

**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 12, 2023**

**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

**CHESTER**

Jeanne Briggs  
Jason Forgue

**HUNTINGTON**

Pegg Dragon  
Lisa Goding  
Edward Renauld

**MIDDLEFIELD**

Tasha Strong

**MONTGOMERY**

**RUSSELL**

Sarah Page  
Sarah Page

**SECRETARY**

Stacy Stewart

**CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION**

Kristen Smidy, Superintendent  
Stephanie Fisk, Assistant Superintendent

**ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL**

Martha Clark, Comm/Program Coordinator  
Kurt Garivaltis, Pupil Services Director  
Deanna LeBlanc, Curriculum Director  
Vanna Maffuccio, Chester Principal  
Melissa McCaul, Stud. Support Leader (Lit)  
William Sullivan, Middle/High Asst. Principal  
Chris Tamburrino, Asst. Pupil Services Dir

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE**

Joseph Pisani

OTHERS: None

**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. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS/RECOGNITIONS**

- Ms. Page said Kristen presented at the Massachusetts Women's Educational Leadership Network Conference and she was emailed that she did an amazing job!

**7:15 PM IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS**

**A. Elementary Code of Conduct Approval (Enc.)**

- Ms. Smidy said the committee was going to vote on this before they issued an advisory. Our attorneys suggest we approve it and move along with clarity.
- Mr. Forgue said we are doing it anyway.
- Ms Smidy said yes, this piece is the parent notification piece.
- Kristen suspension at the elementary level. Ms. Dragon asked if this was in the handbook.
- Ms. Smidy said this is just the code of conduct.
- Mr. Forgue asked why we are voting on it if they can't provide clarity.
- Ms. Smidy said A, B, and C were added.

**Mr. Renauld made a motion seconded by Mrs. Garfield to approve the Elementary Code of Conduct.**

**Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 7 Nays 1 Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)**

Yeas: Jeana, Peg, Terri, Lisa, Ed, Tasha, Sarah

Nays: Jason

**7:20 PM V. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEM**

A. Approval of Policies (Enc.'s)

- ADDA Background Checks,
- BB School Committee Legal Status,
- BBBE-E Schedule of Regular Term Expirations By Town,
- DB-R Budget - Apportionment of Expenses,
- DBG Budget Adoption Procedures,
- DBJ Regional School District Transfer Authority,
- DD Grants, Proposals and Special Projects,
- DEC Federal Funds Supplement Not Supplant Policy,
- DGA Regional School District Authorized Signatures,
- DH Regional School District Bonded Employees,
- DI Fiscal Accounting and Reporting,
- DIE Regional School District Audits,
- DJE Procurement Requirements,
- DK Regional School District Payment Procedures,
- KCD Public Gifts To The Schools

- Ms. Page said this is the first read of the policies.
- Ms. Smidy said under background check it was unclear if volunteers and contractors need to get fingerprinted, now it is if you lived out of state or conducted business out of state.
- Mrs. Goding said she lived out of state prior to living in massachusetts. She asked if we run SORI checks.
- Ms. Smidy said no.
- Ms. Fisk said BB still had 17 members and 7 member towns. BBE removed the Worthington term. D was wording changes. State formula for DBR instead of citing the law. 2/3ds of all the members for Budget.
- Mr. Forgue asked if it is 2/3rds of 15 and asked if it was a state requirement.

- Ms. Fisk it is the same with a quorum.
- DBG all members of the school committee.
- DBJ school department o district School business officials
- DD shall to must grants supplement versus supplant
- DEC supplanting federal funds.
- DGA authorized signatures for warrants -gives you the ability to have one person sign warrants.
- All employees assistant and treasure
- DI effective internal controls
- DIE auditing firm
- DJE add a line to foster greater efficiency entry into agreements
- DK also one person signing warrants
- KCE public gifts to schools - accepted by the school committee and kept separate from the general fund.
- Move to Unfinished business at the next meeting.
- Mr. Forgue said if we accept the policy it just means we have to option, is it our or yours.
- Ms. Fisk said we have been having 3 with two to release.

**B. Grants Approval (Enc.)**

- Ms. Smidy said the Barr Grant supports our intern program and part of Martha's salary is in there - go to other schools who have internships. The second is for welding tools and HVAC work. Tech grant - for 500,000. It will replace the intercom and other components like door access and security cameras.

**Mr. Forgue made a motion seconded by Mrs. Garfield to approve the grants listed.**

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

Yeas: Jeana, Peg, Jason, Terri, Lisa, Ed, Tasha, Sarah

**C. Approval of Last Day of School as June 22, 2023**

***Ms. Dragon made a motion seconded by Mr. Forgue to approve the last day of the FY '23 School year as June 22, 2023***

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

Yeas: Jeana, Peg, Jason, Terri, Lisa, Ed, Tasha, Sarah

**D. Recommendation to Participate in the National School Lunch Program for the FY '24 School Year**

- Joseph Pisani said MASR just supported the bill to continue with free lunch.

***Mr. Forgue 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: Jeana, Peg, Jason, Terri, Lisa, Ed, Tasha, Sarah

**E. Recommendation to Participate in School Choice for the FY '24 School Year**

- Ms. Smidy said the school committee votes an overarching school choice, but principals may have the opportunity to limit a specific class.
- Ms. Dragon said we seem to run into a problem with some districts - the disparity between different schools.
- Ms. Fisk said we receive \$5,000 per student and reimbursement for special education services. Our per pupil is \$16,000 to \$17,000.
- Ms. Smidy said it doesn't include transportation or special education, that is separate. We are just making sure we aren't losing money by accepting school choice.
- Ms. Dragon said special education made it difficult.
- Ms. Smidy said our special education percentage is higher than the state average. If students choice in we bill back to the sending district for the services. This does not include the ones that move into the district.

***Mrs. Garfield made a motion seconded by Mr. Forgue to approve School Choice for the FY '24 School year.***

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

Yeas: Jeana, Peg, Jason, Terri, Lisa, Ed, Tasha, Sarah

**F. Approval of Student Activities Accounts for the FY '24 School Year**

***Ms. Dragon made a motion seconded by Mrs. Garfield to approve the student activity accounts.***

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

Yeas: Jeana, Peg, Jason, Terri, Lisa, Ed, Tasha, Sarah

**G. 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, 2023. This is for short term borrowing in case assessments are not received on time, etc.**

***Ms. Dragon made a motion seconded by Mr. Forgue to approve the following vote: 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, 2023. 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: Jeana, Peg, Jason, Terri, Lisa, Ed, Tasha, Sarah

**8:15 PM VI. CONSENT ITEMS 3/8/2023 Minutes (Enc.)**

**Mr. Forgue made a motion seconded by Ms. Dragon to approve the minutes of 3/8/2023.**

**Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 7 Nays Abstain 1 Absent (Roll Call Vote)**

Yeas: Jeana, Pegg, Jason, Lisa, Ed, Tasha, Sarah

Abstain: Terri

**8:20 PM VII. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE UPDATE**

- Joseph Pisaini said the report is in the folder and he hopes you will read over the long break. He included the student survey report. Highlight the state house visit! Went to the state house to testify to the joint ways and means committee to fully fund rural school aid. There was a general amount of support! The other legislative visit senator Mark He invited all school committee members to the National honor society induction on May 17
- Ms. Page said the advocacy on the legislative front is great. She hopes it will make a difference.

**8:25 PM VIII. COMMUNICATIONS**

**A. School Committee - None**

**B. Chairperson - Retirement/Recognition Ceremony (May)**

- Ms. Page said the towns are close to having you take our papers if you are intending to run again. She is due again this year.
- Retirement ceremony will be right before the May meeting. She will put out a google doc to support it.

**C. Superintendent - Central Office Update (Enc.)**

- Ms. Smidy said her report was in the folder. What is not in the report is that graduation is coming up on June 2, 2023. School committee is invited to sit on stage and get a corsage. She will appoint an interim Principal for Littleville before the May meeting. Before may meeting.
- We have had a shift in assessments. The budget will stay the same, however the assessments will change.

**D. Assistant Superintendent**

- Ms. Fisk said the House budget came out today. There is an increase in rural school aid to 10 million and regional transportation from 75 to 100%.
- Mr. Forgue said they upped charter and homeless.
- Ms. Fisk said vocational transportation is zero.

**E. Administration (Enc.) - None**

**F. Town Officials - None**

**8:30 PM IX. COMMITTEE REPORTING (Enc.)**

**A. Superintendent's Evaluation**

- Ms. Page said the superintendent's evaluation subcommittee met for the last time. Our goal is for you to have the documents in hand for the evaluation Friday, Saturday or Sunday and return them back to her by May 10. It is the same format as last year. If you have any questions please email her. It should be pretty easy.
- Mrs. Garfield adi it is one of the most important things the school committee does.
- Ms. Page said she will reach out to the members who are not here.

**B. Legislative Liaison**

- Mr. Forgue attended MMA at the log cabin with the Lt Governor, Natalie Blais and Jo Comerford. The Saturday before they were in Lenox - Beacon Hill in the Berkshire Hills Conference. There were 4 state senators, and state representatives. He left that one more optimistic. It is the east vs west problem. For the Rural School Leader the overwhelming response was can you make sure they are from a rural area. On the senate side the ways and means committee said his highway department is funded by chapter 90. 5.5 million to 7 million to 10 million is better, but they still need to know it still isn't right.
- Ms. Dragon said the section on the rural resources and state owned property. The difference between what they give us and the seashore. I
- Mr. Forgue said it is the plymouth/savoy problem. Savoy had the same Median income level as Plymouth and Plymouth received nine times more.

**C. Negotiations**

- Paraprofessional negotiations meet tomorrow afternoon.

**D. Building Liaisons**

- Mrs. Briggs said baby chickens have hatched at Chester, Calendar raffle tickets are on sale now for \$10.
- Mrs. Goding said GEF is planning the annual trivia night for Saturday May 13, 2023 at Strathmore park. There will be comedy and raffles. See the Gateway Education Foundation page for more details. Even If you can't make it you can still make a donation.

**E. CES Update - None**

**F. Policy- None**

**8:35 PM X. OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA**

**8:40 PM XI. INFORMATION**

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

AP #1062 \$257,409.87

PR #017 \$430,156.72

AP #1066 \$57,255.89

PR #018 \$447,777.75

AP #1067 \$109,407.89

**8:45 PM XII. ADJOURNMENT by 9 p.m. unless extended by majority vote.**

***Mrs. Briggs made a motion seconded by Mr. Forgue to adjourn at 8:02 p.m.***

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

Yeas: Jeana, Peg, Jason, Terri, Lisa, Ed, Tasha, Sarah

Respectfully Submitted,  
Stacy L Stewart,  
School Committee Secretary