

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
Wednesday, February 7, 2024
Middle School Room 112/114**

7:00 P.M.

7:00 PM I. OPENING OF MEETING

Call to order: Sarah Page, Chairperson

BLANDFORD

Keri Morawiec

CHESTER

Jeana Briggs
Brian Forgue
Jason Forgue

HUNTINGTON

Pegg Dragon

MIDDLEFIELD

Alex Seid
Tasha Strong

MONTGOMERY

RUSSELL

Tara Balboni
Sarah Page
Lyndsey Papillon

SECRETARY

Stacy Stewart

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

Kristen Smidy, Superintendent
Stephanie Fisk, Assistant Superintendent

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

Kylie Crawford, Interim MS/HS Asst. Principal
Kurt Garivaltis, Pupil Service Director
Deanna LeBlanc, Curriculum Director
Vanna Maffuccio, Chester Principal
Melissa McCaul, Littleville Principal
William Sullivan, Middle/High Principal
Chris Tamburrino, Asst. Pupil Services Dir.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Joseph Pisani

OTHERS: Andy Myers, Val Zeh, Adair Laurel-Cafarella

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

7:20 PM V. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEM

A. Two Changes in Calendar Proposal (2023-2024) (Enc.)

1. Change Half PD day from March 19 to March 12
2. June Half days for secondary (day 177, 178)

Mr. Brian Forgue made a motion seconded by Mrs. Morawiec to change the half PD day from March 19 to March 12.

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

Yeas: Tara, Jeana, Pegg, Brian, Jason, Keri, Lyndsey, Alex, Tasha, Sarah

- Dr. Sullivan submitted a proposal so grades 9-11 get full time on learning before taking finals. This would have the last 4 days for secondary be half days. In the afternoon teachers would use time to correct final exams.
- Mr. Jason Forgue asked how many classes are senior only.
- Dr. Sullivan said English. There are only a few senior only classes.
- Mr. Jason Forgue said there would be two finals - one for seniors and one for the rest.
- Mr. Brian Forgue said you would be having finals on the last days of school.
- Ms. Dragon said if they miss two finals is it possible for them to make up finals on the day.
- Dr. Sullivan said there would be make-up time.
- Mr. Brian Forgue asked for Joseph Pisani's opinion.
- Joseph Pisani said it would depend on each individual student's feelings on this. Some are exempt, maybe they have a heavy schedule. He did get feedback from mid year that other schools have the half days. It makes sense from the policy aspect.
- Lizzy Kadzik agrees with Joseph Pisani. She would rather have finals pushed back further. My brain is dead after finals.

Mrs. Balboni made a motion seconded by Mrs. Morawiec to approve half days at the secondary level for day 177 and 178.

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

Yeas: Tara, Jeana, Pegg, Brian, Jason, Keri, Lyndsey, Alex, Tasha, Sarah

B. Mass Maritime Tabletop Exercise Approval (Enc.)

- Mrs. Smidy said Shanon Gilbeault approached her about the exercise. We would submit our safe schools plan to the cadets and they would design a drill emergency management exercise. They would work in partnership with the state police.
- Ms. Dragon asked if it would be after school.
- Mrs. Smidy said not necessarily, but only staff and administrators participate in table tops, not students. She said practicing this helps us in situations where we need to respond to emergency situations.

Mr. Brian Forgue made a motion seconded by Mrs. Morawiec to approved the Mass Maritime Tabletop Exercise

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

Yeas: Tara, Jeana,Pegg, Brian, Jason, Keri, Lyndsey, Alex, Tasha, Sarah

C. Music Trip to NY City Approval

- The music trip to NY to see Wicked is April 3 and the cost is \$150-200 per student depending on how many students go.

Ms. Dragon made a motion seconded by Mrs. Morawiec to approve the Music Trip to NY City.

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

Yeas: Tara, Jeana,Pegg, Brian, Jason, Keri, Lyndsey, Alex, Tasha, Sarah

D. Skills USA Spring Overnight Approval (Enc.)

- Students who earn a gold or silver get to stay overnight. Overnight trips need school committee approval.

Ms. Dragon made a motion seconded by Mr. Brian Forgue to approve the Skills USA Spring Overnight.

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

Yeas: Tara, Jeana,Pegg, Brian, Jason, Keri, Alex, Tasha, Sarah

Recuse: Lyndsey

E. Personnel Leave Approval (Enc.)

- Mrs. Smidy said Maddy Scott, our Chester counselor is entitled to 12 weeks of FMLA but needs school committee approval to be out the remainder of the school year. Principal Maffuccio and Mrs. Smidy both support it.
- Mr. Jason Forgue asked how her position was being filled.
- Mrs. Smidy said we are actively looking but have not found someone yet. David Bjorkland from the Health Center is going there.

Mr. Brian Forgue made a motion seconded by Mrs. Morawiec to approve the Personal Leave Request for Maddy Scott.

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

Yeas: Tara, Jeana,Pegg, Brian, Jason, Keri, Lyndsey, Alex, Tasha, Sarah

F. Second Quarter Transfers Approval (Enc.)

- Ms. Fisk said most transfers surround payroll line items - extended medical leave, vacant positions, overtime coverage for snow.

Mr. Jason Forgue made a motion seconded by Mr. Briand Forgue to approve FY 24 Second Quarter Transfers.

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

Yeas: Tara, Jeana, Pegg, Brian, Jason, Keri, Lyndsey, Alex, Tasha, Sarah

G. Policy First Read

1. JH Attendance
 2. All policies listed in [December 2023 Newsletter](#) except KDCB, EFC, and EFD
<https://www.masc.org/masc-policy-newsletter-december-2023/>
 3. All policies listed in [March 2023 Newsletter](#)
<https://www.masc.org/masc-policy-newsletter-march-2023/>
- JH attendance - the policy being proposed is the MASC recommended policy for all students.
 - Mr. Jason Forgue asked what the change was.
 - Mrs. Smidy said notification the number of days and the dropout prevention after ten days.
 - Policies listed in December 2023- There are a lot of minor wording changes. Policies were dated. There are new components on how staff communicate with students around technology and regulation on what we need to post to maintain data. The newsletter goes over the changes.
 - Mr. Brian Forgue said KSD policy gives community members the ability to use the internet, but they must comply with our digital use form.
 - Policies listed in March 2023 consist of grammatical changes, some updated language, and a couple of dated policies were removed.
 - Move to old business for the next meeting.

7:45 PM VI. JOINT BUDGET SESSION WITH TOWN OFFICIALS

A. FY' 24 Budget Overview Slides (Enc.)

- Mrs. Smidy gave a presentation which was in the packet.
- What does just bumped up mean? Key factors are: the state says economically groups 1-9 receive the minimum. This year we are in group 10 which is why we are getting more than just minimum.
- Mr. Jason Forgue asked what the deadline is.
- Mrs. Smidy said October 1. She would be concerned if we bumped back down next year.
- Charter School - we are assessed right from our July payment. Charter comes off our Chapter 70 every month. It looks like we may have 4 Charter students coming back in the fall. 37% is what we are reimbursed for now. They charge us in July on what they project.
- SBA Funds will go to a capital stabilization fund for the roof. We have received positive feedback.
- Andy Myers supports it but would encourage us to look at all the different roof options. Chester is trying to put the school on their green grant.
- Ms. Fisk said we are also looking into SBA but the roof has to be at least 25 years old.
- Mr. Jason Forgue thinks that is a good way to go.

- Ms. Fisk said the target share for minimum contribution is based on the wealth in your town, local income and property. No town is meeting the 82%.
- Ms. Dragon asked if it was based on the initial assessment.
- Mrs. Smidy said this is reported through the assessor's office.
- Mr. Jason Fogue said if there is an abatement, it won't change until next year.
- Andy Myers complimented the school on keeping the assessments under 2%. He would like the Vocational Information for April if they could. He has some concerns about the drop in student count.
- Ms. Fisk said the state is 4% as well. We will have more students enrolling in the spring. It will shift a little by March 1.
- Mr. Garivaltis said it's all full except for one at Chester elementary.
- Mrs. Smidy said we hope this changes because of Barr and a grant to help revamp the preschool program. Over time it will hopefully be over 2 million. We didn't get it last year because they expect us to partner with 3-5 childcare programs and we don't have them, so we spoke to them, they made some changes to the grant and we reapplied.
- Andy Myers said let's market the heck out of the preschool. Professional marketing as well.
- Mr. Brian Fogue said it's not structured as alternative.
- Mr. Jason Fogue said we need 4 out of 6 votes to pass the budget.
- Mrs. Smidy said it's included in the budget.
- Mr. Brian Fogue said if they wanted to go another route they would have to vote the whole budget down.
- Mrs. Smidy said she would consider taking it out if she got a feeling it wouldn't pass.
- Mr. Jason Fogue said he would be against this.
- Ms. Fisk said she could see if assessments went up 10%, but it's under 2%

8:15 PM VII. CONSENT ITEMS

A. 12/13/2023 Minutes (Enc.)

Mr. Jason Fogue made a motion seconded by Mrs. Balboni to approve the minus of 12/13/2023.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 8 Nays Abstain 2 Absent (Roll Call Vote)

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

Abstain: Keri, Alex

B. Acceptance of Grants/Donations (Enc.)

- Mrs. Smidy said \$9,000 from the next generation grant will cover the cost of people going to VT.
- There is a DESE grant for \$10,000 for chronic absenteeism for tracking student attendance. They will be using Open Architects software and teachers will be paid to pilot it.

Mr. Jason Forgue made a motion seconded by Mr. Brian Forgue Accept Grants/Donations.

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

Yeas: Tara, Jeana, Pegg, Brian, Jason, Keri, Lyndsey, Alex, Tasha, Sarah

- Mr. Jason Forgue asked about chronic absenteeism as it relates to the new policy and the report we received that puts us into receivership with the implementation of this new policy.
- Mrs. Smidy said we are complying already and was surprised the policy didn't exist.

8:20 PM VIII. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE UPDATE

- Joseph Pisani Lucky to show Lizzy Kadzik who is a sophomore. National school counselor week - encourage your students at home to wish them a happy week. Former Gateway teacher Susan Luppino is our commencement speaker this year. The rest is in the packet. There is a social media campaign. Students are feeling the inequities of funding, long bus rides, bindings on books, news schools vs new roofs. Littleville door decorating, chs named a now power High school senior night season for winter sports.
- Ms. Dragon said not being elected might be easier.
- Joseph Pisani said there are pros and cons. There is security if they are chosen by administration but difficult when you are tasked with supporting the student body and don't don't necessarily have their support.
- Mrs. Smidy said expectations will need to be very clear.
- Joseph Pisani said he was elected by the student council, but he hopes it's more of the whole student body. He favors a student body doing the election.

8:25 PM IX. COMMUNICATIONS

A. School Committee

B. Chairperson

- Ms. Page paid for our yearbook ad. If you haven't paid yet. She said Ed Renauld did resign from the school committee for personal reasons.

C. Superintendent - Central Office Update (Enc.)

- Mrs. Smidy said we are killing it with Barr. Barr is sending other superintendents to us. She said Kelly Sudnick will be moving into the teachers contract for a vacancy of a class nurse. There will be a new administrative position at Littleville to support student needs. Wrap around will soon be managed by the YMCA - hours will remain the same. They will be taking the grant and running it for free. We will be combining the structure of the middle and high school to become one school to streamline organization. We hope it will have an impact on programming in a positive way. It won't affect athletics grade 6 will still be excluded.

D. Assistant Superintendent - None

E. Administration (Enc.) - None

F. Town Officials -None

8:30 PM X. COMMITTEE REPORTING

A. Superintendent's Evaluation

- They met tonight and Mrs. Smidy is making great progress. It will come out in April.

B. Legislative Liaison - None

C. Negotiations - None

D. Building Liaisons - None

E. CES Update - None

F. Policy

- The next big thing is homework policy -met Monday and will continue working on it at the policy meeting in March.

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

- Mr. Forgue would like Hampshire County Group Trust to justify the 8% increase.
- Ms. Fisk said it started at 10% and came down to 8%. The big thing they talked about at the meeting was prescriptions.

8:40 PM XII. INFORMATION

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

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|-----------------------|----------------------|
| AP #1038 \$262,950.65 | PR #012 \$427,974.59 |
| AP #1047 \$416,060.50 | PR #013 \$443,018.97 |
| AP #1051 \$80,624.81 | PR #014 \$419,742.52 |
| AP #1053 \$184,737.60 | PR #015 \$422,143.31 |
| AP #1058 \$147,818.25 | |

8:45 PM XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

8:50 PM XIV. ADJOURNMENT by 9 p.m. unless extended by majority vote.

Mr. Jason Forgue made a motion seconded by Mrs. Papillon to adjourn at 8:31 p.m.

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

Yeas: Tara, Jeana, Pegg, Brian, Jason, Keri, Lyndsey, Alex, Tasha, Sarah

Respectfully submitted,
Stacy L Stewart
School Committee Secretary