

**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, September 11, 2024  
Middle School Room 117/119**

**7:00 P.M.**

**7:00 PM I. OPENING OF MEETING & QUESTION TO SEE IF ANYONE IS RECORDING**

Call to order: Kristen Smidy, Superintendent

**BLANDFORD**

Keri Morawiec

**CHESTER**

Jeana Briggs  
Brian Forgue  
Jason Forgue

**HUNTINGTON**

Pegg Dragon  
Lisa Goding

**MIDDLEFIELD**

Tasha Strong

**MONTGOMERY**

Peter DeGregorio

**RUSSELL**

Tara Balboni  
Sarah Page  
Lyndsey Papillon

**SECRETARY**

Stacy Stewart

**CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION**

Kristen Smidy, Superintendent  
Stephanie Fisk, Assistant Superintendent

**ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL**

Martha Gendron, Littleville Asst. Principal  
Deanna LeBlanc, Curriculum Director  
Vanna Maffuccio, Chester Principal  
Melissa McCaul, Littleville Principal  
Chris Parker, Technology Director  
William Sullivan, GRS Principal  
Chris Tamburrino, Asst. Pupil Services Dir.  
Val Zeh, GRS Assistant Principal

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE**

Theodore DeAngelis-Page  
Ana Holmes, Alternate

OTHERS: Amy Mason

**7:05 PM II. REORGANIZATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

**A. Chairperson**

***Mrs. Morawiec nominated Ms. Page as Chairperson seconded by Mrs. Papillon***

Ballot Vote:

Ms. Page: Lyndsey, Pegg, Jeana, Peter, Brian, Keri, Tara, Tasha, Sarah

Abstain: Jason

Once a chair is nominated and approved, the meeting will be run by the chair.

## **B. Vice-Chairperson**

**Mrs. Balboni made a motion seconded by Mrs. Morawiec to nominate Mr. Forgue as Vice Chair.**

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

Yeas: Tara, Jeana, Peter, Pegg, Brian, Lisa, Keri, Lyndsey, Tash, Sarah

Abstain: Jason

## **C. Appointments**

- **Sick Bank Committee:** Tara Balboni, Keri Morawiec
- **Negotiations Committee:** Lisa Goding, Jason Forgue
- **Superintendent's Evaluation:** Tara Balboni, Keri Morawiec, Peter DeGregorio, Sarah Page
- **Policy Committee:** Pegg Dragon, Lyndsey Papillon, Sarah Page, Nicole Daviau
- **Warrant Signing Committee:** Brian Forgue, Jeana Briggs, Peter Degregorio, Pegg Dragon, Keri Morawiec, Lisa Goding, Tara Balboni, Sara Page
- **Collaborative for Educational Services (CES) Representative:** Brian Forgue
- **Gateway Education Foundation:** Lyndsey Papillon, Tara Balboni
- **Legislative Contact:** Brian Forgue
- Liaisons
  1. Chester Elementary: Tasha Strong, Jeana Briggs
  2. Littleville Elementary: Lisa Goding
  3. Gateway Regional School: Nicole Daviau, Sarah Page
  4. Curriculum: Lyndsey Papillon, Peter DeGregorio
  5. Pupil Services: Lisa Goding, Pegg Dragon
  6. Finance and Facilities: Sarah Page

Mrs. Goding suggested having someone on the cultural committee. Mrs. Daviau and Ms. Page volunteered.

### **7:15 PM III. PUBLIC INPUT - None**

Guests attending the meeting may address the committee on topics not on the agenda. (There is a three minute time limit per guest)

### **7:20 PM IV. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS/RECOGNITIONS**

### **7:25 PM V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS**

A. Update re: Trips Abroad (Enc.)

- Mrs. Smidy said we received an email updating us on our other trips request.

### **7:30 PM VI. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEM**

A. School Physician Contract Approval (Enc.)

- Mrs. Smidy said this was signed over the summer to proceed with standing orders for medication delegation. The hilltown committee health center fulfills this at no cost to the district. The physician is Cheri chung.
- Ms. Dragon asked if this is allowing adults in?
- Mrs. Smidy said no, this is to fulfill student needs.

***Ms. Dragon made a motion seconded by Mrs. Papillon to approve the School Physician Contract with the Health Center.***

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

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

**B. School Based Health Center Adult Patients Annual Discussion and Vote**

- Ms. Page said this the annual vote if we allow adult patients to be seen at the School Based Health Center.
- Mrs. Balbon asked if it was because of the safety concerns and things we all discussed.
- Mrs. Smidy said yes, plus
- Mrs. Balbon asked if there is a reason why we should vote differently.
- Mrs. Smidy said she isn't recommending it for this year.
- Pegg are they only having 1 st
- Mrs. Smidy said there are a number of internal things that happened. We need the security for Preschool arrival and departure. There are transitions from Littleville to here for band and the both preschool classes are here and have a lot of families around. It requires more oversight.
- Mr. Brian Fogue said hilltown really wanted to have adult patients.
- Mrs. Smidy said based on challenges they suspect and support our decision.
- Ms. Dragon said the doctor was pushing for patients.
- Mrs. Smidy said she may not have every spot filled, it would have to be filled with other tasks.
- Ms. Dragon asked if school based could see the parents of children is that part of it.
- Mrs. Smidy said she can see staff, but not families.

***Mr. Jason Fogue made a motion seconded by Mrs. Balboni to allow adult visitor patients.***

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

Nays: Tara, Jeana, Peter, Pegg, Brian, Jason, Lisa, Keri, Lyndsey, Tasha, Sarah

**C. Notification of list of classes with numbers less than 10 (Enc.)**

- Mrs. Smidy said this is so you know how district resources are being allocated. In order to offer classes students need, there are smaller class sizes.
- Ms. Page asked if this feels like a typical number.
- Mrs. Smidy said yes, but there are also new intro to electronics, chapter 74 classes.
- Mr. DeGregorio asked what chapter 74
- Mrs. Smidy said vocational programming is required to take so many facetime/hands on hours.

- Ms. Dragon asked if the extra teaching positions for these extra classes are in the budget
- Mrs. Smidy said the next item. Teachers regularly teach five. Teachers who take on an additional teaching load are compensated and it's less expensive than an additional teacher. Two are vocational classes and the third is a teacher of the deaf. He teaches his high school load then as an elementary student. We are paying the teachers more, but it's still cost effective.
- Ms. Fisk said it is all from rural school aide.
- Mrs. Smidy said we don't need to cut.

**D. Approval for three teachers to teach an extra teaching load with less than 10 students.**

***Mr. Brian Forgue made a motion seconded by Mrs. Morawic to approve the three teachers with an additional class load with less than 10 students.***

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

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

- Mr. Jason Forge asked how this works for prep time.
- Dr. Sullivan said it takes the place of their duties.

**E. Approve calendar update to move GRS Open House to October 10**

***Mrs. Balboni made a motion seconded by to approve the calendar change to move the GRS Open house to October 10, 2024.***

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

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

**7:45 PM VII. CONSENT ITEMS**

**A. 6/12/2024 Minutes (Enc.)**

***Ms. Dragon made a motion seconded by Mr. Brian Forgue to approve the minutes of 6/12/24.***

***Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 9 Nays Abstain 2 Absent (Roll Call Vote)***

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

Abstain: Peter, Lyndsey

**B. Acceptance of Grants/Donations (Enc.)**

- a. Information shared about the Barr Foundation Grant - in the superintendent's report.

**Mrs. Morawiec made a motion seconded by Mrs. Papillon to approve the Grants and Donations listed in the spreadsheet.**

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

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

**7:50 PM VIII. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE UPDATE**

- Theodore DeAngelis Page said open house will now be on October 10. The Barr foundation is taking 7-12th grade students on site visits to other schools. The new phone policy is effective.
- HS - BARR internships 6 students 9-12 to assist Barr groups. There will be 2 students per school at \$15 per hour. There are also intern opportunities for communication. Picture day was yesterday.
- Sports -boys soccer started strong with a 4-0 win against Mt. Everett, JV tied St. Mary's on Monday and there is a home game against Sci-Tech tomorrow at 6.
- Girls are in Athol right now. They tied 1-1 against Pathfinder on Monday. Boys cross country placed second last week. Jacob Maynard came in first place. Girls cross country won against all three teams last Tuesday.
- Middle school has new additions to their schedule: exploratory blocks. They include community service, financial literacy, wood shop, intro to spanish. They now have a split lunch of 6th & 7th and 8th grade being separate. PBIS is returning.
- Chester held a memories to treasure meet and greet. K got to ride the bus for the first time with their parents that ended with a popsicle with the principal.
- Littleville also rode the bus with their parents that ended with a popsicle with the principals. They started a 1 school 1 book program that is starting a boy called bat.
- He is excited for this position and hopes to do well representing the student body
- Ms. Page asked about the phone policy.
- Theodore DeAngelis-Page said they are required to put their phones in phone pouches or backpacks during classes or there are consequences. Keeping students focused on what they should be on.
- Mrs. Balboni asked how many student's they've seen for not following the policy.
- Dr. Sullivan and Ms. Zeh said only about 5 so far.
- Dr. Sullivan said student reps were part of the meeting to get their input.
- Ms. Zeh said they know the other schools are doing it as well, but they can have it at lunch for grade 8 and high school.

**7:55 PM IX. COMMUNICATIONS**

**A. School Committee - None**

**B. Chairperson - None**

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

- Mrs. Smidy said instructional vision is something we were tasked with talking about at the Barr conferences this summer. Breaking it down to doing what we said.
- Summer programming: two years ago we received a significant grant for \$210,000 for 5 years then reducing it. They had expectations about attendance and participation we could not meet. Looking at it and talking to other schools all schools had to have 40

participants with transportation or apply for less money if we had 25 participating no matter what your populations. She has done some investigating with Gill-Montague and Pioneer Valley and they are strategizing on how we draw attention to this. Not having an afterschool program in our area is a real loss to our community. She brought it to DESE's attention and they said to apply for less and acknowledged the email. The commissioner seeked her out at her last meeting. It is a true inequity. We are 151 square miles. She also spoke with Todd Gazda today and the commission

- Ms. Page asked if there is anyone we should be contacting.
- Mrs. Smidy will send out the samples of what they are sending out.
- Mrs. Balboni asked if they are missing out on enrichment.
- Mrs. Smidy said yes. She said when she spoke to Todd, he let her know about 4 other schools in the same boat. 40 kids need to participate in all 400 hours in order to meet the criteria.
- Mr. Brian Fogue said he met with Secretary of Education Tutwiler.
- Mrs. Smidy said she received an email to go to a meeting with 5 superintendents for an hour of open discussion. She spoke a lot and felt heard and acknowledged he owned that he was in charge of some of these things and admitted they were inequitable. Declining enrollment, regional transportation, bus contracts, etc. She is not sure how people were selected, it was Palmer, Pathfinder, Springfield, Chicopee, and Gateway.
- Mr. Jason Fogue said he always talks about running toward what you want in graduation speeches.

#### **D. Assistant Superintendent**

- Ms. Fisk said we will be going out to bid for transportation this year. That will be starting soon.
- Mr. Jason Fogue asked if we think Dufour will bid
- Ms. Fisk hopes so.
- Mrs. Smidy said we are going to ask for the current structure and if we are all on the same schedule.

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

**F. Town Officials - None**

#### **8:00 PM X. COMMITTEE REPORTING (Enc.)**

**A. Superintendent's Evaluation - October 9, 2024**

**B. Legislative Liaison - none**

**C. Negotiations - none**

**D. Building Liaisons - none**

**E. CES Update - none**

**F. Policy - November 13, 2024**

#### **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#1099	\$303,737.06	PR #001	\$103,162.36
AP#1102	\$215,388.06	PR #002	\$180,147.65
AP#1103	\$47,816.99	PR #003	\$184,671.53
AP#1107	\$65.65	PR #004	\$126,146.59
AP#1108	\$76.29	PR #4.1	\$5,500.00
AP#1109	\$28.21	PR #4.2	\$1,000.00
AP#1000	\$290,302.85		
AP#1004	\$63,622.23		
AP#1106	\$195,885.70		
AP#1009	\$329,098.82		
AP#1012	\$5,606.50		
AP#1110	\$2,016.00		
AP#1014	\$112,972.50		

**8:25 PM XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION - None**

**8:50PM XV. 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 11 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)***

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

Respectfully submitted,  
 Stacy L Stewart,  
 School Committee Secretary