

**THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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

**Program Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes**

Friday, March 11, 2011

Superintendent's Conference Room

9:30 a.m.

**Members**

Roger Garberg, Chairman  
Michelle Sweet (9:50 arrival)  
Tony Gross (Alternate)

**Administration Present**

Interim Superintendent Dr. Joseph Connelly

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**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Garberg called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m., stated the mission of the Gloucester Public Schools, and thanked Mr. Gross for substituting for Val Gilman.

**II. REPORTS/DELIBERATIONS/DISCUSSION**

**A. Programs Agenda for 2011** – Chairman Garberg provided some background information on the Programs Agenda and stated that he gave a copy of it to Dr. Safier for his comments and that he was very enthusiastic about it. Chairman Garberg reviewed the new items added to the planned and potential areas for review, as follows:

- Review of SPED Policy and Programs – Dr. Connelly stated that JoAnne Reiss' position is that the kids come first. There was a discussion about saving money versus doing what is best for the kids. Dr. Connelly believes it would be beneficial to put this on a future Program Subcommittee agenda for discussion and then possibly bringing it to the full School Committee. He also stated that the School Department may be able to save money by initiating in-house programs in the middle school to avoid gaps that require outside placements.

Dr. Connelly indicated that he received an email from Maggie Rosa of the GEF looking for a list of all programs the GEF has funded this year. He stated that he would like to publicly identify the beneficial impact the programs have had on the kids in a special presentation at a future School Committee meeting.

*Note: Mrs. Sweet joined the meeting at 9:50 a.m.*

- School Autonomy – Chairman Garberg indicated that Dr. Safier is very interested in working with the subcommittee on this matter.

- SIPs – Dr. Connelly stated that there is a leadership meeting on March 18<sup>th</sup> to review SIPs and that he is going to insist that the format and content of the SIPs be consistent. Before the principals present the SIPs to the School Committee, they will present them to him to be critiqued.
- MCAS Report – Dr. Connelly stated that the report was ready to be presented in December but the presentation kept getting bumped. He indicated that Val Gilman now wants the MCAS report presented to the School Committee. Dr. Connelly stated that he can provide the PowerPoint presentation that was prepared but that the principals would prefer not to give last year's MCAS report at this late stage, especially since they are so busy with SIPs, etc. Mrs. Sweet suggested that Dr. Connelly present a summary of what each school is doing to get ready for this year's MCAS.

Dr. Connelly suggested having a celebration of MCAS in order to motivate the kids, especially at Veterans. This celebration could consist of breakfast, wishing the kids luck, and possibly having a visit from a literary character. Dr. Connelly intends to talk to Cherylann Parker about this matter.

Dr. Connelly reviewed the \$10,000 grant for Beeman from the Center for District and School Accountability and the intensive requirements in connection with the grant.

- SC Dashboard – A discussion was held on changing the term “dashboard” to something simple that the public can understand, such as “evaluation.”
- Professional Development Evaluation – Dr. Connelly stated that the Curriculum Consulting Council has been nonexistent for years because the teachers were against it. He believes the council must be reactivated and that it should identify the professional development needs of the community and what the implementation plan should be for the coming year. Dr. Connelly recommended that the council's plan should be presented to the School Committee in August or September. He also suggested making this one of Dr. Safier's goals.

On a motion by Mr. Gross, seconded by Mrs. Sweet, it was unanimously

**VOTED:** To recommend to the full School Committee that one goal of the Superintendent is to provide teachers with needed professional development opportunities, including reestablishment of the Professional Development Committee/Curriculum Consulting Council, for the purpose of identifying successful instructional strategies that will assist Gloucester in closing the existing achievement gaps.

There was a discussion about a survey that Dr. Safier indicated was performed in Billerica at a cost of \$1,500 per survey.

On a motion by Mr. Gross, seconded by Mrs. Sweet, it was unanimously

**VOTED:** To recommend the 2011-2012 Program Subcommittee Agenda to the full School Committee.

**At this time, the Agenda was taken out of order.**

**C** **FY 2012 Budget Program Impacts** – Dr. Connelly identified textbook adoptions of \$174,650 and related major curriculum initiatives of \$235,000 that are not in the budget because of the Scott Foresman program we hope to adopt for the other three elementary schools, which has an approximate cost of \$200,000. He stated that he is hoping that year-end unspent funds can be put to that purpose. However, he stated that the School Committee must recognize that we have not given the principals the funding they need to pursue these curriculum initiatives.

Dr. Connelly also indicated that the approximately \$27,000 in general supply reductions that are being cut at the schools will have to be replaced in FY13. He stated that a Title I teacher that does reading recovery with only a handful of kids can become a literacy coach so there will be two full-time literacy coaches in the elementary schools. This will impact the reading recovery program.

Mrs. Sweet indicated that she heard from her kids, who attend the high school, that a Spanish teacher is being laid off and that there is a petition circulating. Mr. Gross stated that he heard the same thing at a Boy Scout meeting. Dr. Connelly indicated that he instructed the principals not to use anyone's name when talking to their staff but that Mr. Goodwin felt obligated to talk to this teacher. At this point, the elimination of this teacher's position is in the Tier III reductions and is not being discussed at this time. Dr. Connelly stated that he will talk to the teacher in question and do damage control.

There was a discussion about eliminating an art teacher and a performing arts teacher at O'Maley and hiring a world language teacher. This would not be a budget cut. Dr. Connelly indicated that he will include this matter in his Superintendent's Report.

*Note: Dr. Connelly left the meeting at 11:15 a.m. to attend another meeting.*

**B.** **Strategic Development Process** – Chairman Garberg reviewed the results of the staff visioning surveys, which included questions concerning school autonomy, project-based learning, extended learning time, and extended planning time for teachers. He stated that he just received a few more surveys from East Gloucester School and that we do not have data from other elementary schools because it was

lost. A discussion was held about whether to resurvey those teachers in order to complete the data. Chairman Garberg stated that he will talk to Dr. Connelly about this.

- D. Protocol for Interactions with Charter School** – This issue was brought up by Val Gilman as a result of her email interaction with Joe Knowles. There was a discussion about whether a policy is needed for the GPS administration to interact with the charter school, which would not involve the School Committee in any event. A discussion was also held on head nurse Cindy Juncker helping at the charter school. The subcommittee came to the conclusion that there is not a strong need to establish a protocol for interactions with the charter school at this time.

There was a discussion about whether the superintendent should report on students leaving the district for the charter school and/or students coming back from the charter school in his superintendent's report. With respect to students returning from the charter school, the district stands ready at all times to accept students back from the charter school and to have discussions about that matter.

- E. Update on Website** – Tabled.

- F. Other** – None.

### **III. ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Mrs. Sweet, seconded by Mr. Gross, it was unanimously

**VOTED:** To adjourn the Program Sub-Committee Meeting of March 11, 2011 at 12:02 p.m.

*Maria Puglisi*  
*Recording Secretary*