

**THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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

**Program Subcommittee Meeting Minutes**

Thursday, February 7, 2019  
District Office Conference Room  
2 Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930  
5:30 p.m.

**Members Present**

Kathy Clancy, Chairperson  
Michelle Sweet, Vice Chairperson  
Joel Favazza, Member

**Administration Present**

Dr. Richard Safier, Superintendent  
Gregg Bach, Asst. Superintendent  
James Cook, GHS Principal

**Also Present**

Melissa Teixeira Prince

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**I. CALL TO ORDER** – Chairperson Clancy called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. and stated the mission of the Gloucester Public Schools.

**II. REPORTS/DELIBERATIONS/DISCUSSION**

- A. Public Relations Update** – Dr. Safier reviewed the Memorandum of Understanding between the Gloucester Education Foundation, the GPSD and The Bridge Cape Ann and reported that Kory Curcuru of The Bridge recommended that the district have an Instagram account. Dr. Safier indicated that there will be no publications or videos of a political nature, such as the MSBA project.
- B. Health Education** – Mr. Bach apologized for misunderstanding the purpose of this update, stating that he thought the update requested was on drug awareness education. He indicated that he will prepare a report on sexual education for the next subcommittee meeting.

Mr. Bach provided an overview of the drug awareness curriculum topics in Grades 5 to 12 and stated that both the state standards and the district's coverage of them are fairly limited at the fifth grade level. He stated that the curriculum at the high school is extensive, and Mr. Cook indicated that they are adding an upper-level health class as an elective. Mr. Bach suggested that GHS health and PE teachers Rosa Francis and Jim Unis make a presentation to the full School Committee on health education and reported that Ms. Francis feels strongly that one semester of health is not enough for everything that needs to be covered. Mr. Bach also suggested that students make presentations on their health projects to the full School Committee.

Mr. Bach reported that GPD detectives visit classrooms at the high school and that there have been school-wide trainings and presentations about risk factors and mental

health. He also indicated that he is trying to schedule a presentation on addiction at the high school by Ruth Potee.

Ms. Teixeira Prince noted that there were no references in the health curriculum about vaping or edibles. Mr. Bach stated that the health teachers have numerous other materials that they use in their classes. Dr. Safier reported that the Rotary is offering funding for a series of assemblies on substance abuse and would like to have two former GHS students who are recovering addicts share their experience.

*(Mr. Favazza left the meeting to attend another meeting.)*

- C. Summer Programs Providing GHS Credits** – Mr. Cook reported that he and Laura Carlson will be looking at the hours for the Gloucester Biotech Academy summer program to determine the number of credits for Gloucester High School. He noted that they used this model previously with the summer internship program.
  
- D. Wellness Policy** – Dr. Safier stated that the students have been quite adamant about selling food and that his impression from the School Committee is that they were almost as adamant in having the school store operate. Therefore, he reported that he asked Mr. Cook and Mr. Bach to come up with a temporary solution that would be a compromise. Offsetting that, Dr. Safier noted that the “Fundraising” section of the Wellness Policy approved by the School Committee indicates “No fundraising activities or school store sales involving food will occur during breakfast and lunch periods.”

Dr. Safier reported that Wellness Committee members are stressed at the fact that they worked long and hard to create the Wellness Policy and are quite put out that the will of their committee is being compromised. He indicated that the Wellness Committee will be meeting on February 12th and that he hopes there can be some reconciliation between policy and practice.

Ms. Sweet stated that policies are always changing as things come up and they need to be adjusted. She recognizes that the Wellness Committee did a lot of work on the Wellness Policy but does not believe that amending the policy thwarts the work done by the Wellness Committee. Dr. Safier indicated that the Wellness Committee may vote on February 12th to modify the policy or may choose not to do so.

Kathy Clancy stated that if the school store is selling snacks that fall under the nutritional guidelines, then it is not counterproductive to the Wellness Policy but is consistent with it. She does not see it as harmful to students or a violation of the policy. She also indicated that there is a learning aspect to the students wanting to give up part of their lunch to run the store – ordering, managing inventory, customer service, etc. She stated that freshmen have a reason to interact with seniors who they may be intimidated by, which provides a sense of community. She also suggested

that the school store could sell pencils and pens and be the place where class dues are paid.

Dr. Safier stated that if the Wellness Committee does not vote to amend the policy, the School Committee has the authority to do so through the Program Subcommittee. While that is ongoing, the school store is open three days a week for the last 15 minutes of the lunch periods.

Ms. Teixeira Prince stated that she thought the School Committee had asked Dr. Safier to make the decision. Dr. Safier indicated that the decision is contrary to the policy that the School Committee approved. Ms. Teixeira Prince pointed out that the students can sell food at other times of the day and be in compliance with the policy. Mr. Bach reported that he spoke with the students about selling food after school and they had made those attempts. The students indicated to him that in order to get the store set up somewhere else after school, they would need to be dismissed early from their last class.

Ms. Teixeira Prince again stated that she thought Dr. Safier had told the students they could not sell food during the lunch periods. Dr. Safier indicated that it reached a critical mass where he felt something needed to be done. Ms. Teixeira Prince asked why he did not report to the School Committee that he had changed his mind so the policy could be referred back to Program Subcommittee for review. He replied that he is informing the committee at this meeting.

- E. High School Start Time** – Mr. Bach questioned how a later GHS start time would mesh with other schools in our conference with respect to sports schedules.

*(Mr. Bach left the meeting.)*

Dr. Safier reported that there is a committee at the state level that is looking at school start times. He recommended reviewing this topic again once the state has completed its review.

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

**VOTED:** 2 in favor, 0 opposed that we recommend to the full School Committee that we delay any action on changing the high school start time pending the findings of the state advisory committee.

- F. School Choice Acceptance Policy/Timeline** – Mr. Cook reported that he oftentimes receives requests in the middle of the school year for students requiring special education services to enter GHS, which can be very disruptive at times in terms of staffing. The committee discussed the School Choice policy, File JFBB, which was

provided and modified by special education attorney Michael Joyce. Mr. Cook reported on CCI meetings at the high school.

After discussion, on a motion by Ms. Sweet, seconded by Chairperson Clancy, it was unanimously

**VOTED:** 3 in favor, 0 opposed that we recommend to the full School Committee that we approve the first reading of the School Choice policy, File JFBB.

**III. ACTION** – See Item II.E and F.

**IV. ADJOURNMENT** – On a motion by Ms. Sweet, seconded by Ms. Teixeira Prince, it was unanimously

**VOTED:** 3 in favor, 0 opposed to adjourn the Program Subcommittee Meeting of February 7, 2019 at 6:54 p.m.

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

*Maria Puglisi  
Recording Secretary*