

**THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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

**Personnel Subcommittee Meeting Minutes**

Monday, August 12, 2019

District Office Conference Room

2 Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930

4:30 p.m.

**Members Present**

Melissa Teixeira Prince, Chairperson

Kathy Clancy

Jonathan Pope

**Administration Present**

Dr. Richard Safier, Superintendent

Gary Frisch, Director of Finance  
and Operations

**Also Present**

Joel Favazza (4:37 p.m.)

Michelle Sweet (4:48 p.m.)

Attorney Naomi Stonberg

Charmaine Champagne, MTA Representative

Cynthia Lanzendorf-Carney, GTA President

Richard Francis

Theresa Dannaher

Rachel Rex

Adrienne Marden

Kerrie Donahue

Ruth Flaherty

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**I. CALL TO ORDER** – Chairperson Prince called the meeting to order at 4:31 p.m.

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

**VOTED:** By Roll Call Vote

Ms. Teixeira Prince – yes

Kathy Clancy – yes

Mr. Pope – yes

To enter into Executive Session at 4:31 p.m. for the purpose of discussing collective bargaining strategies with the GTA and to enter back into regular session.

*(The meeting reconvened at 5:02 p.m.)*

**III. OPEN NEGOTIATION SESSION WITH GTA** – Attorney Stonberg reviewed the packet of information prepared in response to the information and data provided by the union. With respect to state aid, Ms. Champagne stated that the union completely understands where the

money comes from, which is why they are trying to form a coalition to get more money for the schools. Ms. Stonberg stated that the committee's top priority is the condition of the buildings.

Ms. Stonberg indicated that health insurance is a major benefit for GTA members and stated that maintaining the 15% employee contribution for the least expensive plans is very expensive for the school district. Mr. Frisch explained net school spending and noted that Gloucester exceeded the required net school spending per pupil in FY18 by almost \$14 million.

Ms. Stonberg reviewed the rankings for student to teacher ratio, and Ms. Champagne pointed out that the data includes union members who do not have a classroom and is therefore a little misleading.

Ms. Stonberg reported that 46.99 % of the city budget was allocated to the schools in FY18. Mr. Pope stated that the school budget for that year was \$41 million, not \$35 million, plus school-related expenses paid by the city, such as custodians, utilities, etc. Ms. Stonberg noted that the budget presented does not include grants and revolving funds, which would make it higher.

With respect to the charts regarding average income per household and per individual among the comparison districts, Ms. Champagne stated that she hopes the committee is not making the argument that educated teachers should not be paid at a level commensurate with their skills. Ms. Stonberg responded that the purpose is to look at all of the factors that go into the budget, the city's ability to pay, and the citizens' willingness to pay.

Ms. Champagne stated that every time they do polling about teachers' salaries, people are more than willing to increase their taxes to pay for teachers' salaries (i.e. not to go in the pockets of administration or for some pet project). She indicated that if they educate the community on how poorly teachers are paid here, there could be a different outcome. She stated that comments have been made to her that people want the union and the School Committee to work collaboratively. Ms. Stonberg responded that the committee would love to brainstorm different solutions to better align the salary schedule but that it needs to be within the budgetary constraints.

Ms. Carney reported that teachers are turning down jobs in Gloucester because the district cannot afford to pay them, and teachers are taking jobs in other districts because they are offering more money. Ms. Stonberg indicated that the district does not have a problem retaining teachers, and Ms. Champagne stated that the union does not believe that people are coming to Gloucester and staying in Gloucester based on the salaries.

Kathy Clancy pointed out that although another district may have a higher salary, they may pay less of the employee's health insurance cost and have a longer work day or work year. Ms. Champagne stated that there are a lot of people who do not like the coverage they get from GIC. She hopes that both sides can agree to coalesce and figure out how to change the funding of the schools because the teachers deserve more money.

Ms. Carney noted that the committee's spreadsheets on the GTA's salary proposal include Step increases, which are already built into the contract, and do not reflect the union's financial proposal. Mr. Frisch stated that the spreadsheets reflect the total cost of the GTA's proposal. Ms. Champagne requested a counter to their salary proposal.

Ms. Carney distributed and reviewed the Association's responses to the School Committee's proposals. With respect to the grievance procedure, Ms. Stonberg indicated that the School Committee does not have authority to resolve personnel issues. Ms. Champagne agreed but stated that the union will not give up the right to have a hearing with the School Committee to let them know what is happening.

Ms. Carney stated that the union wants an open and transparent venue with the School Committee, whether or not they have the ability to resolve the issue. Ms. Stonberg suggested they distinguish between the ability to meet regularly with the School Committee and having a formal grievance procedure about something that the committee has no authority to change.

With respect to salary payment, Ms. Stonberg requested information on which union members are charged a fee if they do not have direct deposits during the summer. Ms. Carney requested a cost analysis of what it actually costs the district to pay teachers over the summer. Mr. Frisch stated that it is not a cost issue but has to do with not being able to close the books for the previous fiscal year. He reviewed the chart showing that nine of the comparison districts do not pay their employees during the summer. Mr. Frisch stated that he will consult with the city auditor and get back to the association.

There was a discussion about the physical requirements of safety care and the fact that worker's compensation insurance covers any injuries sustained. Dr. Safier stated that he will provide details about safety care training.

After discussion of the work year (Article 6, Section B #1), Ms. Stonberg indicated that the committee will get back to the union on this proposal.

With respect to adding library coverage or Bridge coverage to teachers' duties, Dr. Safier reported that this was recommended by the high school principal. Mr. Francis asked whether the new library assistant could cover those duties, and Dr. Safier indicated that he would follow up with Mr. Cook.

Ms. Stonberg suggested that an agenda be developed for items that need further discussion, such as the grievance procedure and the establishment of a professional development committee.

With respect to evaluation priority standards, Ms. Stonberg suggested that a representative of the association work with the Superintendent on that matter.

With respect to parent/teacher communication, Ms. Stonberg reported that parents want regular and timely communication about their child's assignments, grades and any problems. There was a discussion about the computer programs used to communicate with parents at the different grade levels.

With respect to sick leave, Ms. Champagne requested a copy of the resolution that provides for a second medical opinion.

There was a discussion about the association's request to pay teachers to sit on a committee to discuss absenteeism. Ms. Carney stated that teachers believe they should be paid for all committees in which they take part.

With respect to reduction in force, Kathy Clancy explained that due to the budget process, moving the date for layoff notices to up May 1 would require that more people get those notices, resulting in unnecessary anxiety. Ms. Teixeira Prince stated that the committee has a better idea in mid-May of how many reductions in force will be necessary. There was a discussion about the budget calendar.

Subsequent meetings were scheduled for September 5 and October 2, 2019 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

**IV. ACTION** – None.

**III. EXECUTIVE SESSION** – On a motion by Kathy Clancy, seconded by Mr. Pope, it was unanimously

**VOTED:** By Roll Call Vote

Ms. Teixeira Prince – yes  
Kathy Clancy – yes  
Mr. Pope – yes

To enter into Executive Session at 7:00 p.m. for the purpose of discussing collective bargaining strategies with the GTA and to enter back into regular session only to adjourn.

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

**VOTED:** 3 in favor, 0 opposed to adjourn the Personnel Subcommittee Meeting of August 12, 2019 at 7:55 p.m.

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

*Maria Puglisi  
Recording Secretary*