

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, October 8, 2025****Middle School Room 117/119****7:00 P.M.****7:03 PM I. OPENING OF MEETING & QUESTION TO SEE IF ANYONE IS RECORDING**

Call to order: Mr. Forgue, Chairperson

BLANDFORD

Nicole Daviau
Keri Morawiec

CHESTER

Brian Forgue
Jason Forgue

HUNTINGTON

Brianna Sloane
Pegg Dragon
Lisa Goding

MIDDLEFIELD**MONTGOMERY**

Peter DeGregorio

RUSSELL

Tara Balboni
Lyndsey Papillon

SECRETARY

James Hayes

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Melissa Matarazzo, Superintendent
Amy Mason, School Business Administrator

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Ana Holmes, Alternate

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

Martha Gendron, Littleville Asst. Principal
Joan Tuttle, Dir. of Accountability & Grants
Melissa McCaul, Littleville Principal
Chris Parker, Technology Director
Dr. William Sullivan, GRS Principal
Val Zeh, GRS Asst. Principal

OTHERS: Tammy Mirenda, Becket; Andrew Alward, Town Admin, Chester

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)
No public input.

7:06 PM III. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS/RECOGNITIONS**A. [Superintendent Entry Plan](#)**

- Dr. Matarazzo presented her entry plan and referenced an attached link.
- Dr. Matarazzo explained the 3-year induction program for new superintendents.

B. Gateway Naming Plaque

- Mr. Duggan and students conducted historical research on the term "Gateway."
- A commemorative plaque was proposed and will be created and displayed.

C. SkillsUSA

- A presentation was given on the SkillsUSA program and its benefits for Gateway students.

D. MCAS Results Overview

- District-wide ELA and Math MCAS results were reviewed.
- Noted improvement in Grades 6–8. Grade 10 saw a significant drop, aligning with a statewide trend as MCAS is no longer a graduation requirement.
- Jason Forgue inquired how student engagement would be maintained since MCAS is not a requirement for graduation. Dr. Sullivan responded: recognizing growth and offering incentives (e.g., recess, food).
- Jason Forgue asked about data tracking.
 - Dr. Sullivan confirmed I-Ready is used.
- Concerns were raised about "teaching to the test" and state funding accountability.
- Tara Balboni noted students perceive I-Ready as unimportant.
 - Dr. Sullivan acknowledged and said they're working to change that perception.
- Nicole Daviau asked about opt-outs.
 - Dr. Sullivan said no known opt-outs but acknowledged some students rushed through.
- Lisa Goding shared examples from other districts to improve student engagement.
- Ana Holmes asked if families give reasons for opting out.
 - Dr. Sullivan said no reasons are required.

7:27 PM IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

A. None

7:28 PM V. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEM

A. 1st Read: [JICDA Academic Honesty](#)

- Lisa Goding asked for clarification on "improper AI use."
- Dr. Sullivan explained that while teachers may use AI as a tool, students should not use it to generate full reports.
- Policy will be up for vote at the November meeting.

B. Approval for Extended Field Trips: SkillsUSA

- a. Fall State Leadership Conference, November 23-24, 2025; Marlborough, MA; 5 students, 2 staff

- b. State Competition, April 30-May 2, 2026; Marlborough, MA; up to 6 students, 2 staff
- c. National Competition, June 1-6, 2026; Atlanta, GA. Details to follow if applicable.
 - **Motion: Nicole Daviau**
 - **Second: Tara Balboni**
 - **Vote: 10 Yeas, 0 Nays**

7:33 PM VI. CONSENT ITEMS

A. [Approval of Minutes 9/10/25](#)

- **Motion: Nicole Daviau**
- **Second: Brian Fogue**
- **Vote: 7 Yeas, 0 Nays, 3 Abstentions (Tara Balboni, Keri Morawiec, Lyndsey Papillon)**

B. [Approval of Grants and Donations](#)

- **Motion: Brian Fogue**
- **Second: Nicole Daviau**
- **Vote: 10 Yeas, 0 Nays**

C. [Approval of Q1 Budget Transfers](#)

- Presented by Amy Mason, who commented that there is nothing “unusual” about the transfers this quarter.
- **Motion: Brian Fogue**
- **Second: Nicole Daviau**
- **Vote: 10 Yeas, 0 Nays**

7:45 PM VII. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE UPDATE

Ana Holmes reported:

- Littleville:
 - Open house went well
 - Recent events: NED assembly, “Bingo for Books,” book swap, author visit (Eric Bennett)
- Chester:
 - Started “Character Trait of the Month” initiative
 - First trait: Kindness – “Hero of the Month” awards introduced
- GRS:
 - I-Ready assessments completed
 - Unity programs with HS/MS students
 - 7th/8th graders participated in training with Northeastern
 - Senior nights ongoing, sports teams doing well
 - New chemistry teacher hired
 - Engineering students attended trip to Basketball Hall of Fame
 - Administration making positive changes to include students
 - “The Den” space is being used for mixed-grade socialization
 - NEST program growing in popularity; students want more club days
 - Concern: Underclassmen dominate NEST due to class size and maturity

- Following a question from Lisa Goding, reported improved usage of Free Store with added restrictions

7:55 PM VIII. COMMUNICATIONS

A. School Committee

- Nicole Daviau asked about reviewing attendance records for committee members and related actions.
- Jason clarified that members are elected by towns, and removal must go through town processes.
- Brian added there are limited ways a member can be replaced.

B. Chairperson

- Jason Forge commented that the scoreboard "magically" started working. He is seeking quotes for a replacement of the scoreboard. The policy on use of facilities might need to be changed to allow advertisement.
- Suggested involving the community and fundraising to find a long-term solution.

C. Superintendent (Enc.)

- Dr. Matarazzo announced the district can now accept non-resident students into CTE programs – financially beneficial.
- Mentioned issues with scoreboard, irrigation (due to well water), and summer bathroom usage – the latter will not happen again.
- Nicole Daviau suggested exploring rainwater use.

D. Assistant Superintendent

- Amy Mason working on streamlining internal processes to better support staff.

E. Administration (Enc.)

- Mrs. Zeh's birthday is tomorrow
- Open house scheduled for 6:00–7:30 PM

F. Town Officials

- Andrew Alward introduced himself as Chester's new town administrator.

8:02 PM IX. COMMITTEE REPORTING

A. Superintendent's Evaluation

B. Legislative Liaison

- Kristin Smidy on Board of Ed
- DESE released graduation requirements draft proposals (non-MCAS-based): potential for end-of-course state assessments

C. Negotiations

- Scheduled for upcoming months

D. Building Liaisons

- GRS: No report
- Pupil Services: Continuing work

E. CES Update

- Chose firm for Dr. Gazda's replacement

F. Policy

- Reviewed new Central Office org chart, CTE Admissions Policy and Middle School Pathways Policy
- Discussed preschool/school choice admissions. School Committee does not have control over residency definition or decision. Determined that PreSchool Handbook had not been approved by Committee so coming forward in the future. Dr. Matarazzo to learn if seats are available to be open to district non-resident staff and how we would select those students.
- Dr. Matarazzo clarified policies for members absent last month

8:18 PM X. OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

- Lisa Goding requested discussion on SBHC access policies – seeking clarification on who may attend. Jason Forge confirmed this would be placed on the next agenda.

8:18 PM XI. INFORMATION

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

AP#1014 - \$154,249.75

PR#5.0 - \$336,058.87

AP#1021 - \$3.77

PR#6.0 - \$469,057.61

AP#1017 - \$197,216.71

PR#7.0 - \$397,854.67

AP#1023 - \$84,947.48

8:25 PM XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

8:25 PM XIII. ADJOURNMENT by 9 p.m. unless extended by majority vote.