

THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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

Program Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Superintendent's Conference Room – District Office

5:00 p.m.

Members Present

Michelle Sweet, Chairperson
Melissa Teixeira, Vice Chairperson
Jack O'Maley

Administration Present

Dr. Richard Safier, Superintendent
Gregg Bach, Asst. Superintendent

Also Present

JP Ware

I. CALL TO ORDER – Chairperson Sweet called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. and stated the mission of the Gloucester Public Schools.

II. REPORTS/DELIBERATIONS/DISCUSSION

A. Writing Across the Content Area – Dr. Safier introduced JP Ware, a second-year consultant at O'Maley, and stated that she has been doing extensive work to organize and coordinate the writing program there. Ms. Ware reviewed the list of essential common language that was prepared last fall by the ELA teachers. She stated that she then brought that language into the social studies, science and math curriculum meetings to create awareness of it in those areas. She noted that the use of academic language is not great and that the staff is discussing how to devise a method of working on better use of good academic language as opposed to content specific language.

Ms. Ware discussed an "all school write" that was conducted last year in order to collect a sample of work from O'Maley students, which led to a professional development day with ELA teachers to go through the responses, discuss how to shape writing instruction to promote growth, and how to measure that growth. Ms. Ware also reviewed a draft rubric that was developed for two of the writing forms. Mr. Bach offered to have Fred Wolff from Six Traits come back for a professional development session on September 2nd, and Ms. Ware thought that would be a great idea.

Ms. Ware discussed two recent sessions where the entire O'Maley faculty reviewed collections of O'Maley students' writing, one an argument and one an explanation, and refined the rubric. She suggested that the district hold a community scoring event to show the magnitude of the work that is being done in the district and to raise parents' level of expectation of their child(ren).

There was a discussion about feedback given to the students, including the use of comments on Google Docs and a student-friendly checklist for those who are falling short in their writing. Dr. Safier noted the importance of teaching students how to continually edit and refine their writing. He also stated that he would like to see a minimum of a semester exclusively dedicated to writing in ninth grade.

- B. School District Annual Report Policy, File CM** – Dr. Safier reviewed the numerous reports already provided to the School Committee and asked for clarification on what further report the committee is looking for. Ms. Teixeira pointed out that the policy references Mass. General Laws Chapter 72, Section 4, which states that the committee “shall” make an annual report on the condition of the schools and “shall” send two copies of it to the commissioner on or before April 13th and file it with the City Clerk. She suggested that Dr. Safier include any existing reports in a packet called “annual report,” and Dr. Safier stated that he will take care of it.
- C. Athletic and Cheerleading Booster Organizations Policy, File KJAA** – Dr. Safier reported that he received a call from a parent asking whether performing arts booster organizations are expected to comply with this policy. Dr. Safier indicated that they are and recommended to the subcommittee that the policy be revised and the title changed to “Booster Organizations.” He stated that he will revise the policy for review at the next subcommittee meeting. With respect to the second paragraph on page 2 of the policy regarding CORI checks, Dr. Safier stated that he will look into whether fingerprinting checks also need to be conducted.
- D. Introduction to K-12 Insight’s “Let’s Talk”** – Dr. Safier reported that Jesse Lieb from K-12 Insight will be meeting with the principals on April 17th to demonstrate this program. He stated that \$7,500 for the first year cost has been placed into the FY15 budget. Dr. Safier presented a slide show on the various reports that can be generated through the program, including the number of calls per day, response type, respondent type, priority level, case status, etc. Ms. Teixeira suggested looking into whether this type of service could be done in-house to save money.
- E. School Committee SMART Goals** – Ms. Teixeira noted that this document came out of the School Committee’s governance project, and Dr. Safier indicated that the document was drafted in special sessions of the Program Subcommittee without the administration present. Ms. Teixeira stated that the document needs to be updated but she believes the full committee should review it as opposed to the subcommittee since the goals apply to the full committee. Dr. Safier suggested inviting Dorothy Presser from MASC to conduct a School Committee workshop to review the goals, and Ms. Teixeira suggested that that would be up to Chairman Pope.

III. ACTION – None.

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

VOTED: 3 in favor zero opposed, to adjourn the Program Subcommittee Meeting of April 3, 2014 at 6:27 p.m.

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

*Maria Puglisi
Recording Secretary*