



**DISTRICT COMMITTEE
OPEN MEETING MINUTES
MEETING #1889
October 8, 2024**

Members Present:

Thomas Hatem	Methuen	Chairperson
Julio Mejia	Lawrence	Vice Chair
William Tarbox	North Andover	Asst. Treasurer
Zoila Disla	Lawrence	
Edinson Mercedes	Lawrence	
Annemarie Faris	Andover	
Bradley Jones	Methuen	

Members Absent:

<u>Others Present:</u>	John N. Lavoie	Superintendent-Director
	Brenda Richardson	Assistant Superintendent
	Gerry DiStefano	Treasurer
	Cheryl Dennis	District Recorder

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Hatem called the meeting to order at 6:00PM
Roll Call by District Recorder: Mr. Tarbox (present), Ms. Faris (present), Ms. Disla (present), Mr. Jones (present), Mr. Mejia (late arrival), Mr. Mercedes (present), Mr. Hatem (present).

2. MINUTES

a. Minutes of September 24, 2024
MOTION: Mr. Jones moved to approve the minutes of September 24, 2024.
2ND: Mr. Tarbox
VOTE: Unanimously Approved
#18853

MOTION: Mr. Jones moved to allow for the presentation of the Student’s Report.
2ND: Mr. Jones
VOTE: Unanimously Approved
#18854

2b. STUDENTS REPORT:

Mia Coplin, Layla Guerrero and Yeison Mora conducted the Student Rep Presentation while reviewing slides covering Hispanic Heritage Month and Family Game Night 9/15-10/15; PSAT Test 10/29; Family Game Night, Friday 10/10; GLTS Annual College and Career Fair 10/31; Quarter 1 Progress Reports; Reggies Represent at Methuen Day Sat. 10/5; Interact Club 9/21 where 8000 lbs. of trash was collected; Girls Soccer Team hosted a successful Car Wash on Saturday 9/28; Drivers Education is returning to GLTS-classes

will run from 2:45-5:15; September Athletes of the month were identified and plans for GLTS Spirit Week & Homecoming celebrations are underway.

3. FINANCE REPORT

a. Cash Balance Report

Mr. DiStefano read the Cash Balance Report.

MOTION: Ms. Faris moved to approve the Cash Balance Report as presented.

2ND: Mr. Jones

VOTE: Unanimously Approved

#18855

b. Consolidated Cash Reconciliation Report

c. Revolving Fund Report

d. Budget Report

4. COMMUNICATIONS

a. Donations

b. Articles

c. Public Participation

5. REPORTS OF THE SUPERINTENDENT-DIRECTOR

a. SAFE Office Update

Christa Gillis, Assistant Principal and William Vogel, Administrative Dean, both of the SAFE Office presented Discipline Procedures to the District Committee. Ms. Gills and Mr. Vogel reviewed the process relative to discipline procedures and communication via slides: Classroom Procedures-Discipline, SAFE Office Procedures-Discipline, and Keys to Successful Discipline. Mr. Mercedes questioned the success rate of the procedures presented. Mr. Vogel felt it's at 100%. They work constantly and consistently to resolve student issues. Ms. Gillis stated that for some it takes one detention or one call home, it varies as every incident is not the same. Supt. Lavoie reported that our job is to help students improve and be successful, you don't quit. Ms. Gills feels students are great, we don't give up on them. Supt. Lavoie reported that he believes thus far it's a wonderful year for both the students and the teachers. There will be bumps and sharp turns but they will eventually get there. Mr. Vogel reported that we're building and improving our relationships with students and teachers and we receive feedback individually which indicates we're doing a rock-solid job. Our open-door policy with the teachers is important. We receive positive and negative feedback but is worked out with discussion. Ms. Gillis stated the procedures themselves are not new, it's really about building the relationships. Mr. Mejia said there are teachers that agree with this procedure but others that don't and questioned how do you approach a scenario where the teacher refuses to handle something within the classroom and simply sends them to the SAFE office? Ms. Gillis indicated they take specific steps: the teacher may be having a bad day, we reach out to the teacher for more clarity to help them help the student – we determine what's going on. We ask a teacher what it is that's making him or her routinely send a particular student to SAFE. We're there to support both the student and the teacher. Ms. Faris voiced her concern as to when a decision is made that it's over their head – it must be recognized it's not a coincident someone keeps coming back. Mr. Vogel stated we work together with each other within the SAFE Office. If necessary, we'll call in a social worker. Ms. Gillis said we use MTSS intervention as much as possible. Ms. Faris is concerned that these behaviors are contrary to everything and extra vigilance is needed – we don't want to overlook something that was there all along. Ms. Gillis emphasized the growth and availability of resources which they avail themselves of. Ms. Faris questioned

if check in check out passes were being used to which Ms. Gillis confirmed. Ms. Gillis said that with the new system, reports are run on how long and how often a student is out of class. Supt. Lavoie stated if a student impacts the safety of students and/or adults, we may go to outside assistance for different strategies. Ms. Gillis reiterated that safety is our goal. Mr. Mercedes questioned what outside sources to which Supt. Lavoie responded anything from legal services to outside agencies. Chair Hatem questioned if not being an administrator impeded the effectiveness of Kate Keyes to which Ms. Gillis responded no, she's very professional and the teachers respect her in her position. Chair Hatem asked if there is anything needed to keep our faculty safe? Ms. Gillis stated simply your support.

b. Dress Code

Supt. Lavoie updated the District Committee on the Faculty and Student Dress Code Policy after meeting with the Dress Code Committee. Supt. Lavoie informed DC members the issue was sent to GLTS attorney for his input which he'll research and present to DC members at the next meeting. Ms. Faris believes a vocational technical high school should have separate rules and expectations, right? Supt. Lavoie stated GLTS can address safety in shops but students have more rights regarding dress codes. Some schools have lost legal battles over this - we haven't instituted changes as yet because we feel it best to have it reviewed by our attorney. Ms. Faris questioned if the current GLTS dress code were against the law to which Supt. Lavoie responded it was questionable. It is possible we're violating their rights. Ms. Faris stated the need to put parameters and boundaries around our youth, dressing appropriately is an integral part of having our students be their best. Supt. Lavoie indicated he wouldn't argue or disagree that point but it is their right. Once our attorney presents his report, we'll attempt to iron things out. Mr. Mercedes believes the students in his community, Lawrence, are too focused on what they're wearing – a name brand or not. I'm interested in hearing legal arguments for and against requiring uniforms. Uniforms would identify the student and relieve the pressure felt by parents. Ms. Faris and Mr. Jones would favor uniforms as well. If the standards are not set here, students will suffer out in the real world. Mr. Mejia asked Supt. Lavoie to ensure any recommendations from the attorney adequately address cultural and religious considerations – our policy must be integrated and fair. Do you know what rights may be in violation of a student's rights right now? Supt. Lavoie stated a student may not want to abide by some criteria in our dress code as it might interfere with their right to be creativity to express themselves. We need guidance to ensure we do not institute a new dress code that further violates our existing dress code.

c. Workforce Awards Announcement

Supt. Lavoie updated the District Committee on the Workforce Awards Announcement that he spoke at on September 27th at Brockton High School. We were a grantee of this grant in the Spring of 2024 in the amount of \$750,000 which was presented at the 3/12/24 DC Meeting. Supt. Lavoie was asked to speak about the new technology at their awards ceremony stating a photo of our students was featured in the brochure from 10 years ago – it was highlighted as an outstanding program.

d. Update on the Elks

Supt. Lavoie updated the District Committee on the purchase of the Elks. Supt. Lavoie indicated a suitable location for the Elks was still being pursued. A promising possibility is a lot in the City of Lawrence that entails some conservation issues which we may be able to resolve. We'll be reaching out to Brooks Properties as well regarding some land they own which they'd prefer to lease. We're building a barn out back which will include six medical classrooms until we can expand to the Elks.

e. DESE Recognizes GLTS for Achievement on Access Scores

Supt. Lavoie updated the District Committee on GLTS Achievement on Access Scores. Supt. Lavoie stated GLTS multilanguage employment program showed outstanding, significant progress on the access scores. Beginning next month, one administrator within the building relative to each specific program from academic to vocation programs will be highlighted at DC meetings.

f. October/November Calendars

6. REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEE

7. OLD BUSINESS

a. District Committee Priorities

b. Policy

To approve BGE, Policy Dissemination as presented. Chair Hatem instructed members to review changes in the last two sentences.

MOTION: Mr. Jones moved to approve BGE, Policy Dissemination as presented.

2ND: Mr. Mejia

VOTE: Unanimously Approved

#18856

8. NEW BUSINESS

9. TABLED MATTERS

10. PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS/REPORT

a. Resignations

- Heather Silva, ML Instructor, Effective 10/11/24

b. Leaves of Absence

c. Retirements

d. Appointments

- Jason Hull, Plumbing Instructor, Effective: 10/7/24
- Richard Sauro, Auto Collision & Repair Instructor, Effective: 11/4/24

Ms. Faris noted a discrepancy between what the principal sent out regarding new staff and what was presented at the last meeting and questioned how many reading specialists there were. Supt. Lavoie believed there were two in the last meeting. Ms. Faris did not recall Judith and stated the other one was in the Principal's report. Supt. Lavoie indicated that one had resigned and in filling that position a question arose as to her official start date that led to its reposting. Supt. Lavoie indicated names are received from HR and sometimes the timing is off. I'll look into it and enter it in the report next meeting.

e. Job Postings

11. FUTURE AGENDA ITEM

12. EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION: Mr. Mejia moved to enter into Executive Session at 7:35PM.

2ND: Ms. Faris

VOTE: Unanimously Approved

#18857

Enter Executive Session

Enter Open Session

MOTION: Mr. Jones moved to accept the resolution to the Labor Board complaint.

2ND: Mr. Tarbox

Roll Call by District Recorder

Ms. Disla	No
Mr. Jones	Yes
Mr. Mejia	Abstained
Mr. Mercedes	No
Mr. Tarbox	Yes
Ms. Faris	Yes
Chair Hatem	Yes

VOTE:

#18860

MOTION: Mr. Jones moved to create a policy requiring CORI checks for District Committee members.

2ND: Mr. Tarbox

Roll Call by District Recorder

Ms. Faris	Yes
Ms. Disla	Yes
Mr. Jones	Yes
Mr. Mejia	Abstained
Mr. Mercedes	Yes
Mr. Tarbox	Yes
Chair Hatem	Yes

VOTE:

#18861

Mr. Mercedes questioned how far back a CORI goes. He mentioned a man had made a mistake in the past and it haunted him in securing employment. Supt. Lavoie indicated it's only reviewed if something is picked up, it can go back 25 to 30 years. There are a number of factors to consider. Mr. Tarbox mentioned his experience with a player that got into trouble in high school and was hired by some towns but not in some of his neighboring towns, it has followed him throughout his life. Chair Hatem feels any issue should be dealt with by the city or town that sent them – let the voting population decide. Supt. Lavoie said it was tricky, only an individual at the highest level can review the results. Mr. Mejia is unaware of any school committee in the Commonwealth that requires a CORI. This is a volunteer position, we do not have the authority to take a vote and remove someone. Suggested GLTS attorney to a second look at that.

14. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Mr. Jones moved to adjourn at 8:26PM.

2ND: Mr. Mercedes

Roll Call by District Recorder

Mr. Tarbox Yes

Ms. Faris Yes

Ms. Disla Yes

Mr. Jones Yes

Mr. Mejia Yes

Mr. Mercedes Yes

Chair Hatem Yes

VOTE:

#18861

Respectfully Submitted:



Cheryl Dennis
District Recorder

Minutes Reviewed:



John N. Lavoie
Superintendent-Director