

**GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES: Wednesday, February 8, 2017
GCTV Studios, 393 Main Street, Greenfield MA
(approved 03.08.2017)**

Present: Don Alexander (DA); Timothy Farrell (TF); Jordana Harper, Superintendent (JH); Susan Hollins (SH); William Martin (WM); Adrienne Nunez (AN); Nathaniel Tripp (NT).

Absent: Cameron Ward (CW).

Also present: GEA representatives Tom Bevaqua, Donna Rivers, Ann Valentine; Howard Barber, Business Manager; Dianne Ellis, Director of Student Services; Valerie Miller, AEL principal; Karen Patenaude, GHS Acting Principal; GHS Student Representative Amy O'Sullivan; other school staff and citizens.

I. Call to Order

With a quorum present (DA, TF, SH, WM, AN, NT), Chair Martin opened the meeting at 6:37 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes

AN moved to approve minutes of Dec. 14, 2016 and Jan. 11, 2017. TF 2nd. Motion passed.

III. Public Comment

Tom Bevaqua, GEA president and GMS teacher, spoke to shortage of substitute teachers, concern for effect on children, GEA's desire to work with School Cte to find solutions.

Ann Valentine, GEA Vice-President and Federal Street teacher, described how schools cope when subs not available: children sent to other classrooms with worksheet packets; principals and paras cover, neglecting their own duties. Suggestions:

- increase pay for subs
- training seminars for subs
- hire full-time sub for each building
- compensate teachers who receive extra students
- interview/exit survey: Why are subs not returning?

Donna Rivers, GEA representative and GMS/MSA teacher, shared statement of concern re: shortage of subs, paras, nurses. Administrators are aware. Effect on students: crowded classrooms, health/safety concerns, behavior issues. Suggestions:

- prioritize outreach (post job ads, social media, job search sites, radio, outreach to colleges)
- comparable pay
- hiring full-time sub at each school
- training for subs
- recruit parents
- tokens of appreciation to subs
- replace automated system with substitute coordinator to make personal calls
- pay for paras who serve as subs

IV. Reports

A. Student Representatives

Amy O'Sullivan reported on activities at GHS including club activities, fundraisers, prom dress drive; volunteering at Stone Soup Café, Winter Carnival; winter sports (notably girls' hockey team two wins from playoffs).

B. Chair's Report

1. Substitute Shortage

Chair Martin thanked GEA/staff for bringing concerns re: substitute teacher shortage. Requests data: number of subs; number of vacant classrooms; categories of why teacher is out; nearby districts' rates of pay, their experience with shortage.

Discussion:

SH suggested evaluating Aesop.

JH described benefits of Aesop; extensive efforts to recruit subs.

TF: Why are there fewer subs?

Bevaqua: Full-time subs help in other ways if not needed to cover classrooms.

2. Subcommittees Appointments

- Budget & Finance – Chair: Nunez; members: Farrell, Hollins
- Policy & Program – Chair: Hollins; members: Alexander, Martin
- Personnel & Collective Bargaining: Chair: Tripp; members Nunez, Ward
- Facilities, Health & Safety – Chair: Ward; members Alexander, Tripp
- Unique Learning – Chair: Martin; members Farrell, Hollins
- ELT Task Force (ad hoc) – Chair: Alexander; members, Ward, Nunez, Supt. designee, resident/parent

TF moved to approve subcommittee appointments. SH 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

Request for subcommittee list, with description of purpose, to be posted on GPS website.

3. Innovation School at Four Corners

WM: Reminder that final plan to be presented at April mtg. Directed Unique Learning Subcte to review. Unique Learning Subcte to discuss MAVA as opportunity to enhance GPS curriculum.

C. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Harper highlighted recent work:

- Kindergarten registration (Class of 2030)
- Preschool Open House Feb. 15
- MSA food drive donation to Food Bank of Western Mass.
- Snow/weather cancellations: difficult decision, err on side of caution
- Thanked parents, staff on MSA transition team. "Robust conversations." Fall 2017 MSA program moves to GMS building: how to preserve MSA identity, program; benefits to both MSA and GMS.
- Students involved in successful Winter Carnival

SH suggested AEL's entry into 2016 film festival for welcome, marketing.

D. Subcommittees

1. Personnel

NT reported that subcte re-organizing with revised membership, wider charge that includes collective bargaining.

2. Budget

AN reported subcte is deep into budget process. Reviewing principals' requests, opportunities for decreases. Comprehensive summary at March School Cte mtg.

3. Negotiations

AN reported that Unit C negotiations are moving forward.

Following executive session consideration (1/11/17), need open-session vote on movement of occupational therapist assistant and physical therapist assistant into GEA Unit C. **AN moved to**

accept agreement between Greenfield School Committee and GEA regarding occupational therapy assistant and physical therapy assistant. SH 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Policy

SH reported that 6 policies are under active discussion: revolving funds, facility use, plus preparing 2nd reading of 4 reviewed prior. Desire to clarify process by which voted policies get in place.

WM requested Subcte bring to next School Cte mtg policy on School Cte attorney.

WM asked Supt. to provide GHS Curriculum Handbook.

SH: State reimbursement for transportation covers students with IEPs stipulating transportation; for early childhood program registered/licensed as daycare. Potential reimbursement if students first driven to one school, switch buses to go to other school (as with MSA students).

Dianne Ellis clarified special education reimbursement.

Howie Barber will research potential preschool reimbursement.

V. Business

A. GHS Global Glimpse trip to Nicaragua

Karen Patenaude, GHS Acting Principal, responded to School Cte concerns from Jan. 11 mtg.

- Chaperone's trip paid by Global Glimpse, not by students
- 1 GHS chaperone, 4 total chaperones. GHS group (11 students, 1 teacher) teamed with Springfield group (9 students, 1 teacher), plus 2 Global Glimpse staff in Nicaragua.
- Tourist police office next to students' hostel
- Medical information, including vaccinations
- Benefits of leadership training
- Most received full scholarships. Fundraising to reduce students' costs.

B. Academy of Early Learning Tuition Rates for FY18

Supt. Harper provided overview: Rates not adjusted for 7-8 years. Timing of decision allows advance notice to families for next year. AEL rates among lowest in county/region. Goals: Keep AEL accessible to all families (Level 1 = free) and keep program self-sustaining.

Discussion:

- Rates increasing \$1-\$2/day. Other districts up to \$65/day; AEL's proposed highest rate \$33/day.
- Value of AEL: free breakfast, lunch; educational program; most teachers with Master's degrees; 166 days in session; full-day, morning, afternoon options.
- Wrap care (before and after school): proposed fee increase from \$4 to \$5/hour.
- \$496K from general funds, plus grants. Approx. \$750K operational costs. AEL serves severely handicapped children with extraordinary individual costs. Active search for grants.

AN moved to approve proposed tuition rate increase for AEL for FY 2018, and to approve increase in wrap care from \$4 to \$5/hour. DA 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

C. Policy BK: School Committee Membership – first reading

SH provided first reading of BK, reviewed changes. Second reading, vote to come at March mtg.

VI. New Business

A. Full Committee Budget Meetings

Members asked to hold March 1 for possible special School Cte mtg to review, discuss budget. Budget hearing March 8.

B. Hockey Fundraiser

TF announced GHS hockey alumni game (25th anniversary) on Feb. 11, scholarship fundraiser.

C. Calendars

Draft of 2017-18 school calendar sent to GEA. Administrators reviewing. Likely presentation at March mtg.

Policy Subcte directed to draft calendar for School Cte (topics by month, deadlines)

D. GHS Course Offerings

Add to agenda for March School Cte mtg.

E. Strategic Plan

The 3-5 year Strategic Plan is currently in progress (approved by School Committee October 2015). Request to distribute now to members to review. Consider both Superintendent's and School Cte's goals. Put on agenda for workshop meeting and/or regular April meeting? Potentially include strategic planning training.

F. Minutes Process

WM clarified that unedited draft minutes will be sent to members as soon as available. Consideration, amendments at next regular mtg. Goal for "general encapsulation," consistent style/tone.

VII. Adjournment

TF moved to adjourn. SH 2nd. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Farber
Recording Secretary