

**GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES: Wednesday, October 11, 2023
Jon Zon Community Center, 35 Pleasant St., Greenfield MA**

Present: Elizabeth Deneve (ED); Susan Eckstrom (SE); Amy Proietti (AP); Jean Wall (JW)

Absent: Glenn Johnson-Mussad (GJM); Kathryn Martini (KM); Roxann Wedegartner (RW)

Also present: Christine DeBarge, Superintendent; Karin Patenaude, Assistant Superintendent; and citizens.

I. Call to Order

With a quorum present (ED, SE, AP, JW), Chair Proietti called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

AP recommended changes to the agenda due to low attendance of Members.

SE made a motion to move Re-Envisioning our School Facilities [report and vote] and intra-district choice to November's agenda. JW 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

II. Approval of Minutes

JW moved to approve draft minutes of September 13, 2023. SE 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

III. Public Comment

Jesus Leyva, Greenfield, invited all to City Council meeting on October 18, in support of increased state funding for schools.

Speaking in favor of allowing intra-district choice students to remain in their current schools:

- Brittany Cooley, Greenfield – Also asked that data and meeting notes on redistricting and intra-district choice be made available to the public.
- C.C. and A.M., Four Corners students
- Tara Kurland, Greenfield – Also said that community is unaware of potential changes; month's delay on vote allows for communication.
- Sean Pollock, Greenfield
- Rose Skriloff, Greenfield, GMS teacher – Also asked for attention to how redistricting will affect school culture at GMS, with loss of 5th-grade teachers and addition of 8th-grade teachers.
- Alex Wenger, Greenfield – Also criticized lack of communication to parents
- Marianne Bullock, Greenfield – Also praised school leadership for moving forward on difficult challenge of redistricting.
- Ilana Gerjuoy, Greenfield
- Seth O'Connor, Greenfield
- Arjuna Greist, Greenfield

IV. Student Representatives Report

S.T. and T.T. reported on GHS Student Council, club, and community service activities and GHS library programs. Student reports are available to the public on GPS website.

V. Budget Update

Andy Paquette, Business Manager, absent. No questions from Members on financial reports. SE reported that the Budget Subcommittee is beginning planning for 2025 capital requests and budget.

VI. Business

Moved to November meeting:

- *Update on Re-envisioning our School Facilities*
- *Decision regarding Intra-District Choice*
- *Vote on the format for Re-envisioning our School Facilities*
- *Policy votes on Section B and BDA*

A. UPSEU and GPS Technology Department

AP moved that the School Committee recognize UPSEU as the exclusive bargaining agent of the Technology Department for the Greenfield Public Schools. JW 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

B. Policy: Section B “Board Governance and Operations”

SE moved to table second reading of Section B “Board Governance” and as well as the first reading of Policy BDA [“School Committee Organizational Meeting”] until November. AP 2nd.

School Committee Organizational Meeting happens in January. Recommend adoption of BDA before then.

Motion passed 3-0-1 (AP abstain).

C. Superintendent Evaluation

Discussion:

- Mid-cycle formative evaluation: Year 2 of 2-year process.
- Minimal response by Members in completing evaluation.
- Comments re: Superintendent evaluation are included in report; comments on other topics are not included.
- Disagreement on need for vote on who collates data and creates report.
- Ad hoc subcommittee has been created, chaired by ED, to recommend improvements to process for next superintendent evaluation cycle.

D. Superintendent Transition

SE moved that the Greenfield School Committee appoint Assistant Superintendent Karin Patenaude to be the Superintendent of the Greenfield Public Schools, effective July 1, 2024, pending a public interview and successful contract negotiations. JW 2nd.

Discussion:

- Unanimous support for Patenaude from staff and public via many emails, phone calls, texts, conversations.
- School Committee met last Wednesday with MASC to discuss superintendent hiring process. MASC recommended first considering qualified internal candidate as “wisest decision.”
- Hesitation on voting when 3 members are absent.
- Public interview process to be planned, announced.

Motion passed 3-0-1 (ED abstain).

VII. New Agenda Items - None

VIII. Reports

A. Reports of the Administration

1. Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning

Karin Patenaude summarized recent work including professional development; ELA, music, and social/emotional curricula; grants. *(Details in written report.)*

2. Superintendent

Dr. DeBarge provided updates on the Strategic Plan; Re-Envisioning our School Facilities progress; new GPS website; resignation of Eric Hevy, Director of Facilities and Grounds. *(Details in written report.)*

Discussion:

- Letters sent to parents re: absences are automatic; state requirement; useful to track data; no insinuation that absences are not legitimate.
- Chronic absenteeism has been dramatically reduced.
- Summary of comments re: redistricting is available to public on website in 5 languages.

B. School Committee Reports

1. Budget Subcommittee (SE) – Report given earlier in meeting

2. Collaborative for Educational Services (ED)

BEACON (alternative high school) at GCC, created by GPS/Karin Patenaude, transferred to CES management and open to at-risk students in Franklin County.

3. District Wellness Committee (AP)

AP is School Committee representative on Wellness Committee, which also includes teachers and staff, parents, FRCOG rep, and is led by Melissa Bednarski, GPS Nurse Leader. Committee has written long, comprehensive document on wellness topics such as nutrition, HVAC, vaccinations. AP will present draft to School Committee; next step is to change GPS policy manual to defer wellness policies to this document.

IX. Adjournment

SE moved to adjourn. ED 2nd. Meeting adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Farber
Recording Secretary

Meeting Materials

1. Agenda: October 11, 2023
2. Draft minutes: September 13, 2023
3. Student Report: October 11, 2023
4. Superintendent's Update, October 11, 2023
5. Assistant Superintendent Update, October 11, 2023
6. Financial Reports, October 4, 2023

7. Summary of Options for Re-Imagining our School Facilities, updated October 2023
8. Policies JC "Attendance Areas," EEAA "Walkers and Riders," JCA "Assignment of Students to Schools"
9. Policy BDA "School Committee Organizational Meeting"
10. Responses to redistricting options
11. 2023 Superintendent Formative Evaluation results, October 2023
12. "Greenfield Voluntary Recognition," email from Attorney Adam Dupere to Supt. Christine DeBarge, October 10, 2023