

**THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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

**Program Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes**

Friday, April 1, 2011

Superintendent's Conference Room – District Office

9:45 a.m.

**Members**

Roger Garberg, Chairman

Michelle Sweet

Val Gilman (*9:55 arrival*)

**Administration Present**

Interim Superintendent Dr. Joseph Connelly

Assistant Superintendent Shayne Trubisz

New Superintendent Dr. Richard Safier

O'Maley School Principal Debra Lucey

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**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Garberg called the meeting to order at 9:50 a.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. New Business**

2. World Language/Curriculum Decisions – The committee had extensive discussions concerning the O'Maley schedule, curriculum, staffing, enrollment, and strategic direction.

*Schedule.* Debra Lucey noted that parents were concerned that the current trimester system was too long to give parents adequate intermin communications. The current plan is a change to quarterly semesters wherein Progress Reports would occur at more frequently intervals. Both teachers and parents endorse this idea, according to Ms. Lucey.

At Dr. Connelly's request, Mrs. Lucey reviewed the students' daily schedule and the rotation of specials (two each term). Dr. Connelly expressed concern about the 4½-week split in specials each term.

*Curriculum and staffing.* There was an extensive discussion about adding World Language versus the STEM Lab and having John Madama and Dave Brown as part of the specials rotation. Mrs. Lucey explained the motivation for introducing World Language at the middle school. She stated that ten years ago, there were three languages at O'Maley, and it was exciting to think about bringing something back.

Mrs. Gilman noted that John Madama and Dave Brown are key staff. Dr. Connelly stated that of all the instructional staff he has worked with this year, John is the most impressive. However, he is not sure if John's skills will be utilized the way they should be if he is put into a classroom five days a week.

There was a discussion about finding grants to keep John Madama involved in his role and getting a math STEM enrichment teacher to work with him. Other options were discussed (i.e. splitting days) and whether John and David would be able to accept a part-time job.

Mrs. Lucey indicated that because of a predicted decrease in enrollment in 2012-2013, World Language could be brought in as a full-year core subject for eighth grade that year. She also indicated that most parents' major concern is for additional physical education time.

Dr. Safier stated that he remains concerned about math achievement. He noted that the percentage of students scoring “needs improvement” and “warning” is greater than the state average and suggested providing enrichment-type courses as well as “beefing up” remediation for those students who need it.

A discussion was held on changing the literacy block and renaming it “critical thinking skills.”

Mrs. Gilman stated that she views STEM as a differentiator between Gloucester and other communities. She suggested integrating eighth grade students into the World Language classes at the high school, since they are undersubscribed. Dr. Safier stated that we may want to take a look at the innovation school idea.

Mrs. Lucey agreed that they are going in the STEM direction and that the next step would be to decide what it is going to look like. Mrs. Gilman suggested that she promote the activities that parents may not recognize as P.E., such as yoga. There was a discussion about opening the library during lunch for students who do not want to go outside.

Mrs. Gilman stated that the GEF agreed to come to a Program Subcommittee meeting to discuss funding issues and suggested putting them on the agenda in May. She also suggested that Mrs. Lucey write a “My View” column for the Gloucester Daily Times.

The subcommittee deliberated on whether a motion is needed with respect to the new O’Maley curriculum. Mrs. Gilman indicated that she will talk to Mike Gilbert to get a better understanding of the subcommittee’s oversight of this matter.

**A. Old Business from FY 2011-2012 Program Agenda**

1. Strategic Development Update – Chairman Garberg reviewed the data collected as of April 1, 2011. Dr. Safier indicated that as part of his entry plan, he will be conducting focus groups in each of the buildings to collect data and will look at that data collectively with the subcommittee’s data. Mrs. Gilman suggested summarizing the subcommittee’s data for use by Dr. Safier in his focus groups. There was a discussion about obtaining email contact information for parents and having Grant Harris report to the subcommittee on this matter at the next meeting.
2. Review of Past Decisions Not Yet Reported to Full Committee – The administration is continuing to gather information on After School Policy. The Program Subcommittee agreed to revisit this policy before bringing it to the full School Committee. There was also a discussion about allowing eighth graders to play on high school teams.

**B. New Business (Continued)**

1. Review of Policies Respecting Responsibilities and Oversight of Volunteers and Part-Time Persons Working on School Property – The subcommittee agreed to table this agenda item due to time constraints.

**III. ADJOURNMENT**

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

**VOTED:** To adjourn the Program Sub-Committee Meeting of April 1, 2011 at 12:15 p.m.

*Maria Puglisi*  
*Recording Secretary*