

GATEWAY REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES****WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2012****Gateway Library
7:30 P.M.****(A PORTION OF THIS MEETING MAY BE HELD IN EXECUTIVE SESSION)****I. OPENING OF MEETING**BLANDFORDMichele Crane
Jim KronholmCHESTERBeth Brett
Shirley WinerHUNTINGTONRon Damon
William HathawayMIDDLEFIELDCharles Henshaw
Sarah FoleyMONTGOMERYAnne Marie Buikus
Sandra HaasRUSSELLEllen Hirtle
Ruth KennedyWORTHINGTONSue Levreault
Gretchen EliasonSECRETARY

Stacy Stewart

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATIONDr. David B. Hopson, Superintendent
Stephanie Fisk, Business & FinanceADMINISTRATIVE COUNCILJoanne Blocker, Director of Academics
Angela Burke, Technology Director
Jason Finnie, High, Jr. High School Principal
Wendy Long, District Grant Writer
Celeste Malvezzi, High/Jr. High Assistant Principal
Alice Taverna, Pupil Services DirectorSTUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

OTHERS: _____

7:35 p.m. II. PUBLIC INPUT FOR ITEMS NOT LISTED ON AGENDA - None**III. STUDENT COUNCIL INPUT - None****IV. CONSENT ITEMS*****Mrs. Crane made a motion seconded by Mrs. Levreault to approve the minutes of 10/24/12.******Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 9 Nays Abstain 5 Absent*****V. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS/RECOGNITIONS****A. Holiday Musical Entertainment**

- School Committee went to the auditorium for a holiday presentation.

B. High School, Jr. High Update – Jason Finnie

- Mr. Finnie went over the good effort and excellent effort awards.
- In the high school every student passed English and only 3 students didn't pass Math.
- 23 students received the John and Abigail Adams scholarship.
- Student council opened the "swamp" otherwise known as the student store. It is appropriate to the new health regulations.
- Students are planning the day before school vacation to hold the annual reindeer games and a cross curricular activity.
- Holiday concert choir will perform on Monday at 7 p.m. They also requested to perform for students and faculty.

- New courses this year. Multimedia production - applied arts, sports management, body and brains, and introduction to video production – the gateway news network.
- Integrating the common core and 21st century learning standards. Mapping out units. Horizontal and vertically, moving into backwards design for the second half of the year. MAP testing 7-10 and will start its 2nd round in January/February.

C. Field Trip Policy -Number of Students Per Room – Beth Guertin

- Kendra Meisner a senior spoke about how important it was for her to go on the band competition field trip.
- Mrs. Guertin said the rules for rooming are that each student must have their own bed and must not share. With this policy the student are only allowed 2 to a room instead of four. This increases the cost of rooming for the trip.
- Mr. Finnie brought it to school council and student council and they voted unanimously to bring this change to school committee.
- Dr. Hopson said the policy is one to a bed. It is still pretty common to have four to a room. We could have parents sign off.
- Mrs. Eliason said there may be people who feel uncomfortable sharing a bed, how is it handled.
- Dr. Hopson said if for some reason a student is uncomfortable, they could ask to have two to a room. If there is a medical or handicap and they need to have their own bed the district has to pick it up.
- Ms. Malvezzi said the 8th grade trip was changed to just Philadelphia instead of DC as well was because of the two per room cost increase.

Mrs. Kennedy made a motion seconded by Mrs. Levreault to waive both the two meeting rule and two reading rule.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 10 Nays 3 Abstain 1 Absent

Mrs. Levreault made a motion seconded by Mrs. Kennedy to change the old policy.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 10 Nays 2 Abstain 2 Absent

VI. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Student Representative - None

B. School Committee

- Mr. Kronholm said today is the 12/12/12 Valley Gives day which the foundation took part in.
- Mrs. Long said we are at \$2,625 in donations today. To date we have raised \$3,125.00 and we have fulfilled both challenge grants.
- Mrs. Kennedy thanked everyone for voting for her to be a delegate at the joint conference. She brought back a whole bunch of information. There was a lot covered and she would like to see more than just her go. She would like to see us more involved with other school committees.

C. Chairperson

- It is time for the Yearbook ad again. It is usually about \$10 per person.
- The vice chair usually collects the money.
- Members were asked to turn in the money to Mrs. Eliason by the first meeting in January.

Mr. Damon made a motion seconded by Mrs. Kennedy to go into executive session at or before 9:30 p.m. for the purpose of union, non-union, and non-union administrative negotiations not to return to open session.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 14 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Ruth, Charlie, Ellen, Shirley, Michele, Jim, Ron, Sarah, Sue, Gretchen, Sandy, Anne-Marie, Bill, Beth

D. Superintendent – Central Office Update (Enc.)

- Everything is on agenda

E. Business Manager

- Gateway staff, wellness center members and school based health center staff collected over 200 gifts for DCF. The gifts went to children in the seven towns.

F. Administration

- Mrs. Burke said we came in about \$21,000 under what we had budgeted for the phone system. The Video surveillance system is aging. She would like to use the remainder of the money to upgrade the actual video recorder. It will record for longer periods and will be easier to get video on DVD. Administrators will be able to view video at their desks and there will be better access for the outside perimeter. She is trying to get service and support built into the contract.
- Mrs. Long said Monday night is the final holiday performance of the concert series and she believes it will include 2nd graders.

VII. AD HOC COMMITTEE REPORTING

A. Superintendent's Evaluation – Mid-cycle Review Process

- Mrs. Hirtle said the mid-year evaluation only has 7 responses. Did you have a hard time accessing, no time or not interested? We don't have a valid evaluation summary. This will become mandatory by the state next year. We will try to do this again in the late spring.
- Mrs. Eliason thanked the subcommittee for putting it together. It works better when you follow the instructions. She doesn't like to do it in one sitting. She would rather fill it out and take second and third looks at it.
- Mrs. Winer feels it is important to know why people didn't fill it out.
- Mrs. Crane asked if the state cares how we submit the results.
- Mr. Kronholm had trouble with Google docs.
- Dr. Hopson said what we turn into the state is the overall rating and impact on student learning.
- Mrs. Brett said this is one of the major jobs of the school committee.

B. Finance Subcommittee

- Met tonight. Mrs. Burke spoke about the phone system.
- Mrs. Eliason thanked her for sending out the mandated training.
- Started a review of the financial policy.
- The next meeting will be before the 2nd meeting in January at 6:30 p.m.

C. Policy Subcommittee - None

VIII. OLD BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

A. Regional Agreement Amendments

- Regional Agreement Amendments – Worthington has selected a legal firm and appropriated money as well. We should be receiving a letter soon.
- Mrs. Winer said there are two things changing: The Worthington issue and one man one vote.
- Dr. Hopson said we've already voted on what we are moving forward with regards to one man one vote.

B. Video/Audio Taping of TEAM Meetings Policy – Alice to discuss

- Ms. Taverna said the ultimate recommendation was from legal counsel because there were a number of parents who requested to tape meetings. We didn't have a policy so she asked several Pupil Services Directors to send the ones they had and then she also checked with legal counsel as well. Alice handed out a sample from Amherst and the one Margery had written years ago. Most places allow taping of IEP Meetings if there is a disability.
- Mrs. Levreault asked how many parents ask to tape meetings.
- Ms. Taverna said not many do.
- Mrs. Eliason being in an IEP meeting is like drinking from a fire hose. There are a lot of experts there, it is great, but it is very hard for parents to absorb it all in 60 minutes. The foremost measure should be is it helpful for the staff, students and parents. Recall is not perfect and sometimes only one parent can be present.
- Ms. Taverna has never been at a meeting that was being taped where there is a free flow of conversation. A lot of the meetings are run by staff and when there is a tape recorder, they are wondering if they are doing anything wrong. There are many ways for another parent to be involved such as Skype etc.
- Mrs. Buikus called Pat Corriera and she was going to check with legal, but she didn't see a problem with taping meetings.
- Mrs. Foley asked if a parent receives a set of meeting minutes.
- Ms. Taverna said they get a copy of the IEP and it goes back and forth for review. In the end the parents sign it.
- Mrs. Hirtle said yes there is a lot of very sensitive material, and what you say can be taken out of context.

- Ms. Taverna said parents are there with children during the evaluation; most meetings are very small and have four or five people. At the elementary there is a feeling of camaraderie among the teachers and parents. When the meeting is taped everyone's nerves get on edge because it doesn't happen often. Behavior is much different than other issues.
- Mrs. Crane has been in many team meetings, and being there as a parent can be stressful and emotional. She has never felt she needed to tape a meeting. There is plenty of time to look at the IEP before it is final. The thing she wants the most is absolute frankness of everyone in the meeting no matter how hard it is to hear.
- Mrs. Buikus doesn't see the need for a policy if very few people ask.
- Ms. Taverna said as a parent you can invite anyone you want to that meeting, advocate, attorney's, etc.
- Dr. Hopson said if you don't do anything with the policy Ms. Taverna is going to continue to not allow taping. Mrs. Taverna is asking for a policy to support what she is doing.
- Mrs. Levreault said you are talking about a very limited number of people; most parents don't have an advocate or a lawyer. Parents don't have any support network here at the schools. They are probably asking to record because they feel the district is not following the procedures.
- Ms. Taverna said there are many avenues, and they received a copy of their rights. Those rights need to be maintained. Absent a policy she is going to say no recording. Taping does not improve outcomes.
- Mrs. Levreault said there are a lot of times when only one parent can attend.
- Mrs. Eliason said this letter does not say you cannot tape.
- Ms. Taverna said it says in the absent of a policy, it is at the discretion of the Pupil Services Director.
- Mrs. Eliason said you can address the culturally when there is discussion and it stops because someone comes in. such as the superintendent. She feels it would be interpreted as you can't touch me, ha ha you can't record. Some people don't get paid leave, they just can't be there. It should be weather it benefits the parent.
- Dr. Hopson said you've never been in an IEP meeting that was taped. Do you speak freely when you know this meeting is being taped? He does not, Angela does not.
- Mrs. Eliason said she does speak freely when being taped.
- Mrs. Foley said she has taught special education – she has been at team meetings being recorded. The first thing that comes to mind is mediation. If it does go to mediation, is the tape recording submissable.
- Ms. Taverna said not, it is not allowed. It is allowed in BSA meetings. The district's tape is the official record not the families.
- Mrs. Winer said the ability of the parent to bring in someone is one way of getting around that.
- Mr. Henshaw said it doesn't seem to come up enough to prohibit.
- Mrs. Levreault asked how many IEP's and 504s.
- Mrs. Haas said she doesn't see the need to lumber ourselves with more paper.

Mrs. Crane made a motion seconded by Mr. Kronholm to approve the Video/Audio taping of Team meetings policy.

Motion Failed (VOTE) Yeas 6 Nays 7 Abstain 1 Absent

IX. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

A. Budget Parameters

- Dr. Hopson is asking school committee to look at the second page. Where do you want the leadership team to develop a budget?
- Level service: increase of \$500,000, 2.5% increase: \$411,000, 2.2% increase: \$362,000, level funded: cut \$500,000.
- Dr. Hopson would like school committee to make a decision on the direction for administration to put together a budget.
- Mr. Damon is opposed to any reduction from a level service budget that would reduce services to students.
- Mrs. Eliason asked if we could get details on 500,000 increase would come from. What was in E & D at the end of last year?
- Ms. Fisk said we used \$650,000 to offset budget. Out of district placements, reduction in circuit breaker. \$240,000 in circuit breaker reduction. This is also level funding utilities.
- Dr. Hopson said it is not changing staff, or utilities.
- Mrs. Kennedy asked if we are going to be taking part in increasing the day.
- Dr. Hopson said no, because we went through the whole process, expended the grant and in the end the union voted it down.

- Ms. Fisk said we no longer have the edu grant so those expenditures we have to build in the budget.
- Mr. Kronholm would like to start with a level service budget
- Mrs. Winer would echo that.
- Mrs. Hirtle said we need to make a statement that we are a school district that stands behind our students
- Mrs. Kennedy agrees but money does not grown on trees. We are supposed to work with our towns for the students.
- Mrs. Levreault certainly would start with level services. We should look at solar energy again.
- Ms. Fisk said another company will be here Tuesday.
- Dr. Hopson said we don't really need a level services budget – we have a retiring teacher and the class size reduction teacher will replace the retiring teacher. We are comfortable with something less than the \$500,000.
- Mrs. Levreault said if we keep the same amount of money it may allow us to bring something back.

Mr. Kronholm made a motion seconded by Mrs. Kennedy to approve a level services budget.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 10 Nay 4 Abstain Absent

- January 12 is the next GTAC
- Mrs. Winer asked what the four voters want if they are not voting.
- Mrs. Buikus stated that Dr. Hopson said we can get by with less.

B. School Committee Goals

- We need to come up with Goals both school and school committee – one of them was to get comfortable with Google docs. People could bring their computers.
- Mrs. Winer asked, do we want to educate the whole child or focus only on academics
- Beth can we all bring goals to the next meeting.
- Michele – can we look at the goals document and s
- 2nd piece of paper had thoughts that school committee He is not if he is working for a school committee who wants to cut the budget or is in the best interest of students.
- Read district goals as well.

X. OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Future Agenda Items

School Choice Presentation – Wendy Long
Auditor's Report – Stan Kulas

XI. INFORMATION

Information

SBHC adds Community Health Worker
Three Gateway projects await funding
Jr. High students rewarded for effort
Superintendent's Corner November 30, 2012
Littleville students collecting PJ's for book drive
First Term "Effort Awards" for Jr. High
Middle school & elementary concerts next week
December School Committee Meeting
Early Release Day December 11
Superintendent's Corner November 26, 2012
Breakfast for Dinner Fundraiser
Penny Social on December 7
NHS "Hold Up" on December 1
First term honor roll for high school
Holiday Concerts throughout Gateway
Gateway Foundation issued challenge grants
Financial aid workshop
Internships offer hands-on career preparation
"Blaze" and "Pumper" come to school!
Superintendent's Corner November 16, 2012

“Green” gators honor America Recycles Day
 Gateway Education Foundation to take part in “Valley Gives”
 New Librarian shares vision for learning resource center
 “Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act” at Gateway
 Superintendent’s Corner November 9, 2012
 Gateway vocalists at UMASS Honor Choir
 Gateway hosts presentation on college financing
 Superintendent’s Corner November 5, 2012

Warrants

AP# 1040 \$125,006.82	PR# 10 \$346,195.82
AP# 1044 \$146,630.08	PR# 11 \$374,257.71

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A Non Union and Union Contract Negotiations

Mr. Damon made a motion seconded by Mrs. Kennedy to go into executive session at or before 9:30 p.m. for the purpose of union, non-union, and non-union administrative negotiations not to return to open session.

Motion Carried (VOTE) Yeas 14 Nays Abstain Absent (Roll Call Vote)

Yeas: Ruth, Charlie, Ellen, Shirley, Michele, Jim, Ron, Sarah, Sue, Gretchen, Sandy, Anne-Marie, Bill, Beth

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Damon made a motion seconded by Mrs. Crane to adjourn at 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
 Stacy L Stewart,
 School Committee Secretary