

THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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

Program Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 4, 2014

Superintendent's Conference Room – District Office

5:00 p.m.

Members Present

Michelle Sweet, Chairperson
Melissa Teixeira, Vice Chairperson
Jack O'Maley (5:08 p.m.)

Administration Present

Dr. Richard Safier, Superintendent
Gregg Bach, Asst. Superintendent (5:04)

Also Present

Lt. Mike Gossom, Gloucester Police Dept.

I. CALL TO ORDER – Chairperson Sweet called the meeting to order at 5:06 p.m. and stated the mission of the Gloucester Public Schools.

II. REPORTS/DELIBERATIONS/DISCUSSION

At this time, the agenda was taken out of order.

D. Review of the ALICE Program – Lt. Mike Gossom reported that the Department of Education and the Department of Homeland Security have shifted their focus in response to an active shooter from “shelter in place” to “run, hide, fight” and stated that Chief Campanello has recommended the ALICE program (“Alert Lockdown Inform Counter Evacuate”) for the GPSD.

Lt. Gossom reported that he attended the ALICE instructor level class over the summer and described the drills in which he participated. He stated that the first option in the event of an active shooter is to evacuate the building. However, if that is not possible, students and teachers should barricade the doors with whatever is available (desks, chairs), arm themselves with makeshift weapons, and throw things at the shooter. Lt. Gossom stated that in the drills, it was very difficult for the shooter to get an accurate shot when things were being thrown at him. It may also discourage the shooter enough to go to a different location.

Ms. Teixeira expressed concern with how parents will react to hearing about this program. Lt. Gossom noted that the governor has endorsed the program and that a lot of communities are adopting it. It is the best option in a life or death situation and will buy more time for the police to get to the scene. He noted that most of the district's elementary schools are one story and have doors leading outside, so they would most likely be able to evacuate. The last resort would be to barricade the door and do whatever they can to survive. He stated that locking the door and sitting in the corner does not give anyone a fighting chance in a worst case scenario.

Dr. Safier recommended that Lt. Gossom present information on the program and give a demonstration at a full School Committee meeting in the near future.

After discussion, on a motion by Ms. Teixeira, seconded by Mr. O'Maley, it was unanimously

VOTED: 3 in favor zero opposed, to recommend to the full School Committee that we consider the ALICE (“Alert Lockdown Inform Counter Evacuate”) program.

- A. Review of Student Discipline Policy, File JK** – Dr. Safier distributed and reviewed a proposed policy he received from MASC entitled “Student Discipline” and stated that this policy is a summary of the new law, Chapter 222. He stated that in the case of long-term suspensions, the new Plato software and tutoring will provide the required education services while students are not in school. Dr. Safier strongly recommended that the current Student Conduct policy, File JIC, be replaced with this new Student Discipline policy.

With respect to the current Student Discipline policy, File JK, Dr. Safier believes both this policy and the new Student Discipline policy, File JIC, should be included in the Policy Manual. However, he stated that that he will speak with Mike Gilbert to get MASC’s position with respect to File JK. He also indicated that the titles of the policies could be changed to provide clarification.

Lastly, Dr. Safier distributed an updated policy he received from MASC entitled “Student Absences and Excuses,” File JH, which complies with Chapter 222. He recommended that the current policy be replaced with this one and noted that the school attendance policies will need to be reviewed to ensure that they comply with the new “Student Absences and Excuses” policy.

This matter was continued to the next meeting. In the meantime, Dr. Safier reported that all administrators have received notice to adhere to the regulations of Chapter 222. Chairperson Sweet requested a report on the number of suspensions per year at the next meeting.

- B. Review of A Policy to Prevent Bullying, File JICFB** – Dr. Safier reported that Mike Gilbert is still reviewing this policy. The issues to be addressed include a listing of all people who could be a perpetrator with respect to bullying, notification of families, and recognition of specific individuals and/or groups that may be more prone to being victims or perpetrators of bullying. This matter was continued to the next meeting.

- C. Review of Computer Network and Internet Acceptable Use Policy for Students, File IJNDB** – Mr. Bach noted that the existing Computer Network and Internet Acceptable Use Policy for Students, File IJNDB, is five pages long and applies to all grade levels. He indicated that O’Maley requested that the policy be more comprehensive. In addition, he stated that some high school students shared their concerns about the policy with him as part of a class project. The students stated that they will not read the policy because it is too long and suggested making it simpler.

Mr. Bach reported that he researched acceptable use policies in other districts and distributed and reviewed two policies that he adapted from the Boston Public Schools’ policies, one for students in Grades 2-5 and the other for Grades 6-12, which contain kid-friendly positive language. This matter was continued to the next meeting to give the subcommittee members time to review the proposed policies.

III. ACTION – See Item II.D.

IV. ADJOURNMENT – On a motion by Ms. Teixeira, seconded by Mr. O’Maley, it was unanimously

VOTED: 3 in favor zero opposed, to adjourn the Program Subcommittee Meeting of September 4, 2014 at 6:22 p.m.

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

*Maria Puglisi
Recording Secretary*