

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, April 8, 2026

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: Mr. Forgue, Chairperson

BLANDFORD

Nicole Daviau

CHESTER

Jeana Briggs
Brian Forgue
Jason Forgue

HUNTINGTON

Pegg Dragon
Lisa Goding

MIDDLEFIELD

Tasha Strong
Stephanie Simonowicz

MONTGOMERY

Peter DeGregorio

RUSSELL

Alicia Hansen
Lyndsey Papillon
Jennifer Pappas

SECRETARY

James Hayes

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

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

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

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

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Theodore DeAngelis-Page

OTHERS: Lexi Jennings, Jason Parron, Wendy Long, Alexis Batras

7:02 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)

7:05 PM III. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS/RECOGNITIONS

A. Sen Paul Marks - Not present

B. [Portrait of a Gator - GRS](#)

- **Dr. William Sullivan reviewed attached slide with the committee**
- Jason Forge - asked which 4 categories were cut
 - Dr. William Sullivan - Tech skilled, engaged, resourceful, self-directed
 - Jeana Briggs- should be clearly understood as a two-sided skill
- Pegg Dragon - wording may be too complex for elementary level
- Alicia Hansen - mentioned she hopes there will be a rubric or guidelines to assess students
- Lisa Goding- asked why 4 categories were cut
 - Dr. William Sullivan - most schools visited had no more than 6 categories
- Lisa Goding - would like to see some categories added back
- Lisa Goding- Preference for “resilient” over “perseverance”
- Jen Pappas - asked if “creative” was considered
 - Dr. William Sullivan - not specifically, but could be incorporated into a category
- Stephanie Simonowicz - prefers “integrity” over “leadership”
- Lisa Goding - suggested student focus groups
 - Dr. William Sullivan - feedback was already gathered through survey and discussions
- Nicole Daviau - “ethical” may vary in interpretation; should be clarified
- Peter DeGregorio - asked if competencies are aspirational
 - Dr. William Sullivan - not graded, but students must demonstrate they meet expectations
- Jeana Briggs - concern that some students may struggle to demonstrate behaviors
 - Dr. William Sullivan - this is the first class implementing; will adjust case-by-case
- Stephanie Simonowicz - concerns about: Public speaking, Student anxiety, Age appropriateness, Risk of students struggling or failing
- Lisa Goding - believes students will be supported through preparation with teachers and counselors
- Peter DeGregorio - what happens if students refuse to participate?
 - Jason Forge - some level of pressure may be necessary if tied to graduation requirements

C. [Barr Foundation Next Proposal](#)

- **Dr. William Sullivan shared attached slides with the committee**
- Jason Forge - asked if extended studies are used to determine CP vs. Honors placement
 - Dr. William Sullivan - yes, student performance in extended studies helps determine best fit.
- Alicia Hansen - asked if extended learning is an extra period
 - Dr. William Sullivan – no, students select it during NEST/Flex time
- Jason Forge - asked if the program will be internal with the same teacher overseeing it
 - Dr. Sullivan – yes
- Jason Forge - asked if there is monitoring to ensure appropriate credit, noting some AP courses can be easier online
 - Dr. William Sullivan - over time, they will evaluate which courses are appropriate.
- Lisa Goding - asked for more detail on #1

- Dr. William Sullivan - reviewed the attached link related to #1
 - Jason Forgue - questioned #2, suggesting making it 90% of all students rather than separation
 - Dr. William Sullivan - the number came from student survey data and was considered achievable
 - Jason Forgue - noted that with small subgroups, even 1–2 students feeling excluded would heavily impact meeting the goal
 - Dr. William Sullivan - stated that through “Planning Palooza” and reviewing other schools, the approach reflects a collaborative effort
 - Lisa Goding - asked about the YouthTruth survey frequency
 - Dr. William Sullivan - Fall 2026 and Spring 2029
 - Jason Forgue - asked if all students take the survey
 - Dr. Melissa Matarazzo - students in grades 3–12 participated
 - Pegg Dragon - asked how mid-year or late-entry students will be supported
 - Dr. Melissa Matarazzo - will be handled case-by-case to get students up to speed
- D. Superintendent’s Entry Plan Report: [Slides](#), [Report](#)
- a. Dr. Melissa Matarazzo reviewed the attached slides and report attached

8:18 PM IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

- A. Recommend approval of [Adjusted Grades 6-8 Pathway Policy](#)
- Motion: Brian Forgue moved to approve
 - Second: Nicole Daviau
 - Vote: Yes: 10, No: 0, Abstain: 1 (Jen Pappas)

8:20 PM V. NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEM

- A. Recommendation to approve 2028 Costa Rica Trip (Enc.)
- a. Alexis Batras (HS Spanish Teacher) reviewed information on the 2028 trip for students 22 monthly payments of \$177 for the trip. \$3699. 1 free chaperone per 6 children. Benefits - kids learn independence, keep track of their belongings, learn time management, and responsibility.
- Motion: Waive 2-meeting rule (Nicole Daviau)
 - Second: Brian Forgue
 - Vote: Yes: 11, No: 0
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- Motion: Nicole Daviau moved to approve
 - Second: Alicia Hansen
 - Vote: Yes: 11, No: 0
- B. Recommendation to Participate in the National School Lunch Program for the FY ‘27 School year.
- C. Recommendation to Participate in School Choice for the FY ‘27 School Year.
- D. Recommendation for approval of Student Activities Accounts for the FY ‘27 School Year (Enc.)

- E. Superintendent requests authorization for the District Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer under the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 71 Section 16 (9), and with the approval of the Chairperson of the Gateway Regional School Committee, to incur temporary debt, (borrow from time to time) in anticipation of revenue to be received and source for the fiscal year beginning July, 1, 2026. This is for short term borrowing in case assessments are not received on time, etc.
- a. Lisa Goding asked a brief question of understanding
- Motion: Brian Forgue moved to approve Item E
 - Second: Nicole Daviau
 - Vote: Yes: 11, No: 0
- F. Recommendation to approve FY '26 Third Quarter Budget Transfers.
- G. Recommendation to approve the last day of school as June 22, 2026 for elementary and June 23, 2026 for secondary.
- H. Recommend approval of Extended Parental Leave Request ([Enc.](#))
- Motion: Brian Forgue moved to approve B, C, D, F, G, H
 - Second: Peter DeGregorio
 - Vote: Yes: 11, No: 0

8:40 PM VI. CONSENT ITEMS

- A. Approval of [Donations & Grants](#)
- Motion: Brian Forgue moved to approve
 - Second: Nicole Daviau
 - Vote: Yes: 11, No: 0
- B. Approval of [Minutes for 3/4/26](#)
- Motion: Lisa Goding moved to approve
 - Second: Brian Forgue
 - Vote: Yes: 9, No: 0, Abstain: 2 (Nicole Daviau, Jenn Pappas)
- C. Approval of [Minutes for 3/11/26](#)
- Vote: Yes: 9, No: 0, Abstain: 2 (Nicole Daviau, Jenn Pappas)

8:45 PM VII. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE UPDATE

- A. [Student Rep Update](#)
- Theodore DeAngelis-Page reviewed the attached document

8:55 PM VIII. COMMUNICATIONS

- A. School Committee
1. Peter DeGregorio - would like documents and files made available to the public made available on google drive.
 - a. Jason Forgue - we can find a way to make that happen
- B. Chairperson
- C. Superintendent ([Enc.](#))
- Dr. Melissa Matarazzo reviewed the attached document and also added that Ellen Emmonds has retired. She has been trained and replaced by Katie Holmes.
- D. School Business Administrator

1. [Q3 financials updated](#)
- E. Administration ([Enc.](#))
- F. Town Officials

9:00 PM IX. COMMITTEE REPORTING

- A. Superintendent's Evaluation
 - Jason Forgue- Within 2 weeks you will receive a questionnaire invite. Jun 1, 2026 is the deadline to complete that.
- B. [Legislative Liaison](#)
 - Brian Forgue - reviewed the attached slide.
 - Wendy Long - any information from Sen Boldyga on his position with Rural aid?
 - Brian Forgue - believes he supports it but his strategy doesn't seem effective so far.
 - Jason Perron in attendance introduced himself to run for State Senate.
 - Specifically mentioned how impressed he is with the school committee here vs others he has dealt with.
- C. Negotiations
 - Jason Forgue - Ongoing negotiations with IA. Nothing new to report.
- D. Building Liaisons
- E. CES Update
- F. Policy
 - Jason Forgue - Next month will have policy subcommittee meeting

9:06 PM X. OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

9:06 PM XI. INFORMATION

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

#1073 - \$42.29	Health Ins - \$396,955.73
#1071 - \$76,769.92	Life Ins/LTD/Dental - \$12,886.78
PR 19.0 - \$499,026.07	#1074 - \$237,488.15
PR 19.1 - \$2,819.28	

9:07 PM XIII. ADJOURNMENT by 9 p.m. unless extended by majority vote.

Motion: Brian moved
Second: Nicole

James Hayes
School Committee Secretary