

**GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES: Monday, September 13, 2021
Greenfield High School Library, Greenfield MA**

Present: Katie Caron (KC); Susan Eckstrom (SE); Susan Hollins (SH); Glenn Johnson-Mussad; (GJM); Amy Proietti (AP); Jean Wall (JW)

Absent: Roxann Wedegartner (RW)

Also present: Christine DeBarge, Superintendent; Mike Kucheski, GPS Athletic Director; Karin Patenaude, Assistant Superintendent; John Robert, TMS; Kelly Savitri, GPS Head Nurse; other school staff & citizens.

I. Call to Order

With a quorum present (KC, SE, SH, GJM, AP, JW), Chair Proietti called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes

GJM moved to approve draft minutes of August 11 and August 18, 2021 [as amended]. JW 2nd. August 18, add to IV, third bullet: "for elementary school families." **Motion passed unanimously.**

III. Public Comment

None

IV. Reports

A. Student Representatives

S.T. reported on GHS organizations including Student Council, Key Club, class meetings, and other groups beginning to form in the new academic year.

B. Administration Reports

1. School Business Manager

Postponed until October

2. Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning

Karin Patenaude summarized recent work:

- academic coaches & interventionists have begun screening
- reviewing, aligning math, ELA curriculum
- mentors for new-teacher mentees
- federal grants

Discussion:

- Currently finalizing turnaround plans & DESE grant requests for Federal Street & GMS
- Working on collecting reliable student assessment data, given challenges of remote instruction & testing last year
- Request for presentation of music curriculum

3. Superintendent

Dr. DeBarge summarized initial efforts getting to know people, resources & projects. Much time given to responding to urgent, confidential issues. Additional work includes:

- Ongoing evaluation of student performance data
- Before-School Care successfully staffed; 130 students signed up

- Unified Arts – art, music, physical education, technology, library: schedules modified to provide instrumental music 2x/week at all elementary schools
- New staff hired: Eric Hevy, Facilities Director; Christopher Pratt, GMS Associate Principal. Work continues to fill other vacant positions.
- Caissie Putnam has resigned as Four Corners principal.
- COVID protocols & testing
- Beginning to meet with City department heads

Discussion:

- Concern for lunch protocols, especially for elementary students who cannot yet be vaccinated. Elementary students are seated at 3' distance during lunch.
- Delay in DESE's pooled testing service due to vendor's staff shortage. GPS developing plan to test using our own staff.
- GPS doing rapid tests for symptomatic students & daily "test & stay" for anyone who had close contact with active case.

C. School Committee Reports

1. Chair

- Superintendent will respond to emails sent to the School Committee from the community. Consensus to bcc full School Committee to inform all of messaging. Caution not to respond, deliberate online.
- Given widespread challenges, amazing success at staffing. Be patient as we move forward under these challenges.

2. Subcommittee Reports

a. Budget & Finance Subcommittee – SE

Discussed problems with offering Unified Arts at elementary schools, confirmed that lack of funding was not the cause.

b. Health, Safety & Facilities Subcommittee – KC

Discussion of Green River School can proceed now that Superintendent & Facilities Director are on board.

c. Subcommittee Meetings

Expectation that all subcommittees will meet monthly. All subcommittee chairs to identify regular meeting time & inform Chair Proietti & Superintendent to allow coordination with various staff who might need to attend.

V. New Business

A & B. Pooled Testing for Athletes, and Superintendent Discretion Regarding COVID Protocols (*agenda items considered together*)

Kelly Savitri, GPS Head Nurse, recommended testing as strong mitigation strategy for all, especially athletes. MIAA has relaxed prior COVID restrictions for sports. Frontier, Mohawk, potentially Gill-Montague are requiring testing for athletes; Greenfield in co-op teams with these districts.

SE moved that the Greenfield School Committee mandate interscholastic athletics participants be required to participate in COVID-19 testing. GJM 2nd.

Discussion:

- Intent is to require testing for students participating in all extracurricular activities. Because agenda item is limited to athletes, action can include only athletes to avoid Open Meeting Law violation. Intent for Superintendent to expand this policy to cover all extracurricular activities participants.
- Superintendent will research, consider whether to require testing for Before/After School Program students.
- GPS nursing staff can reach out to individual families who need information and/or might be reluctant to consent to testing. Students age 18+ do not need parental consent.
- COVID policies approved by School Committee did not include expiration, thus avoiding creating new policies for 2021-2022 year, as other districts needed to do.
- Policy EBC-S on COVID-related issues, approved last spring, already empowers the Superintendent to make all operational decision-making regarding COVID protocols, with reports to the School Committee as necessary. No new action is needed.

Motion passed unanimously.

C. District Level Strategic Planning

Justin Martin, TMS, will present on strategic planning services at School Committee's October meeting.

Discussion:

- Request to know cost, see examples of strategic plans led by TMS
- Relying on TMS services is convenient; concern for lack of diversity in vendors, perspectives.
- Need to review goals recently set by School Committee – e.g., social justice.
- School Committee's interview questions in superintendent search can guide priorities for strategic plan.

VI. Executive Session - MGL c 30A, §21, (a): (3) To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares.

GJM moved to enter executive session. JW 2nd. Motion passed unanimously. Entered executive session at 7:20 p.m. Returned to public session at 7:27 p.m.

VII. Vote on Custodian/Maintenance Settlement Agreement

KC moved to approve the settlement agreement by & between the Greenfield School Committee and the UPSEU Local 424: Custodial/Maintenance Personnel, as presented. GJM 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Adjournment

KC moved to adjourn. SH 2nd. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Farber
Recording Secretary

Meeting Materials

1. Agenda: September 13, 2021
2. Draft minutes: August 11, August 18, 2021

3. Extracurricular COVID Safety Check Proposal
4. "Yale University announces recipients of the 2021 Educator Award" – Patrick Garland, GHS
5. Superintendent's Report, Sept. 13, 2021
6. Assistant Superintendent Update, Sept. 13, 2021
7. Financial Reports: Year to Date Budget Report, Revolving Account Balances, Sept. 9, 2021