

THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Our mission is for all students to be successful, engaged, lifelong learners.

School Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 9, 2019

District Office Conference Room
2 Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA
7:00 p.m.

Members Present

Jonathan Pope, Chairman
Kathy Clancy, Vice Chairperson (7:03 p.m.)
Tony Gross, Secretary
Melissa Teixeira Prince
Michelle Sweet
Joel Favazza

Administration Present

Dr. Richard Safier, Superintendent
Gregg Bach, Asst. Superintendent
Gary Frisch, Director of Finance
and Operations

Recorded by 1623 Studios

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** – Chairman Pope called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and stated the mission of the Gloucester Public Schools.
- II. **SALUTE TO THE FLAG**
- III. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS** – None.
- IV. **COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRPERSON** – None.
- V. **RECOGNITIONS** – Chairman Pope reported that the West Parish fifth graders are performing “The Lorax” tonight and tomorrow night. Mr. Favazza recognized the GHS Docksidiers and chorus for their holiday concert, stating that he was “floored” by how good it was.
- VI. **GHS STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL** – Elizabeth Schuster introduced herself and updated the committee on the following events at GHS: wrestling match, girls’ basketball game, and midterms.
- VII. **CONSENT AGENDA**
 - A. **Approval of Minutes**
 - 1. School Committee Executive Session of November 14, 2018
 - 2. Personnel Subcommittee of November 27, 2018
 - 3. Building & Finance Subcommittee of November 28, 2018
 - 4. School Committee of November 28, 2018
 - B. **Approval of Warrants**

- C. Approval of Transfers** – November 2018
- D. Referrals**
- E. Acceptance of Scholarship** – Thomas G. Lucido Scholarship in the amount of \$1,000.00
- F. Acceptance of Gift** -- \$75.00 from Lueders
- G. Approval of Out-of-State Field Trip** – GHS JROTC to Phoenix, Arizona from February 6, 2019 to February 10, 2019 for Rifle Team Nationals Competition

On a motion by Ms. Teixeira Prince, seconded by Ms. Sweet, it was unanimously

VOTED: 5 in favor, 0 opposed to approve the Consent Agenda as noted.

(Kathy Clancy joined the meeting at 7:03 p.m.)

Chairman Pope reported that Gunner Muth has announced that he is retiring at the end of the school year.

VIII. DELIBERATIONS ON EDUCATIONAL ISSUES/SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

- A. Superintendent’s Evaluation** – Chairman Pope read the committee members’ individual evaluations and noted that the summative evaluation includes all of the comments submitted by the members.

Mr. Gross stated that Dr. Safier has always looked for ways to improve the quality of Gloucester Public Schools. He does not shy away from reporting on weaknesses and challenges in the district and comes up with ways to meet those challenges.

Ms. Sweet stated that it has been a pleasure working with Dr. Safier and that the continued success of the district is directly related to his efforts. His dedication to our schools is shown in everything he does and she looks forward to working with him over the next year.

Ms. Teixeira Prince read the comments contained in her individual evaluation (see attached) and strongly encouraged Dr. Safier to attend the student services team meetings, if possible, so he can get a broader understanding of the issues kids are facing. She appreciates all that he does.

Kathy Clancy read the comments contained in her individual evaluation (see attached).

Chairman Pope stated that Dr. Safier’s dedication to directing resources to the lower grades has reaped great benefits and moved our district to another level.

After discussion, on a motion by Ms. Teixeira Prince, seconded by Ms. Sweet, it was unanimously

VOTED: 6 in favor, 0 opposed to accept the summative evaluation of the superintendent, as presented.

B. Superintendent’s Report – Dr. Safier updated the committee on the following matters:

1. Coordinated Program Review
2. Turnaround Plan Grant Fund Code 222
3. Posting for Middle School Assistant Principal
4. Student Discipline

On a motion by Kathy Clancy, seconded by Ms. Sweet, it was unanimously

VOTED: 6 in favor, 0 opposed to accept the Superintendent’s Report.

IX. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Building & Finance Subcommittee of December 19, 2018 – Mr. Gross reported that the Building & Finance Subcommittee discussed the following matters at its meeting of December 19, 2018: compostable containers and reusable trays, staff absence report, budget calendar/process, capital planning, and File KHB, Advertising in the Schools or on School Grounds policy.

After discussion, on a motion by Mr. Gross, seconded by Kathy Clancy, it was unanimously

VOTED: 6 in favor, 0 opposed to authorize the CFO to appropriate \$1,000.00 from the Main Office contingency account for a missed retirement incentive payment to a teacher.

On a motion by Mr. Gross, seconded by Kathy Clancy, it was unanimously

VOTED: 6 in favor, 0 opposed to approve advertising related to the acceptance of a grant from Energy North Inc.

Chairman Pope stated that he would like to establish that this action does not set a precedent for future advertising.

After discussion, on a motion by Mr. Gross, seconded by Kathy Clancy, it was unanimously

VOTED: 6 in favor, 0 opposed to accept a grant from Energy North Inc. to GHS in the amount of \$500.00.

X. ACTION

A. Acceptance of Grants

1. \$10,760.00 from Gloucester Education Foundation – After discussion, on a motion by Ms. Teixeira Prince, seconded by Ms. Sweet, it was unanimously

VOTED: 6 in favor, 0 opposed to accept a grant from the Gloucester Education Foundation in the amount of \$10,760.00 for the O’Maley Biolab.
2. \$9,050.00 from Gloucester Education Foundation – After discussion, on a motion by Ms. Teixeira Prince, seconded by Ms. Sweet, it was unanimously

VOTED: 6 in favor, 0 opposed to accept a grant from the Gloucester Education Foundation in the amount of \$9,050.00 for elementary art.
3. DESE FY19 FC222 Targeted Assistance Grant – On a motion by Ms. Teixeira Prince, seconded by Ms. Sweet, it was unanimously

VOTED: 6 in favor, 0 opposed to accept the DESE FY19 FC222 Targeted Assistance Grant in the amount of \$25,000.00.

B. Recommendations made by Building & Finance Subcommittee

1. Use of Main Office Contingency Account – See IX.A.
2. Acceptance of Grant from Energy North Inc. – See IX.A.
3. Approval of Advertising – See IX.A.

XI. DISCUSSION/OTHER COMMUNICATION/OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

- A. MSBA Project Update** – Chairman Pope reported that the building committee will be meeting tomorrow and that Dore & Whittier will present the timeline for the project. Dr. Safier stated that the designer toured East Gloucester School yesterday to learn about the educational program. Chairman Pope indicated they will be going to Veterans’ Memorial tomorrow and a different team will go to look at the Green Street site. Ms. Teixeira Prince requested that the building committee minutes be distributed to the School Committee.
- B. Operating Protocols and Rules of Procedure** – Ms. Teixeira Prince requested a meeting to review the School Committee Operating Protocols and Rules of Procedure.

- C. Fieldhouse Floor** – Ms. Teixeira Prince requested an update on any conversations held about the fieldhouse floor. Chairman Pope reported that the city has engaged Dore & Whittier to come up with a plan and some estimates on what it would cost to fix it. He stated that Dore & Whittier indicated this would take place after the holidays. Dr. Safier reported that the goal is to have the floor fixed over the summer.
 - D. Report on ENSATS/Local 22 Pilot Program** – Ms. Teixeira Prince requested a report on the pilot program with ENSATS and Local 22. Dr. Safier reported that 13 students are signed up.
 - E. Report on Preschool Location** – Mr. Favazza requested a report at the next meeting, if possible, on the progress of finding a location for the preschool. Chairman Pope reported that Dore & Whittier is conducting an overall study for the city and the city administration acknowledged that the location of the preschool should be the top priority in the study.
 - F. Executive Session Minutes of November 14, 2018** – Kathy Clancy requested that a reference be added to these minutes to indicate which grievance was discussed so that it can be tracked.
 - G. Guidelines and Salary Ranges for Non-Union Employees** – Chairman Pope referred this matter to the Personnel Subcommittee. Ms. Teixeira Prince stated that the Personnel Subcommittee should determine the standards and norms in other districts and come up with some figures but that the Building & Finance Subcommittee will need to discuss the matter from a financial perspective.
- XII. ADJOURNMENT** – On a motion by Ms. Sweet, seconded by Mr. Gross, it was unanimously
- VOTED:** 6 in favor, 0 opposed to adjourn the School Committee Meeting of January 9, 2019 at 8:24 p.m.

All reference documents and reports are filed in the Superintendent's office.

*Maria Puglisi
Recording Secretary*

Comments by Melissa Teixeira Prince

Dr. Safier,

You are an educational leader who promotes success to all students within the Gloucester Public Schools. You advocate with compassion to nurture our students in a school culture that is conducive to high student achievement. Over the past year you persistently strived to achieve and maintain a professional culture that provides resources to support our staff. Your expectations for teacher and student performance is high and you zealously work with your administrative team to establish those expectations. You demonstrate knowledge of best practices and communicate effectively to achieve high quality instructional programs. You have improved systems which identify critical data elements and you work well with stakeholder groups engaging them in the desired outcomes. While no leadership goes without incident(s), I find you to be a strong educational leader invested in a vision and promotion of strong core values in a school climate where all students are well known, respected and cared for. You orchestrate practices to improve teaching and learning and often find much success in the results based on collaboration with your staff. Our students are engaged in rigorous academic programs and extracurricular activities.

In addition, you have demonstrated a clear and articulate knowledge of the Massachusetts educational standards. It appears you maximize the use of the mandated evaluation system which in turn causes frequent conversations, often critical, where collaboration occurs which in turn results in a strong professional culture with engaged staff working towards a shared vision of improving instructional programs.

Your position as Superintendent is difficult and often one of the most criticized. Thank you for your efforts, your persistence and the achievements your leadership has provided to the Gloucester Public Schools.

Comments by Kathy Clancy

Dr. Safier,

You continue to be a strong leader for our District.

Your ability to continually assess so many areas of instruction in our District is commendable. There is so much important work being done with respect to curriculum review, assessing data, adapting to ever-changing state guidelines and expectations, examining teaching practice as it relates to the aforementioned, but also as it relates to the changing needs of our student population. After many years leading Gloucester Public Schools, you continue to be a great role model of high expectations and strive for meaningful instruction in our classrooms for all students. Your personal involvement in many of school-based efforts help move initiatives along and also allow for relationships that foster a positive educational environment among our teachers.

Our elementary schools continued to show impressive academic growth which is a testimony to the thoughtful and collaborative curriculum changes in math and ELA, as well as targeted resources specifically literacy and math coaches, put in place over your tenure

here. These budget priorities enabled the district to rise in state ratings and, more importantly, helped our students excel. Ongoing work and cyclical evaluation further our progress each year.

The large increase in English Language Learners has made our community and District a richer place for all. I believe our schools have responded to these new students and families in a proactive manner and has worked to be inclusive and supportive in their education as well as a resource to help with other needs.

I feel that you manage the operations of the District is very well. Despite constant budget challenges, you have brought positive impact to our schools. You've developed excellent working relationships with city departments such as DPW, police and fire which gives confidence that these departments and their qualified staff are appropriately involved in school matters and responsive to school needs. One example is the cleanliness and maintenance of our schools which had been a problem for a long while. Another is the success of school resource officers.

I have historically highlighted your strong leadership team and will do so again. I feel that our school administration, including Main Office department heads, is extremely dedicated and knowledgeable, and work collaboratively for the benefit of our students. Feedback on our principals is positive at all of our schools which is a testimony to your ability to recruit talented people.

While there are always areas in need of improvement either from less than targeted performance or changing demographics such as English Language Learners, as a District we continue to be transparent about our challenges. More important, when areas of need are identified, a team of educators work on a solid action plan to address it and work purposefully to make improvements.

Dr. Safier, Gloucester Public Schools is stronger because of your leadership and I thank you for your dedication to the staff and students of Gloucester.