seconded by Mrs. Buikus to go into executive session at or before 9:30 p.m. for the purpose of reviewing and approving prior executive session minutes and investigation into criminal wrongdoing not to return to open session.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 13 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Bill, Ron, Jeff, Sue, Scott, Shirley, Ruth, Anne-Marie, Martha, Michele, Sarah, Jim, Gretchen

IX. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS - None

X. OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Future Agenda Items

High School Update – November 13

Auditor's Report – November 13

XI. INFORMATION

Information

19th Annual Search Under Way for Nation's Top Youth Volunteers
Superintendent's Corner October 7, 2013

“Not your grandmother’s grilled cheese...”

Laptop, iPad leases at Gateway

Gateway Open House 10/10

Paradis-Burnett earns National Merit® Commendation

Gateway sails toward ‘perfect storm’

Eighteen Gateway Seniors qualify for Adams Scholarship

Gateway HS Sports ‘Senior Nights’

Area businesses help bring Ed Webster to Gateway

Superintendent’s Corner October 9, 2013

Warrants

AP# 1031 \$292,057.72

PR# 08 \$366,543.95

AP# 1032 \$11.58

9:00-10 p.m. XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION or earlier

Mrs. Kennedy made a motion seconded by Mrs. Buikus to go into executive session at or before 9:30 p.m. for the purpose of reviewing and approveing prior executive session minutes and investigation into criminal wrongdoing not to return to open session.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 13 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Bill, Ron, Jeff, Sue, Scott, Shirley, Ruth, Anne-Marie, Martha, Michele, Sarah, Jim, Gretchen

3/13/13 Minutes (Enc.)

XIII. ADJOURNMENT at 10 p.m. unless extended by majority vote.

Respectfully Submitted,
Stacy L. Stewart
School Committee Secretary