

**THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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

**Personnel Subcommittee Meeting Minutes**

Monday, April 22, 2019

District Office Conference Room

2 Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930

4:30 p.m.

**Members Present**

Melissa Teixeira Prince, Chairperson

Kathy Clancy

**Administration Present**

Dr. Richard Safier, Superintendent

Gregg Bach, Asst. Superintendent

Gary Frisch, Director of Finance  
and Operations

Patty Wegmann, Special Education  
Director

**Also Present**

Attorney Naomi Stonberg

Charmaine Champagne, MTA Representative

Kevin Tierney, MTA Representative

Andrea Tarantino, GTA President

Cynthia Lanzendorf-Carney

Richard Francis

Theresa Dannaher

Rachel Rex

Kerrie Donahue

Ruth Flaherty

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**I. CALL TO ORDER** – Chairperson Prince called the meeting to order at 4:37 p.m.

**II. EXECUTIVE SESSION** – On a motion by Kathy Clancy, seconded by Chairperson Prince, it was unanimously

**VOTED:** By Roll Call Vote

Ms. Teixeira Prince – yes

Kathy Clancy – yes

To enter into Executive Session at 4:37 p.m. for the purpose of discussing collective bargaining strategies with the GTA and to enter back into regular session.

*(The meeting reconvened at 4:59 p.m.)*

**III. OPEN NEGOTIATION SESSION WITH GTA** – Ms. Champagne stated that the association has some proposals and confirmed that the next session will be the last time proposals can be made. She provided the negotiating team with the names of 20 districts that have academic freedom provisions in their teachers’ contract.

Ms. Carney distributed and reviewed the association’s draft proposals, as well as the “Interests” and “Rationales” for each proposal. There was a discussion about Assoc #8, which indicates that teachers should not be responsible for collecting or reporting data and should not be losing class time to analyze data. Ms. Carney indicated that they have no feedback on the School Committee’s proposals at this time.

With respect to the School Committee’s proposal #6 regarding salary payment, Ms. Champagne asked whether this was a cost issue for the district. Mr. Frisch indicated that it has to do with the city auditor closing the books at the end of the fiscal year. Ms. Champagne commented that the district is “pushing off the work” of managing the teachers’ funds to the teachers. Ms. Carney noted that many teachers have bank accounts that require a direct deposit every month and stated that this proposal would not be advantageous to them.

Ms. Stonberg responded to the association’s proposal regarding substitutes, indicating that the district has spent \$391,000 in substitute costs. Dr. Safier explained the increase in the technology budget from 2014 to 2017. Ms. Champagne suggested that the association and the district work together to address the lack of funding for the School Department.

Ms. Champagne stated that there is an issue with the Aesop system and requested a copy of the contract. Ms. Carney reported that there are many times when available jobs are not being filled by substitutes, which requires SPED teachers and paraprofessionals to cover those positions and results in noncompliance with IEPs.

With respect to the association’s proposal regarding district-wide professional relationships, Ms. Stonberg indicated that there are several School Committee policies regarding curriculum development and adoption and selection of instructional materials. Dr. Safier stated that he would like to present a slide show on curriculum and instruction at the school level. Ms. Champagne questioned the need for such a presentation since the teachers are in the buildings and are not feeling that this is happening. She requested time to caucus with the association on whether they want to see the presentation.

*(The association caucused for 15 minutes.)*

Ms. Champagne stated that the association is open to seeing Dr. Safier’s presentation and indicated that an audience member will be recording it. Dr. Safier and Mr. Bach presented the slide show on systemic aspects of the GPSD and the BSRI program. Ms. Champagne requested that Dr. Safier share the presentation with her so she can review it with the association members. She also indicated that although the

administration believes the teachers are collaborating, that has not been the culture or the feeling of the membership.

Ms. Stonberg called out Ms. Champagne for laughing during the presentation. Ms. Champagne apologized to Dr. Safier, stating that she was not laughing at him but at a statement made that she felt was untrue. She stated that what is portrayed in the presentation and what is actually happening in the schools is diametrically opposed. She indicated that teacher leaders do not feel like they are making decisions and want to move to a different model of true collaboration.

With respect to the association's proposed new article entitled "Academic Freedom," Ms. Teixeira Prince distributed and reviewed the following School Committee policies: Files IGA, IGD, IJ, IJJ, IJ-R and KEC. Ms. Champagne expressed concern that the policies are not being followed and questioned what the recourse is for that. She stated that there is a cultural problem in the district in which people do not feel comfortable bringing issues to the superintendent for fear of retaliation. Ms. Teixeira Prince expressed surprise at hearing this for the first time today and asked where it is coming from.

Ms. Champagne reported that she has heard about issues from the membership and they have been trying to figure out some contract language to address those issues to ensure they are addressed appropriately. Ms. Teixeira Prince stated that these are important issues that need to be addressed but they should not be included in the contract. She noted that the Building & Finance Subcommittee reviews the DPW's progress on completing work in the schools on a monthly basis and the School Committee just voted a budget that includes money to replace locks, etc. Ms. Carney stated that they are seeking to add that language to the contract now because those issues have not been dealt with over the past five years.

Ms. Champagne stated that they are trying to get community members to be engaged in what is happening in the School Department. She also stated that the community does not believe that the district is spending their money appropriately or is accountable. She would like the School Committee and the association to work together to get funding passed. Ms. Teixeira Prince stated that teachers should attend the City Council public hearing on the budget to request more funding for the schools.

Mr. Tierney indicated that he knows a lot of association members who would not come to the meeting tonight because of their fear of retaliation (e.g. an unfair, unannounced observation or a SMART goal evaluated differently from their colleagues because of their interactions with curriculum and instruction or coming to School Committee meetings and raising problems with facilities, etc.). Ms. Teixeira Prince indicated that she has spoken to many teachers and stated to Ms. Champagne that there are a lot of members that do not support what she is saying. Ms. Champagne responded by saying that she surveyed the members and the majority response is what she advocates for.

Ms. Tarantino reported that teachers have come to her with issues and asked her not to disclose their names. She stated that they are afraid of their principals and what is going to happen to them.

Kathy Clancy stated that the association is “preaching to the choir” and the reason things cannot all be done at once is because the city only has so much capacity every year.

Ms. Champagne reported that the city told her that they do not believe the School Committee is accountable to the money and is not spending the money the way it should be spent, including rent paid for the Blackburn building. She will continue to look at the budget and believes the next negotiation session should be dedicated to money.

Ms. Carney stated that the School Committee and the association need to collaborate on pushing for an override to address the things that teachers and students deserve.

Ms. Stonberg agreed that the two groups should establish a means of collaborating.

**IV. ACTION** – None.

**V. ADJOURNMENT** – On a motion by Kathy Clancy, seconded by Chairperson Prince, it was unanimously

**VOTED:** 2 in favor, 0 opposed to adjourn the Personnel Subcommittee Meeting of April 22, 2019 at 6:56 p.m.

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

*Maria Puglisi  
Recording Secretary*