

## GROTON-DUNSTABLE REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

High School Library  
Business Meeting Minutes  
May 8, 2012

APPROVED 05.22.12

### **PRESENT:**

Mr. Erik Dichter, Secretary  
Ms Berta Erickson  
Ms Leslie Lathrop  
Ms Alison Manugian, Vice-chair  
Mr. Jon Sjoberg (Arrived at 7:30 p.m.)

### **ABSENT:**

Mr. Jim Frey, Chair  
Mr. John Giger

### **ADMINISTRATION:**

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

**STAFF, PRESS, OTHERS:** C. Lindemer, Groton Herald; P. Comtois, Groton Landmark; L. Morgan, D. Marsh, N. Marsh, S. Morris, T. Jenkins, P. Myerson, R. Hoyt, D. Diggins

### **I. Call to Order:**

The GDRSC Meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by the vice- chair, A. Manugian.

### **II. Pledge of Allegiance (Students from the High School)**

Juniors Sam Morris and Troy Jenkins led the Pledge of Allegiance. Sam works as a camera man for Around Town and his favorite classes are history and band. He hopes to pursue a career in music or film. Troy is on the football and volleyball teams, is in the drama guild and recently performed in *Godspell*.

### **III. Announcements**

None

### **IV. Approval of Minutes**

L. LATHROP MOVED TO APPROVE THE BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES OF APRIL 24, 2012.

SECONDED BY B. ERICKSON

**SO VOTED IN FAVOR UNANIMOUSLY**

### **V. Vote to Accept Warrant Articles**

A. MANUGIAN MOVED THEY ACCEPT ONE PAYROLL WARRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$776,139.05 AND FIVE VENDOR WARRANTS TOTALING \$853,329.45. SECONDED BY L. LATHROP

**SO VOTED IN FAVOR UNANIMOUSLY**

### **VI. Questions and Comments from the Public**

N. Nash asked how the search for a new superintendent is going. A. Manugian said it is going very well and they have five finalists coming in to be interviewed for the interim position.

### **VII. Presentations**

**A. Superintendent Presentation** - Tonight is Erik Dichter's last meeting as a school committee member.

J. Mastrocola said Erik has played an important role on the committee and frequently adds interesting and thought provoking moments. Erik was also steady for change on the Policy, Budget and Finance and Personnel and Negotiations subcommittees during his three years on the school committee. He presented a

clock to Erik on behalf of the committee, the district, leadership team, parents and students.

Erik thanked everyone for their support and encouraged everyone to continue supporting the district. He said they are in a much better place than they were three years ago and there is more good work to do.

**B. GDEF - Spring Grant Awards** - GDEF (Groton-Dunstable Education Foundation) funded 11 grants totaling \$18,332.74. Lorrie Morgan reviewed the awarded grants and noted this cycle includes a generous \$1800 grant from Lowell General Hospital for the renewal of the SNAP software used to manage student health records. They received 13 requests, totaling about \$26,000.

**E. DICHTER MOVED THEY ACCEPT THE GRANTS. SECONDED BY B. ERICKSON  
SO VOTED IN FAVOR UNANIMOUSLY**

B. Erickson said she is impressed that every grade level is aided and L. Morgan said they endeavor to have each school receive something. A. Manugian thanked GDEF for the tremendous amount of work they put into providing these programs. L. Lathrop asked how their fundraising is going. L. Morgan said they had a good year with the trivia nights, the Octoberfest 5K Road Race and their annual fundraising campaign.

**C. Boutwell - School Council** - R. Hoyt said they are currently serving 78 students from the ages of 3 to 5 in preschool classrooms.

#### **SIP - GOALS 2011-2012**

**Goal 1 - Improve marketing and increase enrollment** - This goal is complete and their open house was a huge success with twenty-seven families attending.

**Goal 2 - Improve class offerings** - Currently they have a four afternoon program and this is their lowest enrolled program. They are looking to change this to a three afternoon program since they have a three morning program that is the highest enrolled. They are also looking at other programs to see how they will address similar issues.

**Goal 3 - Review and make recommendations for the FY12 Early Childhood Center budget** - This goal is complete. They will continue to build on the solid components they have rather than adding any new curriculum.

Looking ahead for 2012-2013, they will continue to work on whether the class offerings should be changed and they want to talk more about the transitions with children coming into the program and children moving on to Kindergarten.

**D. Florence Roche - School Council** - Principal Hoyt recognized Council members. He reviewed the objectives for each goal and noted integrating technology and designing a budget to support the objectives are bullet points for all three goals.

#### **SIP - GOALS 2011-2012**

**Goal 1 - To improve student learning as measured by local, state and national curriculum standards and assessments through implementing the Areas of Essential Learning (AELs)** - Writing across the curriculum will be increased, they will systematize assessments and align and map curriculum in math, science, English Language Arts and social studies.

**Goal 2 - To provide a safe and nurturing environment that allows students to reach their greatest potential in the areas of social and emotional development as well as creative expression** - Appropriate playground interactions will be increased. They did an extreme playground makeover and are waiting to hear

about a grant from Lowe's to do some additional pieces. Creative arts high school students will do partial paint designs on the playground and the unfinished parts can be finished by the students using chalk and their creativity. Open Circle will be expanded to include interaction in the cafeteria, on the bus and at recess.

**Goal 3 - To promote the development of students as responsible citizens of the world** - They will educate students about available technology, create a culture of appropriate behavior and provide clear school expectations.

Moving forward, they are diligently working on a common definition of balanced literacy, moving towards a standards based report card and transitioning to common core curriculum standards.

B. Erickson asked how technology will support emotional and social development. R. Hoyt said websites can be put in place for students to explore an emotional response to something or they may write something that ties into their emotional response to something. She feels being able to paint on the playground will provide an outlet for students that are not inclined to participate in sport activities. R. Hoyt said they have also provided a walking path around the outside and they are looking to get pedometers for the students.

**E. Swallow Union - Student Council** - Principal Myerson thanked Council members and said they meet once a month.

### **SIP - 2012-2013**

**Goal 1- To utilize the use of technology to enhance our curriculum** - They have a new science lab with 26 I-Macs and these have been a big plus. They also have 9 iPads, 2 Smartboards and a laptop cart. They will coordinate training topics and a timeline of training sessions and with staff input, determine how each grade level will incorporate the use of technology.

**Goal 2 - To incorporate our district's "Areas of Essential Learning" and Common Core Curriculum** - Math will be the focus area. They will review and define areas where they need to establish new teaching and learning practices and purchase materials that support the updated curriculum. Areas of instruction where staff may need training, guidance and support will be identified.

**Goal 3 - To incorporate a Response to Intervention Plan** - This is a general education initiative designed to assess the needs of struggling learners, especially in the early grades. It is federally mandated that they have a Response to Intervention Plan. A consultant has been hired to help the district with the plan and it will take a couple of years to get new strategies up and running. The RTI committee will work on a vision, timeline and do research. They will review what the district has in place, see what is working and establish teaching RTI protocols for each grade and subject area. P. Myerson said they are meeting the students' needs but they can do a better job.

B. Erickson asked how the RTI will be different from what they have done in the past. P. Myerson said they do a lot of it but they do not have a laid out plan of protocols to follow. A. Manugian asked if the RTI applies to just students on IEPs. P. Myerson said it also applies to students not on IEPs and preferably before a child gets on an IEP. L. Lathrop asked if there are community members on the school councils and P. Myerson and R. Hoyt said not this year but anyone is welcome.

## **VIII. Reports**

### **A. Subcommittees**

**Policy Subcommittee** - L. Lathrop reported they met on Monday and focused on the Residency policy and Student Absences and Excuses policy. Members received a draft of this policy with the change that includes a paragraph about what would happen during various religious holidays. She would like to do a First Reading tonight.

**Budget & Finance Subcommittee** - A. Manugian reported they met and identified some revolving accounts that need further attention. They also discussed legal costs and procedures that should be followed when a teacher or school committee member wants to speak with the attorney. Their next meeting is scheduled for May 31<sup>st</sup> at 8:00 a.m. at MSS but may be rescheduled to an earlier date to allow the current subcommittee members to meet before the school committee reorganizes.

**Personnel and Negotiations** - J. Sjoberg reported they met on Saturday to go over the superintendent's review and he and J. Frey will meet with Mr. Mastrocola to give him feedback. They went over the interview schedules and questions. Their next meeting will be at the middle school on May 15<sup>th</sup> and will be a traditional business meeting to review minutes and wrap things up.

**Curriculum and Instruction** - A. Manugian reported they will be meeting at MSS on Friday at 8:00 a.m. and they have a variety of items on their agenda including the concern about homework that was brought up by a parent at a school committee meeting.

## **B. Superintendent**

**1. Washington Trip - Final Approval (Action)** - The committee initially approved this middle school trip in September but policy states an out of state trip needs two approvals. The trip is June 4<sup>th</sup> through June 7<sup>th</sup>.

B. ERICKSON MOVED THEY APPROVE THE WASHINGTON, D.C. TRIP AS OUTLINED.  
SECONDED BY L. LATHROP

**In Favor:** L. Lathrop, A. Manugian, E. Dichter, B. Erickson

**Abstention:** J. Sjoberg

**2. School Nurse Recognition Day** - J. Mastrocola said May 9<sup>th</sup> has been set aside nationally to honor school nurses for their critical and unique contributions to the educational achievement of children and adolescents. He asked members to join him in recognizing their nurse coordinator Ms Dishington and all their school nurses.

**3. Prom Safety Letter (Info)** - Members received a copy of a letter, signed by himself, Principal Mastrullo and District Attorney Leone, that was mailed to parents and guardians a couple of weeks ago. With prom and graduation season upon them, the letter encourages vigilance around drinking and driving, drugs and texting. The prom is Friday, May 25<sup>th</sup>.

**4. Art All-State Acceptance - Stephanie Chaddock (Info)** - Stephanie Chaddock has been accepted to the 2012 Art All State which will take place on June 1<sup>st</sup> and June 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Worcester Art Museum. She will return with a portfolio and will share her experience with younger students. J. Mastrocola said this is a great honor and wished Stephanie the best of luck.

## **C. Director of Business and Finance -**

**1. Natural Gas Bids** - G. Martin reported there were 5 bidders and Hess Corporation was the low bidder at \$6.02 per decatherm. This year they are paying \$8.18 and they will see about a 26% reduction in price, a savings of around \$28,000 to \$29,000.

## **D. Advisory Committees**

**Prescott Advisory Committee** - B. Erickson reported there was a brief presentation at Groton's Town Meeting and now it is just a matter of waiting. Using Prescott for a fire station is off the table since town meeting voted for it to be built at the Lawrence Homestead.

## **E. Chair - No Report**

**IX. Discussions**

**1. First Reading - Policy JH - Student Absences and Excuses** - J. Sjoberg asked what the current policy says on religious holidays. B. Erickson asked if the committee composed this policy. L. Lathrop said it came from a lot of research of other districts and feedback from people in the district. Mr. Mastrocola has seen the policy. Since no one was able to find the existing policy at this time, it was agreed they will have another reading of the policy at their next meeting.

A. Manugian said Groton's town meeting approved the district's assessment and Dunstable's town meeting is Monday night.

**X. New Business**

None

**XI. Adjournment**

B. ERICKSON MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 8:00 P.M. SECONDED BY L. LATHROP  
**SO VOTED IN FAVOR UNANIMOUSLY**

Respectfully submitted,

Susan H. Smith  
Recording Secretary