

THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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

Program Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

Monday, March 19, 2018

District Office Conference Room

2 Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930

4:30 p.m.

Members Present

Kathy Clancy, Chairperson

Michelle Sweet, Vice Chairperson

Joel Favazza

Administration Present

Dr. Richard Safier, Superintendent

Gregg Bach, Asst. Superintendent

Martha Jo Fleming, Food Service Director

Ann-Marie Jordan, Preschool Director

I. CALL TO ORDER – Chairperson Clancy called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. and stated the mission of the Gloucester Public Schools.

II. REPORTS/DELIBERATIONS/DISCUSSION

A. Review of Wellness Policy – Mr. Favazza asked how he can compare the monetary figures for FY17 to the FY18 figures on the chart provided. Ms. Fleming indicated that the chart shows average daily participation rates, which cannot be compared to dollars. Mr. Favazza stated that the chart is not very helpful unless it can be compared to a year when the school store was open, and Ms. Fleming stated that the pricing and enrollment were different in previous years, so one year cannot be compared to the next just by looking at the figures.

Ms. Fleming indicated that the chart shows the average daily participation rate for September and October, before the store was closed in October, and the average daily participation rate for November through February. Mr. Favazza stated that he wanted to see the previous year's figures because the numbers fluctuate throughout the year. He indicated it is not helpful to look at November versus October and he would have liked to have seen November of 2017 compared to November of 2016. He does not see the month-to-month differences as helpful to the argument that the school store is a detriment to the food service department. Dr. Safier reported that Mr. Lafleur does not have access to a lot of the data that was requested at the last meeting and indicated that there are too many variables, such as revenue numbers and declining enrollments.

Dr. Safier shared a report showing that of 15 neighboring schools that were called, not one of them has a school store that sells food during breakfast and lunch. He also made the following points:

- Any shortfalls in the food service budget would have to be made up by the operating budget.
- Who is going to provide oversight that the students are following the Smart Snacks in Schools regulations from the USDA?
- Risk of food allergies and potential for liability

Dr. Safier reminded the committee that class dues have not changed in decades and that if students paid \$35 per year (an increase of \$10 per year), that would make up for the loss of the \$7,500 income from the school store.

Dr. Safier emphasized that the Wellness Policy was put in place in 2010 and that members of the School Committee voted it on multiple occasions to enable the school to ensure that healthy food is being provided from a central location, which has to be self-sustaining as well. Ms. Jordan stated that school districts, including school stores, are required by law to follow all of the established USDA regulations. She pointed out that the Wellness Committee met with the students in the early fall and told them that they were more than happy to work with the students to look at alternative non-food types of fundraising activities.

Mr. Favazza stated that he does not think the students should be able to do anything outside of the regulations but he believes the school store is a valuable resource for running a “mini business.” He understands that class advisers help with monitoring the store and believes they have the capacity to ensure that their inventory is in compliance with the regulations. He has not seen any evidence that it would be a monumental financial burden to the district by letting the students siphon off a few sales. He thinks the experience is worth it as long as they do it within the required nutritional regulations.

Ms. Fleming reemphasized that any debt in the food service program has to be covered by the School Committee budget. She stated that the food service program charges enough money to cover the cost of the food; however, there are also labor costs, supply costs, and repair costs. She indicated that she cannot even purchase new measuring spoons at this point because there is no money in her budget. She also pointed out that managers who have been working for 15 years are only making \$16 an hour, and they put their hearts and souls into trying to bring in every penny they can. To take away anything from the food service program is very disheartening to her because there are other ways the students can make money by selling other things, but the food service program cannot do that.

Ms. Sweet stated that she would like to see the school store reinstated until the end of the year since the students were not given fair warning until October. She also understands that the fundraising calendar has already been filled by all of the other groups holding fundraisers. She believes that taking away the school store without any warning is disingenuous to the students. She thinks it should be reinstated until

the end of the school year and then the committee can figure out what to do with raising class dues and getting them on the fundraising calendar for next year.

Chairperson Clancy stated that she would like to request that the students consider raising class dues and collecting the dues during their first three years at the high school. Ms. Jordan noted that the students can reach out to other communities for ideas on how to raise money and pointed out that they have been asked to follow the guidelines on how and when food can be sold in school for the past ten years.

After discussion, on a motion by Ms. Sweet, seconded by Mr. Favazza, it was unanimously

VOTED: 3 in favor, 0 opposed to recommend to the full School Committee that the “Fundraising” section of the Wellness Plan be suspended and that the Class of 2018 be allowed to operate the school store for the remainder of the 2017-2018 school year.

Mr. Favazza noted that moving the location of the school store to be more accessible to the atrium and the sports door would allow kids to buy sandwiches and snacks after school.

Mr. Bach noted that at the last meeting, the students reported that most of the districts they contacted have school stores. However, the report provided by Dr. Safier indicates that none of the 15 districts contacted by administration have a school store.

Finally, Chairperson Clancy requested that someone ensure that the Wellness Policy is properly reflected in the handbooks. Dr. Safier noted that the Wellness Policy should be what is currently reflected in the Wellness Plan. Therefore, he suggested that the policy be revised so that the plan becomes the policy or is attached to the policy.

III. ACTION – See Item II.A.

IV. ADJOURNMENT – On a motion by Ms. Sweet, seconded by Mr. Favazza, it was unanimously

VOTED: 3 in favor, 0 opposed to adjourn the Program Subcommittee Meeting of March 19, 2018 at 5:05 p.m.

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

Maria Puglisi, Recording Secretary