

GATEWAY REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 9, 2026

Gateway Regional School

7:00 P.M.

Attendance:

School Committee Present: Jason Forgue, Katherine McDonough, Jessica Sakaske, Pegg Dragon, Stephanie Simonowicz, Lisa Goding, Alicia Hansen, Jakob Wyman (arrived late) Lyndsey Papillon, Jennifer Pappas, Peter DeGregorio, Elizabeth Canedy, Tasha Strong

Administration Present: Dr. Melissa Matarazzo, Dr. William Sullivan, Amy Mason, Martha Gendron, Joan Tuttle, Melissa McCaul, Val Zeh, Alexandra Jennings

Secretary Present: Melissa McKellick

Student Representative Present: Elle DeMoss

Public Present: Brian Forgue

Minutes:

Call to order: Dr. Matarazzo, 7:04 pm

7:05 | REORGANIZATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE

A. Nominate Jason Forgue as Chairperson

- a. Motion by Lyndsey Papillon
- b. Seconded by Peter DeGregorio

Nominate Lyndsey Papillon as Chairperson

- a. Motion by Tasha Strong
- b. Seconded by Jason Forgue
- c. Vote by ballot: 9 Jason Forgue 3 Lyndsey Papillon

Jason Forgue takes over as Chair.

B. Nominate Peter DeGregorio as Vice-Chair

- a. Motion by Pegg Dragon
- b. Seconded by Lisa Goding
- c. Vote by ballot: 12 for Peter Degregorio

C. Appointment of Melissa McKellick School Committee Secretary

D. Appointments;

- o Sick Bank Committee (2 members) Pegg Dragon, Alicia Hanson
- o Negotiations Committee: Lisa Goding, Peter DeGregorio, Jessica Sakaske, Jason

Forgue

- o Superintendent's Evaluation: Peter DeGregorio, Jennifer Pappas, Katherine

McDonough, Elizabeth Canedy, Jason Forgue

- Policy Committee: Lyndsey Pappillon, Pegg Dragon, Lisa Goding, Peter DeGregorio, Jennifer Pappas
- Warrant Signing Committee: Elizabeth Canedy, Pegg Dragon, Lisa Goding, Jason Forgue, Peter DeGregorio, Tasha Strong, Jennifer Pappas,
- Collaborative for Educational Services (CES) Representative: Peter DeGregorio
- Gateway Education Foundation: Lyndsey Papillion, Jessica Sakaske
- Legislative Contact: Elizabeth Canedy, Jakob Wyman

Jakob Wyman entered the meeting.

Jason Forgue discussed forming a finance committee that would meet before the regular meeting possibly by zoom. Discussion about the purpose of the committee and how it would operate began, but Mr. Forgue suggested that this would be best as the topic of the 1st meeting of the subcommittee.

- Finance Committee: Jason Forgue, Tasha Strong, Peter DeGregorio, Lisa Goding
- Liaisons
 1. Chester Elementary: Stephanie Simonowicz
 2. Littleville Elementary: Jennifer Pappas
 3. Gateway Regional School: Alicia Hansen, Lyndsey Papillion
 4. Accountability & Grants: Alicia Hansen
 5. Pupil Services: Lisa Goding
 6. Finance and Facilities: Peter DeGregorio

II. PUBLIC INPUT

No public input

III. PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS/RECOGNITION

A. Welcome back-Superintendent

Discussion: The Superintendent shared the district goals, new staff, and priorities for 2026-2027. The group discussed both the positives and negatives of AI in education and the need to think about what the district's stance will be on AI. They also discussed cyber security.

B. Budget Update-Business Manager

Discussion: Business Manager explained the sources of revenue in the school budget, and provided updates on funding changes since the Committee approved the budget in March. This included expenses that needed to be added, like additional .5 nurse, and also variation in grant funds. Discussed additional Rural Aid funds and the need for new boilers. Talked about starting the RFP process to see if rural aid could be used to update these systems.

Action: It is the will of the committee to start the RFP process for boilers contingent on funding. The Superintendent and Business Manager will take next steps.

C. Grants Update

Discussion:

The committee agrees to extend the meeting until 9:30.

- a. Motion by Jessica Sakaske
- b. Seconded by Peter DeGregorio
- c. All in favor (13)

Grants Funding Update: Director of Grants and Accountability

Discussion: Director of Accountability and Grants updated the Committee on entitlement and competitive grant funds in relation to what the district has received over time.

Elle DeMoss suggested that NHS students could help tutor younger students to earn NHS hours because of reduced funding

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS

No unfinished business/action items

V. NEW BUSINESS/ ACTION ITEM

A. Regional Agreement

- a. Discussion- The need for an updated Regional Agreement. Explanation of what Alternative Assessment is. Dr. Matarazzo explained that this also goes through the RFP process.
- b. Action: Committee would like Dr. Matarazzo to begin the RFP process.

B. Approve updated JKAA: Timeout, seclusion, and physical restraint

- a. Motion by Pegg Dragon
- b. Seconded by Alicia Hanson
- c. Discussion: No discussion
- d. Vote: 13 Yea 0 Nay

VI. CONSENT ITEMS

A. Approve meeting minutes from June 10, 2026 and August 25, 2026

- a. Motion by Lyndsey Papillon
- b. Seconded by Alicia Hansen
- c. Discussion: No discussion
- d. Vote: 12 Yea 0 Nay 1 Abstain

B. Accept Donations & Grants

- a. Motion by Lyndsey Papillon
- b. Seconded by Lisa Goding & Pegg Dragon
- c. Discussion: No discussion
- d. Vote: 13 Yea 0 Nay

VII. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE UPDATE

Discussion: Elle DeMoss talked about the girls soccer team winning their first game, their new uniforms, concerns about lack of doors on bathrooms, college recommendation letters and counselors availability.

Dr. Sullivan shared that all bathroom stalls have doors, but due to high concerns about student safety in bathrooms that were repeatedly addressed in 2025-2026, doors into the hallways have been removed. There is no direct line of sight into the bathrooms where the doors were removed. He also assured the Committee that he will write recommendations for students who need them, and that Ms. Kamins will begin supporting the college application process soon.

VIII. COMMUNICATIONS

Discussion: Chester town official Brian Fogue discussed the desire for a Regional Agreement and the increase in insurance costs to the town. He asked Dr. Matarazzo if the district was considering alternative approaches to health insurance. She replied that the district is not at this time.

IX. OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Adjourn

-Motion to adjourn: Jason Forgue 9:27 pm