

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, June 8, 2022

Middle School Room 112/114

7:00 P.M.

7:00 PM I. OPENING OF MEETING

Call to order: Sarah Page, Chairperson

BLANDFORD

Terri Garfield
Keri Morawiec

CHESTER

Jeana Briggs
Jason Forgue

HUNTINGTON

Pegg Dragon

MIDDLEFIELD

MONTGOMERY

Michael Lafleur

RUSSELL

Sarah Page
Lyndsey Papillon

SECRETARY

Stacy Stewart

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

Kristen Smidy, Superintendent
Stephanie Fisk, Assistant Superintendent

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

Jason Finnie, Middle/High Principal
Kurt Garivaltis, Pupil Services Director
Deanna LeBlanc, Curriculum Director

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Joseph Pisani

OTHERS: Lisa Goding

7:05 PM II. 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)

7:10 PM III. STUDENT COUNCIL INPUT

- Joey Pisani said the high school started end of year testing, they had fun and relaxed after. National Honor Society induction students worked their butts off. The High School Prom was great and the venue was beautiful. Riley Heater and Olivia Dame were the royalty. Spring fling was a fun end of year event with games and snow cones. He gave a shout out to spring sports. Varsity softball had an incredible season. They made it to

the second round of states. Awards ceremony went really well. It was nice he had a great time cheering for everyone. Valedictorian was Chloe Govoni, Salutatorian Nicole Hannigan. Graduation went super well. Ms. Wright gave a really great commencement speech. Gateway Regional had a special night at the starfires game. It went really well. We won a gold medal at the Great East Music Festival.

- Littleville is having a step up day soon. Chester had their step up already. Littleville's field day is coming up and Chester just had their field day. Littleville - spirit week they are teaching the young - shades, team jersey, dress best, tie dye, field day wear their grade color. Ms. Dostal always puts together a great field day. The day will end with a magic show.
- He said there is a new association MASR, represented by MASC. He was one of 10 student representatives who are part of the founding group. They were recognized by MASC at a May 14 conference. It was at Essex Technical School. They talked about the student voice and how important it is. He was one of 3 people from western mass. Pittsfield and Lee were the other two. The Worcester representative represents 24,000 students. There are differences but some similarities. At the end of the day they need teachers, students, superintendents, nurses etc. Rural and regional schools need to be considered more and need more representation. They are creating a delegates assembly to push for supporting 100% transportation reimbursement.
- He is truly amazed by this school district. Gateway is more of a community. It has not been an easy past few years. The resilience, strength and teamwork, from preschool to graduation. Teachers, you don't find it the way we have it here. Teachers know my name, which you don't find in a school of 24,000. Students have become united in high school from pizza toppings to getting through a tough few years.

7:15 PM IV. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS/RECOGNITIONS

- Ms. Smidy recognized staff who have worked here for over 30 years. Cheryl miller harper has been here over 40 years.

7:20 PM V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

A. Superintendent's Evaluation-Discussion and Vote

- This was compiled by Sarah over the past month. The part that gets sent to DESE is just the rubric part. Goals were from the google form because it really looked nice.
- It shows what a great job Mrs. Smidy did this year.

Mrs. Papillon made a motion seconded by Mrs. Morawiec to approve the FY '22 Superintendent's Evaluation Summary.

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

Yeas: Jeana, Pegg, Jason, Terri, Mike L., Keri, Lyndsey, Sara

B. Approval of 4th Quarter Budget Transfers

- Ms. Fisk said most deal with substitutes. There was a reduction in transportation and in school choice.

Mr. Forgue made a motion seconded by Terri to approve the FY '22 4th Quarter Budget Transfers.

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

Yeas: Jeana, Pegg, Jason, Terri, Mike L., Keri, Lyndsey, Sara

C. Approval of (In anticipation - Pre-Approval of Skills Capital Grant - \$374,471)

- Mrs. Smidy said this was awarded to our vocational programs to update equipment for \$374,471. An announcement will be made this summer and she would like to get spending this summer.
- Ms. Dragon asked about the matching fund.
- Mrs. Smidy said Paul Atkinson will get Air Gas and Advanced Manufacturing Company to help with the match of \$10,000. It is in addition to the updated equipment we need to replace.

Mr. Forgue made a motion seconded by Mrs. Morawiec to accept the Skills Capital Grant of \$374,471.

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

Yeas: Jeana, Pegg, Jason, Terri, Mike L., Keri, Lyndsey, Sara

D. Approval of Development & Expansion of High Quality Summer Learning Grant - \$100,000

- Mrs. Smidy said we received this grant already and are spending it on the summer program and we have over 300 kids signed up.
- Ms. Dragon asked what grades it covers.
- Mrs. Smidy said Prek -10. We have hired 11 and 12 grade students to work the program.

Mrs. Morawiec made a motion seconded by Mr. Forgue to approve the Development & Expansion of High Quality Summer Learning Grant.

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

Yeas: Jeana, Pegg, Jason, Terri, Mike L., Keri, Lyndsey, Sara

7:35 PM VI. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEM

A. Policy AC and ACAB-Discussion and possible vote

- Policy AC harassment
- ACAB is the sexual harassment
- Recommendation by MASC
- Mrs. Dragon said it became an issue for her after the policy meeting. She sees it as a list of many categories of exemptions. She feels we should not exclude anyone at all. There are other people who are not on this list. It is not part of a protected class. She wants all people to be represented. Instead of granting privileges to perceived groups we need an open environment to make mistakes, and challenge and discuss, explore the differences. She doesn't care why you are being bullied, you shouldn't be. There

are many being bullied. There shouldn't be discrimination against anybody. We need to look at the whole reason and talk about them. We should be working as one, not your this or that there is us. We are all one.

- Mrs. Smidy said making sure that we are protecting everyone could be under vision, and philosophy. These are recognized groups under civil rights. We can grasp what she is saying under other policies.
- Ms. Page thinks of the categories as a protection and not a privilege. She hears Ms. Dragon she is coming from but as a person who has been treated unfairly in life, having someone having my back feels extra important.
- Mrs. Garfield agrees what should be quality for every human being but our society is not there yet.
- Mr. Forgue said as a father of two who have been bullied, possibly a third, but the third doesn't care. They have been protected by these policies. Movement has been made. He thinks they are still protected even though they're not in any of those classes. The bullying policy addresses them

B. Student civics projects - Discussion and possible vote

- The 8th graders and seniors are advocating for change for the better of the community. A number of them made an appointment with her and Mr. Finnie. Mrs. Balboni met with them too. Additional counseling services and a cool down space. 7 period schedule - more opportunities to take elective courses. Student support for students of color, PSAT prep, home economics course, playground, etc.
- Mrs. LeBlance said they take a full civics course in 8th, and encode a project in high school at the end of US History 2.
- Ms. Page said her student really enjoys it.

7:40 PM VII. CONSENT ITEMS 5/11/2022 Minutes (Enc.)

Mrs. Morawiec made a motion seconded by Mrs. Papillon to approve the minutes of 5/11/2022.

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

Yeas: Jeana, Pegg, Jason, Terri, Mike L., Keri, Lyndsey, Sara

7:45 PM VIII. COMMUNICATIONS

A. School Committee

- Mrs. Briggs thanked everyone as she had completed her first year!
- Ms. Page said August is the reorganization meeting.
- Mr. Forgue said there are 3 boys going to Boys State. They will miss the last days of school
- Mrs. LeBlanc said there are 2 going to Girls State.
- Mrs. Papillon said the Middle School Band and Chorus performance last night was amazing.

B. Chairperson

Ms. Page said graduation was amazing. It feels so personal and emotional even though she doesn't know any of the students.

C. Superintendent - Central Office Update (Enc.)

- Mrs. Smidy said the report is in the packet. We hosted the senior citizen brunch with over 70 seniors in attendance.

D. Assistant Superintendent

- Ms. Fisk said the budget was approved in 4 out of 6 towns, 2 towns still need to vote on Monday. Gearing up for summer cleaning and waiting for the budget to come out.

E. Administration

- Mr. Finnie thanked Joey for his overview of everything.
- Mr. Garivaltis said it has been a great year, but he is glad it is almost over.
- Mrs. LeBlanc has a ton of gratitude for the teacher. It has been a challenging year and they have stepped up.
- Mr. Forgue said Mrs. Smidy sent an email about the Montgomery vote. Did Huntington even vote for it? Chester will be voting on it to send a message out and explore both sides. We have to go back to the drawing board. A lot of these concerns could have been addressed and worked out years ago. It is sad. He wishes the other towns would have included it to see what they thought.
- Mrs. Briggs said Chester had been rocking and rolling; a dance, Chester on Track, two step up ceremonies, and the best field day ever. She gave a shout out to Mr. Garivaltis. She has no idea how he has kept the special education program on track after covid, masks, etc. He is a huge asset to our program. The middle school is rocking and rolling too. They went on a field trip today, and they have a dance on Friday. They are looking forward to the normalcy and excitement of stepping up next week.
- Mrs. Morawiec asked about the civics projects. They have been asked to comment on them.
- Ms. Page said some of this may come to us for a vote.
- Mrs. Smidy said budgetary purposes could come here as well as policy changes too.
- Ms. Page said maybe an email back to them. Sat prep has merit.
- Ms. Dragon actually emailed them and asked them questions as well. And Eagle project they student decides and raises the money for their project.
- Mr. Forgue said we need to make sure the civics project is a little more robust then it is now.
- Ms. Dragon said maybe they could help clean up the Westfield river.
- Mr. Finnie said next year will be the first time for an 8th grader.
- Mrs. Garfield said SAT Prep is costly. Is that something that could come out of the budget?
- Mrs. Smidy said the two students had a couple of configurations. We need to explore what that looks like.

F. Town Officials - None

7:55 PM IX. COMMITTEE REPORTING

- A. Superintendent's Evaluation
- B. Legislative Liaison
- C. Policy Subcommittee

- D. Building Liaisons
- E. CES Update

8:05 PM X. OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

August Meeting
Approval of two donations
Reorganization
Civics project update

8:10 PM XI. INFORMATION

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

AP #1072 \$98,555.64	PR #20 \$404,191.96
AP #1079 \$45.18	PR #21 \$404,387.10
AP #1078 \$155,008.03	PR #21.1 \$3,573.72
AP #1082 \$250,122.72	PR #22 \$422,784.61
AP #1085 \$46,212.35	PR #23 \$413,054.38
AP #1090 \$34.39	PR #24 \$443,175.87
AP #1089 \$203,116.63	PR #25 \$417,985.66
AP #1091 \$29,966.60	PR #25.1 \$8,819.88
AP #1093 \$41,312.64	PR #25.2 \$262.40

8:15 PM XII. ADJOURNMENT at 9 p.m. unless extended by majority vote.

Mrs. Garfield made a motion seconded by Mrs. Papillon to adjourn at 8:14 p.m.

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

Yeas: Jeana, Pegg, Jason, Terri, Mike L., Keri, Lyndsey, Sara

Respectfully Submitted,
Stacy L. Stewart,
School Committee Secretary