

GROTON-DUNSTABLE REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

High School Library
Business Meeting Minutes
December 13, 2011

Approved: 1.10.12

PRESENT:

Mr. Erik Dichter, Secretary
Ms Berta Erickson
Mr. Jim Frey, Chair
Mr. John Giger
Ms Leslie Lathrop (Arrived 7:15 p.m.)
Ms Alison Manugian, Vice-chair

ABSENT:

Mr. Jon Sjoberg

ADMINISTRATION:

Mr. Joseph Mastrocola, Superintendent
Mr. Gerald Martin, Director of Business and Finance

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE:

Adam McPhearson (left at 8:08 p.m.)

STAFF, PRESS, OTHERS: C. Lindemer, Groton Herald; R. Shen, See attached sign-in sheet

I. Call to Order:

The GDRSC Meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by the chair, J. Frey.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Smith's third grade students, Sam and Kaila, led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Announcements

A. McPhearson announced this week each A period class is collecting food and winter clothing for Loaves and Fishes.

The sneakers lining the stair railings are from Purple Week which raises awareness about domestic violence.

J. Frey announced the winter concert will be tomorrow night.

IV. Approval of Minutes

A. MANUGIAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 29, 2011.
SECONDED BY J. GIGER

SO VOTED IN FAVOR UNANIMOUSLY

V. Vote to Accept Warrant Articles

A. MANUGIAN MOVED TO ACCEPT THE REPORT OF ONE PAYROLL WARRANT DATED DECEMBER 1, 2011 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$809,966.87 AND FIVE VENDOR WARRANTS TOTALING \$398,235.29.
SECONDED BY J. GIGER

SO VOTED IN FAVOR UNANIMOUSLY

VI. Questions and Comments from the Public

None

J. FREY MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES TO ADVANCE FOR IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION THE

**PRESENTATION OF THE SUPERINTENDENT ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARDS.
 SECONDED BY A. MANUGIAN
 SO VOTED IN FAVOR UNANIMOUSLY**

Superintendent Academic Excellence Awards

Every year, the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents allows school districts to give awards to high school students who have distinguished themselves in the pursuit of excellence during their high school careers. J. Mastrocola explained the criteria is lengthy and includes a three year cumulative average, rank in class and personal selection by the superintendent. He stated he designated Principal Mastrullo and his staff, as well as the guidance staff, to make the selections this year. The awards are given in the fall so students can use it during their college application process.

The Superintendent Academic Excellence Award was presented to four students. Each was asked to share their plans for next year and to name one tangible they learned, or acquired, that put them in the position to receive this award.

Rochelle Shen - She would like to go to either Harvard or Columbia in the fall. She said creativity got her through school.

Raaid Arshad - He is hoping to get into his top choice, M.I.T. He said time management served him well.

Matthew Ferro - He will be studying astronomy and physics at Northwestern University. He said the one thing he learned in high school was to step outside his comfort zone.

Meredith Shea - She hopes to study engineering at either Yale, Northwestern, Case Western or Carnegie Mellon in the fall. She said she learned that you just have to "work through" because you are going to be busy but you have to persevere.

VII. Presentations

A. GDEF Fall Mini Grant

L. Morgan reviewed the twenty-one grants, totaling \$8,301.49, awarded during the fall 2011 cycle. They received twenty-four applications. Normally they fund \$5000 for the mini-grants but since they did not fund as much as they would have liked to in the spring, they decided to do what they could this fall. She said the min-grants seem to have the most impact.

J. Frey thanked GDEF for their amazing support. B. Erickson is amazed with the variety of enrichment programs they come up with year after year.

VIII. Reports

A. Subcommittees

Budget & Finance Subcommittee - A. Manugian reported they met the last two Thursdays and have met with the middle school, elementary school and high school principals as well as with the head of buildings and grounds and the food services coordinator. Their next meeting is at 8:00 a.m. on December 20th in the MSS library and they will hear from the SPED Director and technology. On Friday, December 16th, they are having a budgeting software demonstration from a second company.

Personnel and Negotiations - J. Frey reported they will meet on December 20th.

Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee - A. Manugian reported they met on December 5th and discussed the reading program. Grace Volpe, the reading specialist at Florence Roche, was present and it was a great opportunity to discuss the program. They also discussed the upcoming changes the state is making with evaluations. They will meet again in January.

Policy Subcommittee - First and Second Reading - (Concussion)

L. Lathrop reported the state requires them to have an approved concussion policy in place by the end of the year. They met with Athletic Director Mike McCaffrey and a copy of Concussion Policy ID:JJIF was distributed

for review. The policy is an amalgam of another district's policy. MASC's suggested policy came out too late to be useful.

She asked M. McCaffrey if the medical history questionnaire should be in the policy and he said it is sufficient for providing background for overall health. He has not seen the impact testing. L. Lathrop said the policy is for extracurricular activities. The policy requires students to take an on-line test that does reaction testing so they will have a baseline before there is an injury. She recommends they approve the policy and revisit it early next year. M. McCaffrey said he is comfortable with the policy and adding the questionnaire next year. L. Lathrop said there are things that can be added and it can be broken up into policy and regulations. A few spelling corrections, and a word change, were made.

J. Giger said they will need to discuss the statement relative to school rules and regulations made by the Athletic Trainer Certified, Athletic Director, guidance staff and administrators about concussions appearing in the student handbook. He said they have some issues around how decisions are made about what goes in the student handbook and it appears to be up to the committee responsible for the School Improvement Plans. He wants to insure wishes of the school committee percolate down the way they are rather than leaving them to other groups to make a decision. J. Frey said if this is made a policy, it will not be optional as to whether or not it is included in the handbook. This will be mandatory content.

E. Dichter asked what the acceptable form will be to insure clearance from the student athlete's physician to return to the sport. L. Lathrop said there is a form that goes with the policy.

L. LATHROP MOVED THAT WITH THE STIPULATIONS THAT THEY MAKE THE MINOR CHANGES, ADD THE FORM AND THAT THEY WILL BE REVISITING THIS EARLY NEXT YEAR, THEY WAIVE THE FIRST READING AND GO TO THE SECOND READING TO APPROVE THIS POLICY.
SECONDED BY E. DICHTER

B. Erickson asked if this will be acceptable with the state. J. Mastrocola said he has to send a letter to the Department of Public Health by the end of the month saying the school committee either approved a concussion policy or that they are working toward a policy that will be done by March 31, 2012. Adjustments to the policy can be made at any time.

J. Mastrocola said S. Kleeman has spent a lot of time in terms of concussion policies and concussion training as an athletic trainer and asked him if they have a good policy in place to protect the students. S. Kleeman said the policy meets the requirements of educating everyone about what a concussion is and how they care for the athletes. The athlete's physician makes the "return to play" decision and he said he always requires a written letter from the physician.

J. Frey asked how frequently concussions occur and S. Kleeman said it is a significant problem and it happens in nearly all sports. The law has heightened awareness and the extra paperwork will not be an issue. J. Frey asked if he is also covering the middle school and S. Kleeman said he is not on site for middle school issues but is available if there is a question or an injury evaluation is needed.

M. McCaffrey said the coaches education will be the primary factor. It is not just a collision sport type of injury and could happen on the cross-country course or ski slope.

B. Erickson said concussions are increasing at the town team levels and she would like to have an alert on the playground. J. Frey said he would hope the nurses would have recognition training. E. Dichter asked if the physical education teachers at all grade levels will have training. L. Lathrop said this policy is specifically for extracurricular and interscholastic activities. J. Frey said professional development around concussion awareness for all activities may be warranted.

SO VOTED IN FAVOR UNANIMOUSLY

L. LATHROP MOVED THEY ADOPT THE CONCUSSION POLICY AS AMENDED.
SECONDED BY B. ERICKSON
SO VOTED IN FAVOR UNANIMOUSLY

The Policy Subcommittee will meet on January 3, 2012.

B. Superintendent

1. Tarbell Lease - Members received background information on the lease extension from 1995 to 2015. The Cancellation of Lease Agreement will be executed with the appropriate dates and reviewed by the district and town attorneys.

B. ERICKSON MOVED THAT THE GROTON-DUNSTABLE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT CANCEL ITS LEASE WITH THE TOWN OF GROTON FOR THE PREMISES KNOWN AS THE TARBELL SCHOOL AND FURTHER AUTHORIZE THE CHAIRMAN TO EXECUTE A CANCELLATION OF LEASE AGREEMENT IN THE FORM ATTACHED TO THE MOTION. SECONDED BY L. LATHROP

L. Lathrop understands they still have some things in the building and J. Mastrocola said Mr. Byrne has advised him there is nothing of value. J. Giger requested the attorney make sure there is a clean separation to be sure the district is not responsible for anything at Tarbell a year or two from now.

In Favor: J. Giger, L. Lathrop, J. Frey, E. Dichter, B. Erickson

Abstention: A. Manugian

2. Project 351 - Project 351 is a youth congress to celebrate service and civic leadership and schools are asked to nominate two students, one from each town, to serve as an inspirational Ambassador. Eighth grade students Samantha Ferraro, from Groton, and Aidan Ward, from Dunstable, have been chosen to attend the conference on January 14, 2012 where they will gain leadership skills and inspirational service experiences. J. Mastrocola said this will be a great experience for the students and offered them support.

3. ELL - Coordinated Review - Update - J. Mastrocola reported they have a very small population of ELE (English Language Education) students but they are still responsible for services to assist toward fluency in English and curriculum mastery in supported settings. While overall the staff is doing a good job with the population of about 12 students across K-12, the district needs to increase attention and management to a few areas. These include increasing communication to the home to explain rights and services, expanding ELE professional development for all staff around ELE services, developing a cohort of staff to be trained in four categories of ELE services and assuring that the AELs and curriculum documents are utilized in all ELE services. He reminded members they now have an ELL (English Language Learner) tutor. He said this is a 2 ½ year process. Any budget implications will be presented as the budget is produced. Many of the items in the report have all ready been addressed this year. The highest cost will involve the training components.

4. NEASC Update

The final NEASC report is still not ready but there should be a full report at the first school committee meeting in January.

C. Director of Business and Finance - G. Martin reported he has the Statement of Interest applications for the middle school roof replacement and the boiler replacement at the Union Building ready for the superintendent's and the chair's signatures. The deadline is mid-January and he would like to get them in early.

D. Advisory Committees

Prescott Advisory Committee - B. Erickson reported it is an on-going process. The architect has suggested the study look into using the building as an inn and this has raised a lot of interest.

E. Chair

1. Project Interface (from the floor) - J. Frey said a program is being launched to make counseling services available in Groton, Dunstable and the school district through Project Interface. This is driven by the efforts of the Boczenowski family. Project Interface is a non-profit organization based out of Newton and they have an initiative to improve integration of mental health and wellness services within school systems and the greater community. It is meant to be a combination of resources to augment resources available through existing institutions and to bridge between the different resources that are required to deal in particular with mental illness and mental stress situations. Once the funding is identified for the organization to expand their resources, it will cover Groton and Dunstable. It is especially targeted toward teen wellness and diffusing potential suicide situations. J. Frey will be attending a luncheon this Thursday at the high school to kick this off.

B. Erickson asked if this will be worked into the wellness program in the future. J. Frey said it could be but it is intended to be augmentative to the existing guidance and wellness resources the district has.

2. National School Board Associations - Their annual conference will be held in Boston April 20th through April 23rd and MASC is offering a discount rate for Massachusetts representatives. Members interested in attending were asked to let him know.

IX. Discussions

None

X. New Business

None

XI. Adjournment

B. ERICKSON MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 8:10 P.M. SECONDED BY A. MANUGIAN
SO VOTED IN FAVOR UNANIMOUSLY

Respectfully submitted,

Susan H. Smith
Recording Secretary

With attachment