

**THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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

**Program Subcommittee Meeting Minutes**

Thursday, September 6, 2018

District Office Conference Room

2 Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930

5:00 p.m.

**Members Present**

Kathy Clancy, Chairperson

Michelle Sweet, Vice Chairperson

Jonathan Pope, Member

**Administration Present**

Dr. Richard Safier, Superintendent

Gregg Bach, Asst. Superintendent

Kathy Verga, Transportation Director

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**I. CALL TO ORDER** – Chairperson Clancy called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and stated the mission of the Gloucester Public Schools.

**II. REPORTS/DELIBERATIONS/DISCUSSION**

**A. Audio and Video Monitoring on School Buses** – Dr. Safier reported that the district has new buses that have both video and audio recording capabilities, which have not yet been implemented due to installation work that needs to be done, etc. He pointed out a distinction between video and audio recording on the buses and stated that there is more sensitivity to audio recording.

Dr. Safier indicated that the purpose of video recording on school buses is to reduce misconduct and stated that audio recording could help deter verbal conflicts and bullying. He summarized a couple of articles on the subject, one of which indicated that audio recording can also be used as a resolution tool to identify allegations of bullying. Dr. Safier noted that the ACLU has been apprehensive about the use of audio recording; however, according to state law and the district's attorney, if there are signs on the buses and parents are notified of the surveillance, there is no expectation of privacy for students.

Ms. Verga reported that the cameras on the buses will not be live monitored and that there is a button the driver can push to "bookmark" an incident on the bus. The drivers would not have access to turn off the cameras and the cameras would only be accessed in the event an incident is reported.

Dr. Safier recommended implementing video recording at this time and further considering audio recording. He noted that he sent out a survey via a superintendents' mailing list and reviewed the six responses he received. He stated that he will also work on a policy for the next meeting.

Dr. Safier reviewed the specifics of the cameras, including their locations on the buses, settings, how and when the footage would be accessed and by whom.

On a motion by Mr. Pope, seconded by Ms. Sweet, it was unanimously

**VOTED:** 3 in favor, 0 opposed to recommend to the full School Committee that we approve the use of audio and video recording equipment on our school buses.

- B. Amendment to Elementary Student Handbooks regarding Recess** – Dr. Safier reported that the elementary handbooks have been revised based upon the Wellness Guidelines, which state that “Physical activity during the school day . . . will not be withheld as punishment for any reason.” He indicated that the handbooks have been amended to state, under the possible consequences for inappropriate behaviors, that loss of recess is for student safety purposes only.

On a motion by Ms. Sweet, seconded by Mr. Pope, it was unanimously

**VOTED:** 3 in favor, 0 opposed to recommend to the full School Committee that we approve the new language to the elementary handbooks which states, “Loss of privileges, e.g. recess (for student safety only).”

**III. ACTION** – See Items II.A and B.

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

**VOTED:** 3 in favor, 0 opposed to adjourn the Program Subcommittee Meeting of September 6, 2018 at 5:35 p.m.

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

*Maria Puglisi  
Recording Secretary*