

THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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

Program Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

Friday, September 14, 2012

Superintendent's Conference Room – District Office

3:30 p.m.

Members Present

Val Gilman, Chairperson
Roger Garberg, Vice Chairman
Kathy Clancy

Administration Present

Dr. Richard Safier, Superintendent
Gregg Bach, Assistant Superintendent
Grant Harris, IT Operations Manager
Erik Anderson, GHS Principal

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Gilman called the meeting to order at 3:37 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.

B. GPS Publicist Positions – Dr. Safier reviewed the intent of establishing the publicist positions and their roles. Mr. Harris reviewed his School Website Report Card, which indicates his evaluation of the status of news feeds and postings, document uploads, school calendars, and updated information in each school. He scored each of these four items from 1-25, with a total possible score of 100. The report card, which mistakenly left out Veterans Memorial School, indicates the following:

- GHS 68
- O'Maley 90
- Beeman 40
- East Gloucester 91
- Plum Cove 84
- West Parish 66

Mr. Harris indicated that he would update the report to include Veterans and resubmit it. He commented that Veterans website was extremely active last year. Mr. Harris stated that the publicists were trained on how to update the school calendars but that that may need to be reinforced. Dr. Safier would like to implement a system where the publicists provide him with a spreadsheet of items that were sent to the press. Kathy Clancy suggested that district-wide information be automatically synchronized with individual school calendars and vice versa. Mr. Harris stated that he would look into that.

Dr. Safier noted that the O'Maley publicist submitted a story to both Cape Ann Wicked Local and the Gloucester Daily Times reporting that the winners of the Peacefest poetry and essay contest for grades 6-8 were all O'Maley students. He did note, however, that it is difficult to control whether the newspapers actually publish what is sent to them by the publicists.

Mr. Harris indicated that this year, the IT Department will make a better effort to communicate with the publicists for feedback on a regular basis. Dr. Safier suggested coming up with a monthly feedback system to guarantee that this is a high priority issue. Mr. Bach suggested sharing that feedback with the principals at leadership meetings.

Chairperson Gilman suggested that each school website have a "welcome message" from the principal on the front page, and Mr. Garberg requested that Mr. Harris add an assessment of "first impression" to his website report card. Chairperson Gilman would also like district news to be uploaded to each school website and would like to know how many parents are signed up for ListServ. Finally, Mr. Harris suggested that a link to the MSBA West Parish project be placed on the West Parish School website, and the subcommittee agreed.

Mr. Harris left the meeting.

- A. GHS Attendance Policy** – Dr. Safier stated that he would like to have this attendance policy in place by the second quarter. Mr. Anderson distributed the updated version of the Attendance Standards & Procedures, as well as the attendance standards contained in last year's student handbook. He reviewed the revised policy, and the subcommittee discussed the following matters:
- Removing family vacations from "authorized absences" and adding a statement encouraging family vacations to coincide with school vacation weeks
 - Changing "authorized absences" to "documented absences"
 - Including the high school attendance policy in the School Committee Policy Manual
 - Providing parents with a form to be signed by doctors indicating that a medical appointment could not take place outside of the school day
 - Moving the language regarding administrative attendance failure to the beginning of the policy
 - Defining the prohibition of work on a day a student is absent from school as work in an approved cooperative internship
 - Removing the principal from Attendance Review Team (ART), per the recommendation of Dr. Safier
 - Appeals beyond the ART will be made to GHS principal, not superintendent

- Ineligibility of students to participate in extracurricular activities after second time tardy

Mr. Anderson will revise the attendance policy as discussed and share the draft policy with the Student Council, at the request of Chairperson Gilman. The subcommittee will meet again on **Wednesday, October 3rd at 4:30 p.m.** to review the revised policy. Kathy Clancy requested that the revisions be highlighted in the document. Mr. Anderson also provided sample regional policies for comparison, and Chairperson Gilman requested that Mr. Anderson provide tardiness data for the full School Committee.

Mr. Anderson left the meeting at 5:35 p.m.

- C. K-12 Survey Data Consolidation Report** – Mr. Garberg reviewed the results of the K-12 Insight survey and noted that the responses were predominantly from parents and staff. The report breaks out the responses between parents, staff and the community and indicates that the different groups have the same pattern of responses. Mr. Garberg pointed out that across all of the groups, the overwhelming preference is for small schools except with respect to availability of teaching resources and after school activities. He noted that the comments in favor of surplusing Fuller School are about three times larger in number than those in favor of keeping it within the district. Chairperson Gilman suggested moving the second figure to the end of the report, adding a note that it was shared with the subcommittee on this date, and sharing the report with the full School Committee at the next meeting.

Mr. Garberg made a motion, seconded by Chairperson Gilman, to present the amended version of the Community Survey on Attitudes Towards Fuller School Options to the full School Committee at the next regular meeting, asking for approval to place it on the district website. After discussion, the motion was withdrawn and a new motion was made.

After discussion, on a motion by Mr. Garberg, seconded by Kathy Clancy, it was unanimously

VOTED: 3 in favor zero opposed, to recommend to the full school committee that we place the Community Survey on Attitudes Towards Fuller School Options on the district website.

- D. Update on School Committee's GPS Website Enhancements/MSBA Best Practice Examples** – Tabled
- E. Reform of CHINS System** – Dr. Safier distributed the new legislation passed to reform the CHINS system, which does not go into effect for three years, as well as a press release from Governor Patrick regarding same.

III. ACTION – See Item II.C.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Chairperson Gilman, seconded by Kathy Clancy, it was unanimously

VOTED: 3 in favor zero opposed, to adjourn the Program Subcommittee Meeting of September 14, 2012 at 5:56 p.m.

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

*Maria Puglisi
Recording Secretary*