

**THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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

**Special Program Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes**

Monday, June 13, 2011

Superintendent's Conference Room – District Office

6:00 p.m.

**Members**

Roger Garberg, Chairman

Michelle Sweet

Val Gilman

*(Note: Chairman Garberg recorded the meeting.)*

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**I. CALL TO ORDER**

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

**II. REPORTS/DELIBERATIONS/DISCUSSION**

**A. After School Policy** – The subcommittee reviewed the Program Sub-Committee Report of May 13, 2011 contained in the draft minutes of the June 8<sup>th</sup> School Committee meeting and agreed to the following revisions to the “Participation” section of the policy, which revisions reflect most of the concerns expressed to the full School Committee on June 8th:

1. The reference to middle school in the fourth paragraph will be deleted to avoid confusion. It was noted that the second paragraph adequately defines participation for middle school students.
2. The following will be inserted as the fifth paragraph:  
  
“Participation in interscholastic athletics shall require the presentation of written proof of parental approval, medical insurance, and fitness to participate signed by a certified physician prior to participation.”
3. The sixth paragraph with respect to St. Ann School’s participation in the Mad Hot Ball will be deleted because ballroom dance is not an after school program but is taught during music class.
4. In the seventh paragraph, the beginning phrase “In the case of students attending schools outside of the Gloucester Public School District” will be deleted. The paragraph now reads, “Written proof of parental approval must be provided for a student’s participation in any after school activity.”

Chairman Garberg noted that during the first reading of the policy at the June 8<sup>th</sup> School Committee meeting one member was concerned that this policy could be construed as discriminating against children who do not enroll in GPS. Chairman Garberg disagreed, noting that discrimination is about differential treatment because of factors beyond your control. In contrast, he noted that enrollment in the district is open to all children resident in Gloucester, so that opportunity to participate is subject only to the free choice of parents to take the opportunity. If the requirement to enroll before participating is discrimination, then most public, charter, and private school programming in the state is discriminatory.

Mrs. Gilman stated that our school district is fighting for funds and that we need every edge we can get to provide our students with innovative programs that add value to the packages we are able to offer to our students. After school programs that we offer, thanks to stipends and grants provided to us from the GEF, such as CAD, Robotics, after school languages and others, are the type of competitive programs that are desirable and unique to our school district and help us to remain competitive.

Mrs. Sweet agreed with both Chairman Garberg and Mrs. Gilman. She noted that the GEF has worked tirelessly to raise money for our schools and that the parents who contribute to the GEF have their children in our schools. Therefore, they should be the ones to benefit from the after school programs.

Chairman Garberg recalled discussing a “pay-to-play” option, in which those choosing out can pay a premium fee to participate, and believes it is inconsistent with our mission. Under a pay-to-play scheme, the district would in effect privilege choice for parents who are financially advantaged and able to pay a premium fee. He also stated that the costs to the district are in excess of \$5,000 when parents choice into other districts and in excess of \$11,000 when they choice into the charter school, an amount not recovered by any feasible pay option. These choices are what we want to influence in our policy, and any small premium we would charge for choice students participating in after school programming will not influence that choice.

Mrs. Gilman again mentioned her concern with allowing students outside the district to play on sports teams when our existing students at the school are not getting adequate playing time. She believes it would be unfair to the students who go to school there to allow students going to schools out of the district to participate when we are not even giving the students here enough playing time. She believes that bringing in “ringers” or stronger players is not in the spirit of a middle school sports team.

After discussion, on a motion by Mrs. Gilman, seconded by Mrs. Sweet, it was unanimously

**VOTED:** To recommend to the full School Committee a second reading of the amended File IHC entitled “After School Policy” as revised.

Finally, Mrs. Gilman noted that there have not been a lot of requests for outside participation in after school programs, which does not surprise her since the charter school is establishing their own non-profit foundation to provide programs for its students. She also added that students that choice out; i.e., Rockport participate in their after-school/enrichment sports programs and don't expect to simultaneously participate in the programs offered by the Gloucester Public Schools.

### **III. ADJOURNMENT**

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

**VOTED:** 3 in favor zero opposed, to adjourn the Special Program Sub-Committee Meeting of June 13, 2011 at 6:50 p.m.

*Maria Puglisi*  
*Recording Secretary*