

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, December 14, 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

Jeanne Briggs
Jason Fogue
Frank Pero

HUNTINGTON

Pegg Dragon
Lisa Goding
Edward Renauld

MIDDLEFIELD

Tasha Strong

MONTGOMERY

RUSSELL

Tara Balboni
Sarah Page
Lyndsey Papillon

SECRETARY

Stacy Stewart

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

Kristen Smidy, Superintendent
Stephanie Fisk, Assistant Superintendent

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

Martha Clark, Comm/Program Coordinator
Jason Finnie, Middle/High Principal
Kurt Garivaltis, Pupil Services Director
Deanna LeBlanc, Curriculum Director
Vanna Maffuccio, Chester Principal
Chris Parker, Technology Director
Andrew Samuelson, Littleville Principal
William Sullivan, Middle/High Asst. Principal
Chris Tamburrino, Asst. Pupil Services Dir.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Joseph Pisani

OTHERS: Scott Caron, Andy Myers, Gloria Farrell

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)

- Mrs. Goding said It Takes a Village is doing their toy giveaway and is looking for volunteers on Tuesday 12/20 from 9am-3pm, Wednesday, 12/21 from 9am-3pm,

Thursday 12/22 from 9:30 am-7:30 pm and Friday 12/23 from 10am-8pm. They are giving away toys.

7:10 PM III. STUDENT COUNCIL INPUT

- Joseph Pisani Exclusive stories - Elementary had newsletters. Chester boiled the sap they collected. Littleville - snow and snow gear and snow pants spirit week, pajamana sock candy cane and stropts flannel Afterschool - working with programing robots. Crafts, fly airplanes as part of Wright flight. Middle school held their winter concert last night. The middle school jazz band is new and awesome. He has been helping Ms. Wright with technology. The technology booth is the best view in the house. The high school student council finalized a list of reindeer games which will take place on the morning of the 23rd. They will also be serving hot chocolate through the assistant principal advisory council. Spirit week consisted of ugly sweater, pj, class color, candycane, etc. Basketball season has begun - two spirit nights. The MASR executive board appointed directors and he was appointed director of legislative affairs. He is the only representative that represents a town west of Worcester. Student rep new years resolutions: one is that grade 6 is their own academy now, so will have some updates from them. Two is to have a typed up organized version of his report to refer back to it. Three is to do another student survey and bring back data about general feelings and specific topics. Thank you to Mrs. Clark for the intern and career opportunities that students have. He also thanked Mrs. Clark, Mrs. Smidy, and Mrs. LeBlanc for writing all of the grants. Recently there has been a lot of talk of symbols and hate - there is concern, there is so much home and confidence in his student body and community to stay strong against hate. As a student who participated in as schools match wits, it will be airing in February and they are happy with their performance.

7:15 PM IV. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS/RECOGNITIONS

- Presentations - The book that was presented at David Lubbers celebration of life was passed around for everyone to look at. Donations in his memory went to the Gateway Education Foundation.

7:20 PM V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

A. Approval of Superintendent's Evaluation Goals (Enc.)

Mr. Forgue made a motion seconded by Mrs. Garfield to approve the Superintendent's FY 23 Goals.

- Ms. Dragon asked about multi-tiered supports; there a percentage assigned.
- Mrs. Smidy said Tier 1 is 80 percent of our students,(all students), Tier II should be 10-15 supports - kids move in and out in one and two. 3 -5 % are in tier III and have individualized supports.
- Ms. Dragon asked about the amount of time the educator puts into them, but it is a different approach.
- Mrs. Smidy said they are all overlapped and hard to break out individually. It's driven by the supports they have been identified with needing. There are tiers of supports.

Mr. Forgue made a motion seconded by Mrs. Garfield to approve the Superintendent's FY 23 Goals.

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

Yeas: Tara, Jeana, Pegg, Jason, Terri, Lisa, Keri, Lyndsey, Ed, Tasha, Sarah

7:25 PM VI. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEM

A. Recommendation to accept the donation of sketch pads from Ken Jones for all Littleville students. (Enc.)

- Mr. Renauld asked what is a sketch pad.
- Mr. Samuelson brought one to show us.

Mr. Renauld made a motion seconded by Mrs. Papillon to approve the donation of sketch pads.

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

Yeas: Tara, Jeana, Pegg, Jason, Terri, Lisa, Keri, Lyndsey, Ed, Tasha, Sarah

- Approval of the elementary school handbook to align with new discipline law (Enc.)
- Mrs. Smidy said the elementary handbook is shared between both elementary schools. The information is on page - the idea is to keep kids in school. HS/MS is not ready because assistant principal Sullivan is updating the handbook as a whole.
- Alternative arrangement -
- Mrs. Smidy said graffiti is not a hate crime and may be punished by cleaning, helping maintenance staff more of a restorative practice.
- Mr. Forgue said it would be case by case.
- Mr. Renauld asked who would make the decision.
- Mrs. Smidy said the school administrator and they are required to document. There was a meeting with local superintendents because it is an unfunded mandate.
- Mr. Forgue asked if there is an appeals process.
- Mrs. Smidy said if there is a suspension yes, if it is alternative no, but there is due process.
- Mrs. Goding asked how it will impact special education students.
- Mrs. Smidy said we were concerned about that because discipline is different - there would still be a manifestation meeting.
- Ms. Dragon asked when it would be distributed.
- Mrs. Smidy said with report cards in two days if approved.
- Ms. Dragon skimmed the whole thing and it is nice that
- Mrs. Smidy said the current goal is to align to the new update and best practices. She will not update mid-year in the future, but the law is binding us.

- Mr. Samuelson said by providing access online, it was not reaching far and wide so he is planning on sending it home in paper form.
- Mrs. Maffuccio is sending a hard copy to only those who request it.
- Mr. Renauld said letter B documented reasons. What remedies are not suitable, what are the specific reasons/ There should be a list.
- Mrs. Smidy said the superintendent's suggested rewriting the legislation.
- Ms. Page asked if there is a district interpretation.
- Mrs. Smidy said the expectation is that it is in place - it would give her a sense of urgency to inform the legislature we cannot comply. We are required to abide by the law, but it was a mental health bill and this was tacked on in the 11th hour.
- Mrs. Papillon asked if we could inquire with the other superintendents and see what they are doing.
- Mrs. Smidy said every time there is a suspension -
- Mr. Figure asked for alternative remedies.
- Mrs. Smidy would prefer to table because at some point we may be required to. To vote against it would be a louder.
- Ms. Dragon we put on the next agenda
- Mrs. Smidy said because we are a small school we try not to suspend students - in theory we are already doing this except.
- Mrs. Goding doesn't see an upside to voting it down.
- Mr. Renauld said it is not an issue until someone questions it. He doesn't have a problem with the law, it is the wording.
- Mrs. Smidy said we could table it until the DESE advisory comes out.
- Table until we get more clarification

B. Approval of Policies IHAM-R, JIC, JICA, AC, ACR, GBA, GCF, JB, JFBB, JFBB-I as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee (Enc.)

- Mrs. Smidy said the updates are to comply with new and current regulations - exemption procedure opted out of sex ed, the policy states curriculum.
- All to comply with the new law and add two protected categories to comply with chapter 117.
- Ms. Dragon said one says to admit non resident and the other says not to admit.
- Mrs. Smidy said that is a good catch. We pick one each year.

C. Athletic Gate Fee Discussion

- Mrs. Smidy said gate receipts have been a problem for a while - soccer was sporadic. She is proposing putting gate fees on hold for this year and relook at athletics in general. Bussing fees, budget implications.

Mr. Renauld made a motion seconded by Mrs. Papillon to waive gate fees for athletics for this 2022-2023 school year.

- Mr. Forgue amended the motion to waive gate fees for students with id's families that wear gateway blue and continue to charge other school families because we pay gate fees at other events.

- Ms. Fisk unless someone is going to volunteer to collect gate fees, we won't have enough to cover the takers. There are no JV teams in our league - they are going out to Mohawk for JV games. You will have a limited amount.
- Mr. Forgue amended provided there is someone willing to collect gate fees and give booster club the fees.
- Ms. Fisk said if we collect fees as a school, we can't give them to the booster club.
- Ms. Page said these are the things we are going to talk about. We will have data.
- Ms. Dragon said if the other schools charge.
- Mrs. Briggs said as a booster parent - see an influx of Gateway kids come in and they have a safe place to go and some kids can't afford it, some have big families, grandparents and we want people to come to the games.
- Mrs. Garfield asked how much we take in.
- Ms. Fisk said the highest year was \$9,000 and a normal year is \$6,400. User fees were \$28,000 when we charged those.
- Mrs. Smidy said the budget also included bussing to all events and we have our own mini buses now.

7:30 PM VII. JOINT BUDGET SESSION WITH TOWN OFFICIALS

A FY'23 Financial State of the District (Enc.)

- Mrs. Smidy shared a powerpoint presentation
- Mr. Renauld asked at what point do we need to start hiring staff because of the increase
- Mrs. Smidy said we did that in Kindergarten. We may need to do that for the preschool as well
- Mr. Garivaltis said we run our preschool at 15 up to 10 on IEPs before we need to add a paraprofessional.
- Ms. Dragon said some schools have a cooperative program.
- Mrs. Smidy said a lot of our home school is religion based.
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- Roof
- Mrs. Smidy said one option is to take what they allocated in FY 26 and FY 27 and roll into an account to pay for the roof. The other option would be to take the money and debt exclude the roof.
- Andy Myers asked for more explanation.
- Mrs. Smidy said the towns could approve to roll the amount into a capital stabilization account
- Or not ask towns to take the money, but we will have to ask the towns to approve it when it
- Steph -
- Mr. Renauld asked why there isn't any money in there.
- Ms. Fisk said every time we budgeted for it, it was shot down.
- Mr. Renauld said we have free cash at the end of the year we can put in.
- Ms. Fisk said we cannot just transfer. It goes to E & D. And the vote has to be set up ahead of time.
- Mr. Renauld said you bill the towns.
- Ms. Fisk said Chapter 70 by law has to go back to the towns and the limit on E & D is 5%.

- Mr. Forgue said we lowered the assessments two years ago. It ends up a zero because every time we make cuts capitalization is the first to go.
- Ms. Fisk said we just want to allocate it to the capital account.
- Mrs. Morawiec said would we have to all agree, or can we vote differently?
- Mr. Forgue said we as school committee approve it in the budget.
- Andy Myers said with the roll over concept maybe we shouldn't do it all for the roof, perhaps we could put solar on the roof.
- Mrs. Smidy said some districts offset the budget and some use it for other things.
- Mr. Forgue said as many grants as we have received the money will eventually disappear, maybe we get a roofing program.
- Andy Myers said the assessments to the towns are based on what the state gives us.
- Mr. Renauld thinks the growth in the school is exciting. Parents see the great things that are happening and it spreads. Vision impaired program was started.

8:05 PM VIII. CONSENT ITEMS 11/19/2022 Minutes (Enc.)

Mr. Forgue made a motion seconded by Mrs. Morawiec to approve the minutes of 11/19/2022.

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

Yeas: Jeana, Pegg, Jason, Terri, Lisa, Keri, Lyndsey, Ed, Tasha, Sarah
Abstain: Tara

8:10 PM IX. COMMUNICATIONS

A. School Committee

B. Chairperson - Yearbook Ad

- Ms. Page said the yearbook ad is coming due and we run an ad every year.
- She thanked Nancy Bigos and the garden club for our cactus plants.
- Gloria Farrell a new russell selectmen was in attendance

C. Superintendent - Central Office Update (Enc.)

D. Assistant Superintendent (Enc.)

E. Administration (Enc.)

F. Town Officials

8:15 PM X. COMMITTEE REPORTING (Enc.)

A. Superintendent's Evaluation

- Supt evaluation met tonight. There will be a formative update at the next meeting. Next Superintendent's Evaluation will be in February.

B. Legislative Liaison

- Legislative liaison - Joseph Pisani is generating ideas for when they come here. Following the new year they would be willing to come.

C. Policy Subcommittee

D. Building Liaisons

- Mrs. Goding special education has filled some positions that were open at the beginning of the year. She thanked everyone who stepped up until we hired the special education teachers we need to hire right now. David Bergmann, Christopher Camarco, Cheryl Miller-Harper is doing an amazing job. Sean O'Neill left and Stephanie Cellilli took his place. Speech and language addition through telehealth - Jeanene??
- Mrs. Papillon said she and Ms. Page have been working on the code of conduct with Mr. Sullivan.

E. CES Update

8:10 PM XI. OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

- A. Next School Committee Joint Budget Meeting January 11, 2023
- B. Next Policy Subcommittee Meeting January 11, 2023
- C. Grants

8:25 PM XII. INFORMATION

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

AP #1034 \$80,344.70	PR #011 \$426,822.08
AP #1039 \$246,121.81	PR #012 \$453,178.91
AP #1042 \$165,908.67	PR #12.1 \$4,682.36
AP #1047 \$56.71	

8:30 PM XIII. ADJOURNMENT by 9 p.m. unless extended by majority vote.

Mr. Forgue made a motion seconded by Mr. Renauld to adjourn at 8:51 p.m.

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

Yeas: Tara, Jeana, Pegg, Jason, Terri, Lisa, Keri, Lyndsey, Ed, Tasha, Sarah

Respectfully submitted,
Stacy L Stewart,
School Committee Secretary