

**THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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

**Program Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes**

Friday, June 3, 2011

Superintendent's Conference Room – District Office

9:45 a.m.

**Members**

Roger Garberg, Chairman  
Michelle Sweet  
Val Gilman

**Administration Present**

Richard Safier, Superintendent  
Shayne Trubisz, Assistant Superintendent  
William Goodwin, GHS Principal  
James Hayes, GHS Assistant Principal  
Mark Bedrosian, Dean of Academic Affairs  
Ellen Clarke, GHS Guidance Director  
Melissa Teixeira, School Committee Member

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**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Garberg called the meeting to order at 9:55 a.m.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**A. Program Sub-Committee Minutes of May 13, 2011 – Tabled**

**III. REPORTS/DELIBERATIONS/DISCUSSION**

**A. Vocational Program** – Dr. Safier explained the process of addressing the various findings as a result of the CPR audit and indicated that Brian Tarr is coordinating the issues that require responses. Dr. Goodwin reviewed the findings and stated that 75% of them have been addressed. He also noted that Jim Hayes has addressed a significant amount of the 35 safety issues that were itemized in the safety report.

Mr. Hayes reviewed the safety issues that have already been corrected and those that still need to be addressed. He provided Dr. Safier with the safety report and responses. There was a discussion about whether the district has adequate financial resources to address the outstanding safety issues and whether there is an opportunity to get help from North Shore Tech for the safety equipment that is needed.

Dr. Goodwin stated that his staff is working with Tom Markham on the purchase of a 40-foot exterior storage container. A discussion was held on whether the carpentry students could build the container and where it would be located. Mr. Hayes indicated that prices for storage containers range from \$3,000 to \$9,200.

Dr. Goodwin reported that 179 students are signed up for the vocational program and that there are 91 first-year students coming into the program. Mr. Hayes provided the subcommittee with the Annual Perkins Report Chart and explained Criterion Number 23 regarding non-traditional participation and completion and how it is being addressed. A discussion was held on hiring a translator for ELL students in the program.

Mrs. Gilman asked how well the college path was represented in career counseling at O'Maley. Ellen Clarke stated that the high school guidance department should collaborate with the O'Maley guidance department and the GEF to get seventh and eighth graders out to college campuses. Mr. Hayes pointed out that the vocational program at the high school enhances students' ability to get into college. He would also like to have the vocational students visit Olin College in Needham to show them what engineering students are doing.

- B. Review of Math Graduation Requirements** – The committee reviewed an administration plan to require four years of math at the high school. Shayne Trubisz reviewed the MassCore program of studies for Massachusetts high school students to be better prepared for college and a career. She indicated that the four year math requirement would be a state requirement in the next few years. Dr. Goodwin indicated that approximately 84% of Gloucester students will be in a fourth year of math in the fall.

Mr. Bedrosian reviewed GHS math data, which reflects fourth year math participation rates by year of graduation, variables contributing to the increase in that participation from 2009 through 2012, and where the remaining 33 students would be placed in a fourth year of math. He recommended that the School Department adopt the four year math requirement for the Class of 2015.

There was a discussion of the process of placing middle school students in high school math classes based on ten data points. Dr. Safier suggested considering national standardized assessments for eighth grade students, as well.

Ms. Trubisz congratulated Mr. Bedrosian and Dr. Goodwin for their work on the requirement. She also expressed the importance of all students having hands-on lab experience. Dr. Goodwin explained the union issue with respect to this matter.

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

**VOTED:** 3 in favor zero opposed, to recommend to the full School Committee that the Gloucester Public Schools adopt four years of math as a graduation requirement beginning with the graduating Class of 2015.

*Dr. Goodwin, Mr. Hayes and Ms. Clarke left the meeting at 11:15 a.m.*

- C. Setup of Facebook Account for Supplementing District Communications –** The subcommittee discussed the possible use of Facebook for linking with the school community. Grant Harris stated that a Facebook account has been created and that it is restricted, allowing only outgoing communications. For lengthy communications, he recommended using a link on Facebook to direct people to the GPS website.

There was a discussion about how the information is going to be formatted on Facebook and who it is coming from. Mrs. Gilman suggested that Dr. Safier should fill that role and that we could consider opening it up to principals at a future meeting. The difference between a Facebook page and a profile was discussed, and the need to “accept” people before they can get updates.

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

**VOTED:** 3 in favor zero opposed, to recommend to the full School Committee that the Gloucester Public Schools immediately establish a Facebook profile and that the Superintendent be the point person for posting information.

Mrs. Gilman requested that Mr. Harris update the School Committee through Dr. Safier and encouraged him to get someone from the high school, such as Mr. Bedrosian, to be on the team.

*Mr. Bedrosian left the meeting at 11:35 a.m.*

- D. Strategy Development –** Chairman Garberg gave a slide presentation of the GPS *Community Satisfaction Survey 2011 (CSS 2011)* results. The presentation included the following points:

- *Adequacy of the sample:* The *CSS 2011* sample was of reasonable size, including 211 parents with 364 children enrolled in GPS (10% of district families). However, the sample may not be entirely representative of the parent population (since the most effective prompt for respondents was through PTO email lists), so that the most reliable results are those pointing out inter-group comparisons (relative satisfaction more than absolute levels of satisfaction).
- *Overall satisfaction and willingness to recommend GPS:* The *CSS 2011* used two measures to assess respondents’ overall satisfaction and confidence with the district. One was overall satisfaction with the schools; the second was willingness to recommend GPS to a friend or neighbor. Mr. Garberg noted that, unsurprisingly, the two measures were highly correlated with each other. He introduced the Net Promoter Score as an overall index of confidence in the district.

- *Net Promoter Scores (NPS)*: Respondents who indicated that they would “definitely” recommend GPS (giving the top rating to *CSS 2011* recommendation question) are termed *Promoters*. Respondents who said would either *probably not* recommend the schools or *definitely not* recommend are termed *Detractors*. *NPS* is calculated as the difference between the percentage of *Promoters* and the percentage of *Detractors*, and positive scores are desirable. Those elementary schools represented in the sample (all except Veterans) as well as O’Maley had reliably positive *NPS* scores, indicating good to excellent appraisals by this sample of the parent community. Beeman and EGS samples had particularly strong *NPS* scores.
- *High school NPS*: The sample of high school parents gave a weakly positive *NPS* score. Since only 53 parents with high school students were included in the sample, this result is inconclusive.
- *Staff vs. Parents’ responses*: *CSS 2011* was available to both parents and GPS staff members. Satisfaction with specific elements of school culture and programming were generally similar between parents and staff samples.
- *Factors of satisfaction*: Analysis showed that four underlying concepts/factors explained much of the variance in satisfaction ratings. Mr. Garberg named these factors i) *Quality of school culture & communications*, ii) *Facilities*, iii) *Instructional quality*, and iv) *Promoting health and enrichment*.
- *Predicting willingness to recommend from satisfaction ratings*: Not every factor in the satisfaction ratings was relevant to accounting for satisfaction ratings. Only two factors – *Quality of school culture & communications* and *Instructional quality* – were important predictors of respondents’ willingness to recommend GPS to neighbors.
- *Comparison with DESE Parent Involvement Survey*: Mr. Garberg noted that the first factor found in *CSS 2011* measured the same concerns that were addressed in the recently circulated DESE survey. In other words, the DESE successfully identified the group of items that the *CSS 2011* establishes as one important influence of parent recommendations of GPS. Mr. Garberg suggested that this agreement between the DESE survey and GPS’s *CSS 2011* tends to validate both surveys.
- *Summary*: *CSS 2011* results suggest that the district can earn even higher levels of parent satisfaction through continued work on instructional quality and school culture, particularly communications with parents.

Mrs. Gilman would like to have the slide show presented to the full School Committee and to Dr. Safier’s staff. She would also like Chairman Garberg to develop a communication emphasizing what we have learned. Dr. Safier stated that results need to be published in a way that illustrates how community concerns are reflected in district actions. Mrs. Gilman would like Chairman Garberg to draft a possible communication of the results of the survey. A discussion was held on how this communication would be presented and to whom.

*Mrs. Sweet left the meeting at 12:25 p.m.*

The committee discussed methods of improving the representativeness of future surveys.

- E. Programs' Contribution to Superintendent Goals** – Mrs. Gilman suggested having a short meeting at a future date to discuss this agenda item, as well as strategy development. A meeting was scheduled for Friday, June 17, 2011 at 9:45 a.m.
- F. CPR Final Report Review** – See III.A.

#### **IV. ADJOURNMENT**

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

**VOTED:** 2 in favor zero opposed, to adjourn the Program Sub-Committee Meeting of June 3, 2011 at 12:30 p.m.

*Maria Puglisi, Recording Secretary*