

GATEWAY REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The Gateway Regional School District will provide an exemplary education that challenges all students in an instructional setting appropriate to their needs.

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

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13, 2022

Middle School 112/114

7:00 P.M.

7:00PM I. OPENING OF MEETING

Call to order: Sarah Page, Chairperson at 7:10 p.m.

BLANDFORD

Terri Garfield

CHESTER

Jason Forgue

HUNTINGTON

Pegg Dragon
Edward Renauld

MIDDLEFIELD

MONTGOMERY

Michael Lafleur
Michael Morrissey

RUSSELL

Tara Balboni
Sarah Page

SECRETARY

Stacy Stewart

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

Kristen Smidy, Superintendent
Stephanie Fisk, Business & Finance

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

Kurt Garivaltis, Pupil Services Director
Deanna LeBlanc, Curriculum Director
Darlene Rehor, Elementary Assistant

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Joseph Pisani

OTHERS: Ruth Kennedy, Jackie Sugru

7:05PM III. PUBLIC INPUT

(Guests attending the meeting may address the committee on topics not on the agenda. There is a three minute time limit per guest)

- Ruth Kennedy thanked us for the poster for the senior citizen brunch and setting it up.

7:10PM IV. STUDENT COUNCIL INPUT

- Joseph Pisani said there is one more day of spirit week. They had Adam Sandler day, country vs country club day, favorite holiday colors, and dress like a tourist day tomorrow. Prom coming up on May 20. The high school play is Clue on May 6, 7. They are super excited to be in the auditorium again. Baseball and softball games have been going on although he cannot tell us what happened. Spring fling and awards ceremony is coming up soon. Student council is planning it. It will be similar to prior to the pandemic. They will have volleyball, bean bag games, etc. They want it to be a relaxing day too. Best buddies had their prom and their 5K is coming up on May 6. The summer program is coming up. Middle school is doing a drive for the rainbow animal shelter. There will be a PBIS celebration tomorrow for ms and hs.

7:15PM II. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS/RECOGNITIONS - None

7:20PM V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

A. Superintendent's Entry Plan Findings

- Ms. Page said we had it in packets last time. It is written very well and she wants to make sure Mrs. Smidy gets the credit for all her hard work.
- Ms. Dragon asked how many are in ELL.
- Mr. Garivaltis said 24 students total. They span many grades. 60% are at the elementary and 40% are at the secondary level. They are primarily Ukrainian, Russian and Spanish.
- Mrs. Smidy said there are regulations on how many hours they receive depending on how proficient in English they are. We have two teachers who support them.
- Ms. Page said this document is what you can use for your superintendent evaluation.
- Ruth Kennedy asked if the towns were going to be involved as they have been in the past.
- Ms. Page said we can provide the towns with evidence and data.
- Ms. Dragon said page six says that teachers pronounced names incorrectly.
- Mr. Garivaltis said there are names that are not common. We need to take the time to learn them. Students and parents are patient.

B. Approval of Policy D

Mrs. Balboni made a motion seconded by Mrs. Garfield to approve the changes to Policy D.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 8 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Tara, Pegg, Jason, Terri, Mike L., Mike M., Ed, Sarah

C. Update re: Representative for Negotiations from Towns

- Mrs. Smidy said because only one was sent forward, we do not have to vote. If towns are opposed they should notify her by April 1, 2022. She will reach out one more time.

7:35PM VI. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

A. Final Regional Agreement Approval

- Ms. Page said there was feedback from the state. There are two changes.
- Mrs. Smidy said they led us astray. Section V Budget (B) Public Budget Hearing and Budget Approval, their mistake, it should say after conducting a public hearing consistent with MGL Chapter 71, Section 38N, as amended, the Committee, by a minimum two-thirds (2/3) weighted vote, shall annually approve an operating budget for the next fiscal year to maintain and operate the District. Also one clarification on Section VI (2) Alternative Assessment Method, the old says the district may exercise the option but it should say the committee may exercise the option.
- Ruth Kennedy asked about page 3 lease section B 2 In the future the district must lease - member towns have to agree.
- Mr. Morrissey said the towns should have the right to negotiate - the towns need to agree in order to negotiate.
- Ms. Page said the only two changes from last week are the two DESE mistakes.

Mrs. Balboni made a motion seconded by Ms. Dragon to approve the two DESE changes to the Final Regional Agreement.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 8 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Tara, Pegg, Jason, Terri, Mike L., Mike M., Ed, Sarah

- Ruth Kennedy said in terms of the school committee vacancy, it is up to the school committee member to notify the clerk and the selectboard and that is not the way it is in the agreement.
- Mrs. Smidy said yes, it is the town clerk and selectboard, however DESE said that would work under their language. If we found out first we would notify the person and prompt them to notify the clerk and the selectboard.

B. Recommendation to Participate in School Choice for the FY '23 School Year

- Ms. Page feels we should waive the two-meeting rule in order to welcome students from other districts at any time.

Mr. Morrissey made a motion seconded by Ms. Dragon to waive the two-meeting rule to vote on Accepting School Choice for the FY '23 School year.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 8 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Tara, Pegg, Jason, Terri, Mike L., Mike M., Ed, Sarah

Mr. Morrissey made a motion seconded by Ms. Dragon to approve School Choice for the FY '23 School Year.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 8 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Tara, Pegg, Jason, Terri, Mike L., Mike M., Ed, Sarah

- Mr. Morrissey asked where they came from.
- Ms. Fisk said Easthampton, Westfield, Worthington, Southwick, Granville, Otis, Belchertown, Becket, Pittsfield.
- Mrs. Garfield asked how it balances out with outgoing.
- Ms. Fisk said 87 are going out and 51 are coming in. It is getting closer.

C. Approval of FY '23 Student Activities Accounts (Enc.)

- Ms. Fisk said it is just a list of the accounts and what they are used for. The audit recommendation is for us to approve them.

Mr. Morrissey made a motion seconded by Ms. Dragon to approve the FY '23 Student Activity accounts.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 8 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Tara, Pegg, Jason, Terri, Mike L., Mike M., Ed, Sarah

- 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 Regional School 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, 2022. This is for short term borrowing in case assessments are not received on time, etc.**

Ms. Dragon made a motion seconded by Mr. Morrissey 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 Regional School 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, 2022. This is for short term borrowing in case assessments are not received on time, etc.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 8 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Tara, Pegg, Jason, Terri, Mike L., Mike M., Ed, Sarah

E. Recommendation to Participate in the National School Lunch Program.

Mr. Morrissey made a motion seconded by Mrs. Garfield to approve participation in the National School Lunch Program.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 8 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Tara, Pegg, Jason, Terri, Mike L., Mike M., Ed, Sarah

F. Approval of the Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) Grant in the sum of \$99,820 form the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for the purchase of Chromebooks (Enc)

Mr. Forgue made a motion seconded by Mrs. Garfield to waive the two-meeting rule to vote on the Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) Grant in the sum of \$99,820 form the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for the purchase of Chromebooks.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 8 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Tara, Pegg, Jason, Terri, Mike L., Mike M., Ed, Sarah

Mr. Forgue made a motion seconded by Mrs. Garfield to approve the Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) Grant in the sum of \$99,820 form the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for the purchase of Chromebooks.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 8 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Tara, Pegg, Jason, Terri, Mike L., Mike M., Ed, Sarah

G. Approval of MOU with Westfield State University

- Ms. Smidy said this would be a relocation site if needed. There are district sites listed as well. She feels if we need to do a fast relocation, we need to go off site with a good traffic pattern. A centralized place like Westfield state is a good location for that. The safety preparedness director will do some table tops upon approval of the MOU.

- Move to old business for a vote at the next meeting.

H. Approval of Last Day of School as June 14, 2022

- Mrs. Smidy said we need to approve the last day of school. They are both half days.
- Ms. Page asked to waive the two-meeting rule.

Mrs. Balboni made a motion seconded by Ms. Dragon to waive the two-meeting rule to vote on the last day of school.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 8 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Tara, Pegg, Jason, Terri, Mike L., Mike M., Ed, Sarah

Mr. Forgue made a motion seconded by Mrs. Balboni to approve the last day of school as June 14, 2022.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 8 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Tara, Pegg, Jason, Terri, Mike L., Mike M., Ed, Sarah

I. Superintendent Evaluation Process

8:05PM VIII. CONSENT ITEMS 3/15/2022 (Enc.)

8:10PM IX. COMMUNICATIONS

A. School Committee

- Mrs. Garfield is looking for the name of a student who is interested in boys' state. She was approached by someone because of an opening. It's a leadership opportunity for students in the junior year. It is being sponsored by the American Legion.

B. Chairperson

- Ms. Page said that Mr. Lubbers has resigned. We do need two jobs filled: warrant signer which requires every other week throughout the year and every week in May. Ed Renauld volunteered. Also the CES spot. He was on their policy and finance subcommittees.

C. Superintendent

Central Office Update (Enc.)

- Mrs. Smidy said the update was included in the packet. We are offering a summer program Prek-12 this year. Everything is free. We are using ESSER money so it's not going to be free forever. We have also applied for grants. With regards to her entry plan she spoke to teachers and students about the transition from grade five to grade 6, She is being thoughtful about grade 6 being in the middle school and some of the needs

they have so it will be framed as a 6th grade academy. We are looking at the curriculum in hopes to link it with 7th and 8th. They will be held by a homeroom teacher and able to group with other students throughout the day.

- Ms. Dragon thought it was well done. She asked who will be the principal in charge.
- Mrs. Smidy said the middle/high school principal. They will be able to participate in after school activities, but not in high school sports.

D. Assistant Superintendent

- Ms. Fisk said the house ways and means released their budget. It is different from the governor's budget and free lunch is still there. Rural school aid minimum per pupil is \$60 and not \$30 so that \$23,000 more. It would automatically reduce assessments to the towns.

E. Administration

- Mr. Garivaltis said Mrs. Smidy has talked about the enthusiasm for the summer program and also about the possibility of creating a visually impaired specialty program. We are making progress and discussing rates. A meeting was hosted for advertising. We would tuition students in.
- Mrs. LeBlanc said the ELA curriculum selection committee has been weeding through curriculum choices. They are in the process of voting right now.
- Mrs. Smidy said the state is paying for that.
- Mrs. Rehor held the annual Title I night. They had so many people, they were running around looking for extra tables. They played bingo, had pizza and the bookfair raised \$2,000. It is nice to have everyone back enjoying a night together.

F. Town Officials - None

8:20PM X. COMMITTEE REPORTING

- A. **Superintendent's Evaluation** - Next meeting
- B. **Legislative Liaison** - None
- C. **Policy Subcommittee** - will set up their next meeting tonight.
- D. **Building Liaisons** - none
- E. **CES Update** - none

8:30PM XI. OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

8:35PM XII. INFORMATION **Information**

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

Warrant

AP#1068 \$219,634.19

PR#019 \$400,610.08

PR#19.1 \$109.83

8:40PM XII. ADJOURNMENT at 9 p.m. unless extended by majority vote.

Mrs. Balboni made a motion seconded by Mrs. Garfield to adjourn at 8:10 p.m.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 8 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Tara, Pegg, Jason, Terri, Mike L., Mike M., Ed, Sarah

Respectfully submitted,
Stacy L Stewart,
School Committee Secretary