



THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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PROGRAM SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, May 3, 2012

6:00 pm

Superintendent 's Conference Room – District Office

Gloucester, Massachusetts 01930

AGENDA

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. REPORTS/DELIBERATIONS/DISCUSSION

- *A. Elementary School Attendance Policy – First Reading (*45 Minutes*)
- B. Community Outreach Discussion/Brainstorming/West Parish MSBA Process (*60 Minutes*)
- *C. Further Discussion of School Committee Program Sub-Committee Responsibilities Policy File: BDE (*15 Minutes*) (*See attached Program Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes of April 5, 2012*)
- D. Discussion items that were not reasonably anticipated by the Chairperson, in accordance with M.G.L., Chapter 30A, Section 18-25

III. ACTION

IV. ADJOURNMENT

*Enclosures

ATTENDANCE - Grades 1 – 5

(First Reading)

Massachusetts General Law Chapter 76, Section 2 states that it is the duty of parents/guardians to assure that children attend school regularly. The statute defines regularly as no more than 7 standard absences in any six-month period.

The Gloucester Public Schools recognizes the importance of attendance and its relationship to academic success. Numerous studies show that even a few days of missed school can result in lower test scores and other difficulties in school.

ABSENT FROM SCHOOL

The Gloucester Schools recognize that children are sometimes sick and should stay at home. For this reason, we allow up to 12 days of absence before taking action with the court system. Absences designated as Urgent/Medical (detailed below) will not count toward this maximum of 12 absences, but all others will.

Absence (Standard) *counts toward maximum total of 12*

- Common illness not requiring hospitalization or emergency care
- Scheduled doctor's appointments
- Dentist appointments
- Family vacations
- Family gatherings

Absence (Urgent/Medical) *does not count toward maximum total*

- Absence requiring emergency/urgent medical care (requires doctor's note indicating that treatment could not take place outside of the school day)
- Death in the family
- Religious holiday
- Required court appearance

District/school actions to address standard absenteeism:

1. After 6th day absent per year, parent/guardian receives warning letter.
2. After 8th day absent per year, parent/guardian conference required.
3. After 10th day absent per year, parent/guardian required to attend parent information/training night, to be held at a central District location.
4. After 12th day absent per year, school or district staff may take action including, but not be limited to, intervention by the Department of Children and Families or filing of a (CHINS) Child in Need of Services report with the District Court.
5. After 15th day absent per school year, student will be considered for repeat of grade.

Students absent from school will not be eligible to participate in any after school activity on the day of the absence (subject to discretion of principal).

Students are entirely responsible for making up work missed during their absences. Students must make up work on the teacher's designated additional assistance day or at some other prearranged time (this may include recess or other non-academic time).

B. TARDINESS

Promptness to school is very important. A student is considered tardy after the opening times stated under school hours. If a student arrives after the starting time, an adult must accompany the student to the office to sign the student in. Students arriving to school three hours after the start of school will be marked as TA (tardy-absent) and will not receive credit for the day. Tardy-absences apply toward the maximum 12 absences per year.

District/school actions to address tardiness:

1. After 6th day tardy per year, parent/guardian receives warning letter.
2. After 8th day tardy per year, parent/guardian conference required.
3. After 10th day tardy per year, parent/guardian required to attend parent information/training night, to be held at a central District location.
4. After 15th day tardy per year, school or district staff may take action including, but not be limited to, intervention by the Department of Children and Families or filing of a (CHINS) Child in Need of Services report with the District Court.

Dismissal

Students may be dismissed early for illness, urgent or emergency medical appointments, and true family emergencies. All other dismissals are highly discouraged.

If your child must be dismissed early, please send a note that morning describing the reason for the dismissal and the time you will pick up your child.

When picking up your child for an early dismissal, please report to the School Office. You will need to sign the dismissal book and your child will be called to the office and be released to you. **Parents should not go directly to the child's classroom to meet their child.**

To assure the safety of all children, telephone and email requests for changes in after-school or dismissal plans cannot be accommodated. Such requests must be received in writing. The beginning and the end of the school day are very busy times and we wish to assure the safety of our children by following appropriate procedures to make certain that their safety needs have been met.

In an effort to encourage responsibility and independence in our students, please understand that student use of the office telephone must be restricted to emergency use only. Students may not be able to use the office phone for forgotten homework, shoes, projects, or after-school arrangements.

Unauthorized Vacation

The Gloucester Public Schools highly discourages trips or family vacations that do not coincide with school vacations, and vacation-related absences will count toward the 12-day maximum before court action. Every effort should be made to schedule vacations during the school vacation periods.

Teachers are not required to provide advance assignments or to accept make-up work related to family vacations.

Parents may seek prior approval from the Principal and Superintendent for extended absence that may have educational merit for the student.

THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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

Program Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 5, 2012

Superintendent's Conference Room – District Office

6:00 p.m.

Members Present

Val Gilman, Chairperson
Roger Garberg, Vice Chairman
Kathy Clancy

Administration Present

Dr. Richard Safier, Superintendent (6:49 p.m.)
Dr. Shayne Trubisz, Assistant Superintendent
Gregg Bach, East Gloucester Principal

Also Present

Maggie Rosa, GEF President (6:28 p.m.)
Christine McGrath, GEF Vice President (6:46)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Gilman called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m. and stated the mission of the Gloucester Public Schools.

II. REPORTS/DELIBERATIONS/DISCUSSION/NEW BUSINESS

- A. Review of Policy File: BDE, “Subcommittees of the School Committee” –**
Chairperson Gilman would like to create an annual Program Subcommittee timetable to ensure that the School Committee is aware of the types of follow-up needed in order to be consistent with smart goals and accountability and to support the district improvement plan.

The subcommittee reviewed the current roles and responsibilities of the Program Subcommittee per Policy File BDE and discussed additional topics that fall under its area of oversight. The subcommittee discussed the following matters with respect to the list of its charges:

- Having key people report to the subcommittee on curriculum
- Reviewing, endorsing and/or approving major curriculum changes that have budget implications
- Promoting the schools on Cape Ann Report via interviews regarding programs
- Reviewing the process for curriculum implementation
- Including professional development as a responsibility of the Program Subcommittee

(Maggie Rosa joined the meeting at 6:28 p.m.)

- Tools for assessing student progress/District Data Team
- Reviewing process of students' transition between schools
- Ensuring that the Parent Advisory Council is successful and meeting its requirements – follow up on this at next meeting
- Reviewing grant applications in subcommittee to understand length of grant and how professional development comes about
- Inter-and intra-governmental relations as they relate to Program Subcommittee – Mr. Garberg will ask Mike Gilbert about this.
- Reviewing the DIP and strategy development for the district
- School Committee's relationship with the Student Council

(Christine McGrath joined the meeting at 6:46 p.m.)

- Outreach on major educational initiatives (i.e. BSRI)
- Reviewing the health education program

(Dr. Saftier joined the meeting at 6:49 p.m.)

- Reviewing quarterly report from North Shore Consortium

- B. Plan for Addressing Common Core Standards** – Dr. Trubisz reviewed the 2011 Mass. Curriculum Frameworks for English Language Arts and Literacy from the DESE, including guiding questions, key ideas, principles for learning, literary vs. informational reading, anchor standards for reading and writing, and next steps. She also reviewed and the subcommittee discussed the Common Core action planning in progress for 2012-2013.
- C. Update on District Technology Committee** – Gregg Bach reported on the District Technology Committee membership, current goals, future goals, and progress to date, including a survey of middle and high school staff and students that will be conducted during the week of April 23rd. The committee will be able to make some recommendations regarding technology after review of the survey data. There was a discussion about standardized tests being taken online in the future. Mrs. Rosa suggested requesting input from the community and indicated that the GEF would try to raise funds for technology and solicit people to help. A discussion was held on types of devices and how the technology would be funded.
- D. Proposal by Elementary Principals to Create New Attendance Policy** – Mr. Bach reported that there is a problem with absences and tardiness in the elementary schools. He reviewed a proposed attendance policy for grades 1-5 which distinguishes between standard absences (counts toward maximum total) and urgent/medical absences (does not count toward maximum total). Kindergarten is not

included in the draft policy because it is not mandated. Mr. Garberg requested data on the rates of absence and tardiness, and a discussion was held on combining instances of absence and tardiness with respect to action taken by the school.

Mr. Bach requested an opportunity to fine tune a few details prior to the committee's first reading of the policy, and Dr. Safier would like to seek legal input on the draft policy, as well.

There was a discussion about the need for parents to write a note for early dismissal of a student as opposed to calling the school, which will reduce disruption in the classroom and increase safety of students (i.e. losing track of a child). The committee agreed that a phone call accompanied by a faxed signed note would be acceptable.

Chairperson Gilman requested that all references to the "Gloucester Schools" in the draft policy be replaced with the "Gloucester Public School District" for consistency. She would also like to consider the possibility of stating that kindergarteners use this policy as a guideline, as well, but that they are not subject to Mass. General Laws.

- E. Fall 2012 O'Maley After School Offerings** – The committee discussed surveying the staff at O'Maley on what kinds of programs would be most popular and most beneficial to the students and then getting a response from the students. Mr. Garberg will work with Dr. Safier to develop a survey.

In terms of sustainability of a program, Ms. McGrath indicated that it is important to have someone at O'Maley who is interested in the program. Mrs. Rosa believes that the most successful programs that GEF funds are the ones that are driven by the teachers. Dr. Safier indicated that next year there will be a catalog of offerings sent out and that registration for all extracurricular programs will take place at the same time. There was a discussion about the timing of registration, when after school programs should be held, and the process of putting together a catalog.

- F. Community Outreach for Fuller School Decision and West Parish MSBA Process** – Chairperson Gilman indicated that the revisions to the FAQs have already been made. With respect to the two additional questions, Dr. Safier stated that he would try to have the answers ready for the next full School Committee meeting. Chairperson Gilman indicated that she would prepare a "My View" column about the survey and the FAQs, and a discussion was held on how to engage the PTOs, site-based councils and community partners. Kathy Clancy suggested drafting something for the PTOs to email to their members and also emailing it to the community partners for distribution to their membership. Chairperson Gilman will draft that document and suggested sending it to the city councilors, as well.

- G. Education Forum Updates and Pre-Presentation Plans** – Dr. Safier stated that the Docksiders will be performing from 6:20 to 6:55 p.m. Invitations will be sent out early next week to GPSD non-profits and community partners to set up information

booths for a half hour gathering before the forum. Dr. Safier indicated that Food Services will provide beverages and pastries and IT will set up the sound system, a screen and a podium. He listed the topics that will be discussed at the forum.

- H. Update on Status of FY2012/2013 District Improvement Plan** – Dr. Safier stated that the District Improvement Plan (DIP) is still a work in progress and that he will present it at the full School Committee meeting on April 25, 2012. Ms. McGrath requested a copy of the DIP for the GEF to use as a reference. A special Program Subcommittee meeting was scheduled for Monday, April 23, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. to approve the DIP.
- I. Assisted Listening Devices** – Mrs. Rosa suggested equipping the school auditoriums with assisted listening devices. She will look into the cost of putting in wireless transmitters and receivers.

III. ACTION – None

IV. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Kathy Clancy, seconded by Mr. Garberg, it was unanimously

VOTED: 3 in favor zero opposed, to adjourn the Program Subcommittee Meeting of April 5, 2012 at 9:05 p.m.

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

*Maria Puglisi
Recording Secretary*