

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, November 8, 2023

Middle School Room 112/114

7:00 P.M.

7:00 PM I. OPENING OF MEETING

Call to order: Sarah Page, Chairperson

BLANDFORD

Nicole Daviau

CHESTER

Jearna Briggs
Brian Forgue
Jason Forgue

HUNTINGTON

Pegg Dragon
Lisa Goding

MIDDLEFIELD

Alex Seid
Tasha Strong

MONTGOMERY

RUSSELL

Sarah Page
Lyndsey Papillon

SECRETARY

Stacy Stewart

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

Kristen Smidy, Superintendent
Stephanie Fisk, Assistant Superintendent

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

Deanna LeBlanc, Curriculum Director
Vanna Maffuccio, Chester Principal
Melissa McCaul, Littleville Interim Principal
Chris Parker, Technology Director
William Sullivan, Middle/High Asst. Principal

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Joseph Pisani

OTHERS: Amy Porter

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

A. Terri Garfield Book Dedication

- Terri Garfield Book donation - Book is marked with a book plate.

7:15 PM IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

A. Health Center Update

- Ms. Page said they met during policy and sort of hashed out what that might look like.

- Mrs. Papillon said they are planning to write a new policy because it doesn't fit our current visitor policy. There are big concerns like security that need to have more information. Dr. Chaloux will escort those community members to and from the door. We also spoke to Dr. Chaloux about how many people we were talking about. The policy would include a stipulation we would have to vote as a larger committee every year. Mrs. Smidy will be able to review the issues quarterly to make sure this isn't being taken away from our students. Students with wellness more regular things will be on Brenda's appointment list. Should there be a personnel change such as Dr. Chaloux is no longer the person, there would be an immediate review of the policy.
- Mrs. Smidy said there is a general need to ensure students and staff are safe in our building and our rural community has access to health care.
- Mrs. Papillon said they want to make sure our school is seen as the hub of our community and if we can make this work we can make Dr. Chaloux a valuable asset to our community.
- Ms. Page trusts that Dr. Chaloux has our kids' needs in mind and Ellen is at security. If it doesn't work for this group of people it won't work.
- Mrs. Papillon said it wouldn't be a new or updated MOU, the update to the MOU would be to refer to the policy..
- Mrs. Goding said due to increased violence in schools, that we should only limit it to staff.
- Mrs. Smidy and Ms. Daviau both said Dr. Chaloux has somewhat vetted the people who will come in. She will have access to our list of no trespasses.
- Mrs. Briggs said there are basketball tryouts tonight and there are forty parents there and I don't know who they all are.
- Mrs. Smidy said it is not foolproof.
- Mrs. Dragon said you will have it as a google doc before the December meeting when we need to vote.
- Mr. Jason Forgue asked if we allow any current staff member to bring in anyone they want to the front door.
- Ms. Fisk said yes.
- Mr. Jason Forgue said you are letting a non-staff member into the building. How is the grant written, there is nothing about seeing only students in the grant.
- Mrs. Smidy said it states they have to be here during school hours.
- Mr. Jason Forgue said it doesn't say they can and it doesn't say they can't.
- Mrs. Smidy said that is something she will review in the first quarter to make sure.
- Mr. Jason Forgue asked how do you define what doesn't work.
- Mrs. Smidy said the policy states she makes the decision but she is happy to bring it back there to the school committee..
- Mr. Jason Forgue said he just needs to know what the definition of what doesn't work is.
- Mrs. Papillon said this isn't working would be a major security breach and or not allowing our students access. If one of those two things came to light.
- Ms. Daviau sees it as continuity to healthcare.
- Ms. Page said Dr. Chaloux is willing to give up some of her patients to be here but still wants to support the community.
- Mrs. Dragon said she wouldn't be adding new adult patients either.
- Mrs. Goding still has concerns about behavioral health and that there is a year long wait for our students.

7:20 PM V. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEM

A. Boston Trip Discussion and Potential Vote (Chris Mosher)

- Mrs. Briggs is happy that eighty percent of the students have signed up to go.

Mr. Jason Forgue made a motion seconded by Mr. Brian Forgue to approve the Boston trip as presented.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 9 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Jeana, Nicole, Pegg, Brian, Jason, Lisa, Lyndsey, Tasha, Sarah

B. Half Day Timing for Elementary Schools Discussion and Potential Vote (Enc.)

- Mrs. Smidy said there is an hour and 10 minutes for the bus route on a normal day. Half day dismissal is 10:40 a.m. for high/middle and 11:40 a.m. at the elementary schools, but more concerned 11:40 a.m. for elementary schools, so we would like to move to 11:50 a.m. for elementary students. It doesn't affect anything contractual. We are also collecting data on the effectiveness of our pd.
- Mrs. Papillon asked why this is coming up now.
- Ms. Fisk said it is really Chester Elementary because of the Middlefield/Blandford/Otis line run.

Mrs. Dragon made a motion seconded by Ms. Daviau to approve the have day change for elementary schools.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 9 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Jeana, Nicole, Pegg, Brian, Jason, Lisa, Lyndsey, Tasha, Sarah

C. Roof Discussion and Planning

- Mrs. Smidy said Ms. Fisk put an update in her report. They met with Curt Robie he gave them some information and that is to have on retainer a house doctor architect and have a contractor determine the cost for wet spots. He talked about a tear off or a go over but we can't do a go over if we have wet spots. Which is why we need infrared to determine any wet spots.
- Ms. Fisk said we have two SBA webinars coming up.
- Mrs. Smidy said there are steps we need to take to evaluate our current roof.
- Ms. Fisk will bring in Sarnafil and do another assessment. It has always been 2027. We will have some good ideas once we get the ball rolling. The first webinar is December 1, 2023.
- Ms. Fisk said we just made the last sba payback payment. The following year will be our last building payment, but we want to give the towns the option to continue to make it part of the budget process.
- Mr. Jason Forgue asked if we are going to propose a budget and include the payment as a stabilization so they wouldn't have an option.
- Mrs. Smidy said if they didn't want to put the money in a stabilization account we may need to come up with another option.

7:45 PM VI. CONSENT ITEMS

A. 10/11/2023 Minutes (Enc.)

Mr. Jason Forgue made a motion seconded by Mr. Brian Forgue to approve the minutes 10/11/2023.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 9 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Jeana, Nicole, Pegg, Brian, Jason, Lisa, Lyndsey, Tasha, Sarah

B. Acceptance of Grants/Donations (Enc.)

The following grants need approval: IDEA, Targeted Special Education Program Improvement for \$12,831.00, DPH School Behavioral Health Grant for \$92,400, and Rural School Aid for \$832,654.41.

Mr. Brian Forgue made a motion seconded by Mrs. Papillon to approve the mentioned grants and donations.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 9 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Jeana, Nicole, Pegg, Brian, Jason, Lisa, Lyndsey, Tasha, Sarah

7:50 PM VII. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE UPDATE

- Theodore DeAngelis-Page said the cross country people have a race on Saturday. The Boston trip was cool. They went to the state house.

7:55 PM VIII. COMMUNICATIONS

A. School Committee - none

B. Chairperson

- Ms. Page said it is time for our yearbook ad. We buy a full page ad so it is \$14 per person.
- Ms. Page said we needed an executive session for the purpose of releasing executive session minutes at or before 8:10 p.m. not to return to open session.

Mr. Jason Forgue made a motion seconded by Mrs. Papillon to go into executive session at or before 8:10 p.m. pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, s. 21(a)(7) to comply with, or act under the authority of, any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements - approval of executive session minutes: 10/13/2021, 12/8/2021, 1/12/2022, 3/15/2022, 5/10/2023, 6/14/2023, 9/13/2023, not to return to open session.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 9 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Jeana, Nicole, Pegg, Brian, Jason, Lisa, Lyndsey, Tasha, Sarah

C. Superintendent - Central Office Update (Enc.)

- Mrs. Smidy would like to acknowledge Mr. Finnie who has decided this is his last year in education. He will have a special assignment in January and Dr. Sullivan will take over as interim principal and hire an interim assistant principal for the remainder of the year.
- Mr. Jason Forgue, Mr. Brian Forgue and Mrs. Smidy went to a meeting with Natalie Blais, Ann Gobi, and John Gold about rural aid issues and how to move forward with advocacy.
- Mrs. Smidy said It is still unclear, but the work by Gateway is getting noticed nationwide. She got an invitation from NSBA to sit on their board..
- Mr. Jason Forgue attended a Condition of Education meeting as well and was way more attended than he thought. There was an interesting panel and ideas. The secretary of education is fantastic and inspiring. He came from the Barr Foundation. He is pushing us in new ways. He asked where else we could go, since we are going all over but it feels like we are spinning our wheels.
- Mrs. Smidy said there is a lack of directions.
- Ms. Page said if people are noticing we are out there that's great.
- Ms. Dragon noticed an article about the money that Southwick received with the amount.
- Mr. Jason Forge said Natalie Blais said he was a total pain.
- Ms. Fisk said when we have to create a rural report mid year - just to keep our head above water, with no huge gains.
- Mrs. Briggs thinks Gateway got the point across.

D. Assistant Superintendent

- Ms. Fisk said it's not in the report but Bret Hartley will be leaving us to go to story point. She would like to recognize all the work he has done over the past 7 years.

E. Administration (Enc.) - None

F. Town Officials - None

8:00 PM IX. COMMITTEE REPORTING (Enc.)

A. Superintendent's Evaluation

Mr. Brian Forgue made a motion seconded by Mrs. Papillon to approve the Superintendent's 2023-2024 goals.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 9 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

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Yeas: Jeana, Nicole, Pegg, Brian, Jason, Lisa, Lyndsey, Tasha, Sarah

B. Legislative Liaison

- Mr. Brian Forgue, as a selectboard member, went to the chamber of commerce meeting with Senator Velis and Representative Pease. Senator Mark's remarks were not it's the big win, but baby steps.

C. Negotiations - none

D. Building Liaisons - none

E. CES Update - none

F. Policy - none

8:15 PM X. OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

8:20 PM XI. INFORMATION

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

AP #1033 \$295,835.05

PR #008 \$425,332.01

PR #009 \$418,425.32

Went into executive session at 8:05 p.m.

8:25 PM XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive session pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, s. 21(a)(7) to comply with, or act under the authority of, any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements - approval of executive session minutes: 10/13/2021, 12/8/2021, 1/12/2022, 3/15/2022, 5/10/2023, 6/14/2023, 9/13/2023 (Enc. SC only)

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

Mr. Jason Forgue made a motion seconded by Mr. Brian Forgue to adjourn at 8:09 p.m.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 9 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Jeana, Nicole, Pegg, Brian, Jason, Lisa, Lyndsey, Tasha, Sarah

Respectfully submitted,
Stacy L Stewart
School Committee Secretary