

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 13, 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

Jeana Briggs
Brian Forgue

HUNTINGTON

Pegg Dragon

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

Melissa McCaul, Littleville Interim Principal
Chris Parker, Technology Director
William Sullivan, Middle/High Asst. Principal
Chris Tamburrino, Asst. Pupil Services Dir.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Joseph Pisani

OTHERS: Andy Myers, Amy Porter, Val Zeh

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

7:15 PM IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

A. Health Center Policy Discussion and Potential Vote (Enc.)

- Policy written up for review for that before tonight.
- Mr. Brian Forgue said adult community members will be allowed to use the health center, it will be reviewed quarterly, and reviewed every year. It is a privilege.
- Ms. Page likes the word privilege. We reserve the right to let them

- Mrs. Smidy said the committee was willing to do this because of the current staff. With different members the privilege may be revoked.
- Ms. Dragon said that wording seems to be very harsh. We would speak to them if there was a question or a situation that occurred. We reserve the right to rescind.
- Mr. Brian Forgue thinks that because it is reviewed on a quarterly basis it won't be dropped just on a hat.
- Ms. Page said we didn't read the policy last time. We need to waive the two meeting rule to vote on this. She also spoke with Mr. Jason Forgue and he was okay with us voting tonight.

Mrs. Papillon made a motion seconded by Ms. Dragon to waive the two meeting rule to vote on the Health Center policy.

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

Yeas: Tara, Jeana, Nicole, Pegg, Brian, Lyndsey, Tasha, Sarah

Ms. Dragon made a motion seconded by Ms. Daviau to approve the policy KIA Visitors to School Based Health Center.

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

Yeas: Tara, Jeana, Nicole, Pegg, Brian, Lyndsey, Tasha, Sarah

7:20 PM V. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEM

A. Approval of Contracts for Nursing Students (Enc.)

- Mrs. Smidy said the nurse leader requested to take on student nurses from UMass, Dartmouth and Westfield State University. There was a letter in the packet explaining the rationale and the two contracts.
- Mr. Brian Forgue asked if this would help with the backlog of nurses.
- Mrs. Smidy said there is not a backlog in school nursing, it was mental health.

Ms. Dragon made a motion seconded by Mr. Brian Forgue to approve the contracts with Westfield State University and UMass Dartmouth to accept nursing students.

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

Yeas: Tara, Jeana, Nicole, Pegg, Brian, Lyndsey, Tasha, Sarah

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

A. FY' 24 Financial State of the District (Enc.)

- Mrs. Smidy gave a powerpoint presentation.
- This is where we are at for this fiscal year and gives an idea of what FY 25 might look like.
- Ms. Dragon asked for an explanation of high needs.
- Mrs. Smidy said any student that is in special education and includes low income and English Language Learners.
- Andy Myers recommends that the school keep the stabilization account.

- Ms. Smidy said it would be way cleaner and it's Ms. Fisk's preference for the roof.
- Mr. Brian Forgue said part of the whole debacle how does that affect this
- They advocated for an increase and you had to meet the threshold in order to qualify.
- The money coming in late doesn't affect administratively the student.
- Ms. Fisk said we are allowed to keep one year's revenue.
- Mrs. Smidy said it's not available right away.
- Andy Myers said enrollment figures in the first chart looks like it went up.
- Mrs. Smidy said one is foundation enrollment and one is bodies.
- Andy Myers asked what the trends are.
- Ms. Fisk said the vocational is staying the same. Home school is up this year and down from two years ago. Charter is up. School choice is about the same.
- Andy Myers said with the school roof there are new technologies for solar roofs.
- Mrs. Smidy said there are geothermal schools in the green schools programs.
- Andy Myers said there should be grants for them. Towns can include schools in their green communities profile. There is a new green communities coordinator for western mass.

7:45 PM VII. CONSENT ITEMS

A. 11/8/2023 Minutes (Enc.)

Mr. Brian Forgue made a motion seconded by Mrs. Papillon to approve the minutes of 11/8/2023.

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

Yeas: Tara, Jeana, Nicole, Pegg, Brian, Lyndsey, Tasha, Sarah

B. Acceptance of Grants/Donations (Enc.)

Mass Cultural Grant STARS Residency for Chester Elementary

Mass Cultural Grant STARS Residency for Littleville Elementary

Teacher Diversification, came out because DESE to wants us to encourage and retain teachers

We are using 10,000 to attract and retain a speech pathologist, support teachers in masters

programs and it will help with professional development in inclusion and equity - BARR

foundation site visits for elementary.

Donation of science equipment.

Mr. Brian Forgue made a motion seconded by Ms. Daviau to approve the grants above and donation.

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

Yeas: Tara, Jeana, Nicole, Pegg, Brian, Lyndsey, Tasha, Sarah

7:50 PM VIII. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE UPDATE

- Joseph Pisani gave invitations to reindeer games to the school committee. One of his goals this year is to bring some students along so next year one of them will take over being the student representative. This month was Theo. Students, staff and

administrators went to Beacon hill to rally for rural schools. Got to go on a tour and on the floor with Representative Blais. The highlight was the testimony by Chester students. Winter sports season, winter theater season. Started today. Doors being decorated for winter. There is a spelling B coming up at Chester Elementary. There was an inflatable course at Littleville. A small sampling of cool Barr stuff will be at reindeer games. Gilbert the party pig will be making an appearance. High school has spirit week coming up, and the semi is scheduled for March 1. MASR delegate for new resolutions. What are students' thoughts on Barr, all positive, they thought it was good because we don't usually get to ask these questions. Lizzy Kadzik will follow this month.

7:55 PM IX. COMMUNICATIONS

A. School Committee

B. Chairperson

- CORI forms for everyone.
- Yearbook money for the ad.

C. Superintendent - Central Office Update (Enc.)

- Supt - only Bar foundation update - we killed it. We included every student in the district in focus groups and others had 15 students. Shifting to the dream faze.. Barr money will be used to visit other schools. There is a trip April 9-12 to VT. Want two students and parents who are school committee members. Kristen will send the information.
- Ms. Dragon asked if there are some underlying things that are the same, not just different.
- Mrs. Smidy said we can also plan our own trips.
- Mrs. Smidy gave a shout out to Cheryl Wright who has taken all the data and put it in newsletters.

D. Assistant Superintendent - None

E. Administration (Enc.) - None

F. Town Officials - None

8:00 PM X. COMMITTEE REPORTING

A. Superintendent's Evaluation

- Met tonight and will meet again in February to go over the data and set the timeline for the rest of the year.

B. Legislative Liaison

- Mr. Brian Fogue said Representative Boldyga came to their selectboard. He discussed generally the fiscal outlook of the state and rural school aid. He supports the efforts and votes for it, but doesn't do a lot of extra stuff. He made significant warnings of the fiscal state of the state but said there are promising signs from the millionaires tax. He seems to think that 9c cuts will be enacted in some kind of state budget. He is of a fiscally conservative outlook. Mr. Brian Forge doesn't think he opposed or stepping in our path, but not necessarily a unique tool or asset.
- Joseph Pisani said in Governor Healy's first year the budget was later.
- Ms. Fisk said it will be at the normal time.

- Mr Brian Forgue said Chester's budget just increased. There are concerns in the fire department, police department. They are generally supportive to put forward the already expected contribution.

C. Negotiations

- Monday December 18 at 4:45 p.m.

D. Building Liaisons - none

E. CES Update - none

F. Policy

- Policy quick conversation about meeting in January.

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

8:20 PM XII. INFORMATION

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

AP #1036 \$119,978.75	PR #010 \$441,899.11
AP #1043 \$178,771.04	PR #011 \$443,314.48

8:25 PM XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

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

Ms. Dragon made a motion seconded by Mrs. Briggs to adjourn at 8:17 p.m.

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

Yeas: Tara, Jeana, Nicole, Pegg, Brian, Lyndsey, Tasha, Sarah

Respectfully submitted,
 Stacy L Stewart,
 School Committee Secretary