

**THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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

**Personnel Subcommittee Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday, May 10, 2011

Superintendent's Conference Room

4:45 p.m.

**Members**

Melissa Teixeira, Chairperson

Michelle Sweet

Tony Gross

**Administration Present**

New Superintendent Dr. Richard Safier

CFO Tom Markham

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**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Teixeira called the meeting to order at 4:50 p.m. and stated the mission of the Gloucester Public Schools.

**II. REPORTS/DELIBERATIONS/DISCUSSIONS**

**At this time, the Agenda was taken out of order.**

- B. Health Insurance Audit** – Tom Markham reported on his conversations with officials in Haverhill regarding their recent health insurance audit performed by Chapman Kelly, including the cost of the audit and the number of employees audited. Mr. Markham also spoke with officials in Wakefield about their audit. He believes our audit can be conducted in-house to save money, since there are less than 1,000 employees in the district.

Mr. Markham also provided a summary of the new health reform law and indicated that there is basis in law for conducting the audit. The law requires that employers reach out to employees and have them opt in or opt out of covering dependents up to age 26. A discussion was held on dependent status. Chairperson Teixeira provided Mr. Markham with GIC dependent status information and the name of a contact person at Harvard Pilgrim who may be able to help us with the audit. Mr. Markham indicated he would also get in touch with David Bain to see if they have a legal interpretation of the dependent status requirements.

Mr. Markham summarized the goals of the audit, and there was a discussion of how it would be conducted. He also reviewed his recommended time line proposal for conducting the audit, which contemplates the bulk of the work being done over the summer, and a draft letter to school employees regarding documentation requirements, which includes an amnesty period for corrections to be made to an employee's coverage.

Chairperson Teixeira stated that there may be some interest on the city side in doing an audit of their employees at the same time. She also stated that the new law requires employees to “reapply” for health insurance to get the benefit of the new law. In other words, employees must sign a document stating whether they are staying with the same plan or switching plans. Mr. Markham stated that he has not been notified by the city of this requirement, nor has he received anything from Harvard Pilgrim. He will follow up on this matter.

There was a discussion of the timing of conducting the health insurance audit and the amnesty period. Chairperson Teixeira stated her understanding that we have the right to request employees’ prior year’s tax returns, which will indicate their marital status and dependents.

- A. Procedures/Policies for Employees Requesting Time Off** – Chairperson Teixeira indicated that she has been hearing concerns from employees about how school leadership is responding to requests for time off. She stated that the new bereavement policy reduces the amount of bereavement time that an employee can take off. However, the Superintendent has discretion to approve additional time off. Mr. Markham explained the process of requesting time off and the role of the Human Resources office in the process. He stated that the HR office does not hold up any forms that are requested from the Superintendent.

Mr. Markham also explained the process of requesting and approving comp time. Dr. Safier stated that since comp time is a substitute for overtime, it needs to be justified and approved in advance.

Dr. Safier would like to review the policies of other districts to see what they are doing with respect to time off. Chairperson Teixeira suggested also reaching out to MASC and MASS for guidance on this matter. Dr. Safier agreed to contact MASS and, Chairperson Teixeira indicated that she will contact Mike Gilbert at MASC. Chairperson Teixeira would like to have a consistent policy for the entire district in writing before the new school year.

*Note: Tom Markham left the meeting at 5:45 p.m.*

A personnel subcommittee meeting was scheduled for June 16, 2011 at 4:45 p.m. in the Superintendent’s conference room to discuss this matter further.

- C. Job Description and Qualifications for GAEP Employees** – Chairperson Teixeira reported that she has heard some concerns from employees about classroom aides not being able to perform to their full potential because of their qualifications. She would like to establish some minimum requirements for employment, such as a high school diploma or equivalent, dress code, etc. Dr. Safier indicated that he will speak with the principals to try to ensure that reasonably qualified candidates are hired. The subcommittee reviewed the GAEP job description.

**III. ACTION**

After discussion, on a motion by Mr. Gross, seconded by Mrs. Sweet, it was unanimously

**VOTED:** To recommend to the full School Committee that the School Department move ahead with a health insurance audit.

**IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION – None**

**V. ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Mrs. Sweet, seconded by Mr. Gross, it was unanimously

**VOTED:** To adjourn the Personnel Subcommittee Meeting of May 10, 2011 at 6:05 p.m.

*Maria Puglisi*  
*Recording Secretary*