

**GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES: Wednesday, July 13, 2022**  
Jon Zon Community Center, 35 Pleasant St., Greenfield MA

**Present:** Elizabeth Deneve (ED); Susan Eckstrom (SE); Glenn Johnson-Mussad; (GJM); Kathryn Martini (KM); Amy Proietti (AP); Jean Wall (JW); Roxann Wedegartner (RW)

**Absent:** None

**Also present:** Christine DeBarge, Superintendent; Greta Shwachman, Director of Food & Nutrition Services; citizens and the press.

**I. Call to Order**

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

**II. Approval of Minutes**

**JW moved to approve draft minutes of June 8, 2022. RW 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.**

**III. Public Comment**

Jasper Lapienski, Greenfield, returned to the School Committee the book *I Like Cats*, which he found during a house repair project. The book had been checked out of the Green River School in 1988 by Shara, a student in Room 1. The stamp inside the book identified the book as the property of the School Committee.

**IV. Reports: Administration**

**A. Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning**

Dr. DeBarge presented Karin Patenaude's report on recent work on curriculum, professional development, grants, library assessments, mentoring. *(Details in written report)*

Discussion: Measuring student outcomes re: new curricula; efforts to improve literacy outcomes; support for and assessments of students grades 8-12 not included in new curricula; training in literacy support for special education staff; student assessments in math.

**B. Superintendent**

Dr. DeBarge described summer work including building cleaning & capital projects; kindergarten enrollment; upcoming school building tours with School Committee & other city officials August 23; hiring of Michelle Fenimore as GMS principal & Joel Lowsky as Director of Technology. *(Details in written report)*

Discussion: Director of Behavioral Services position will be filled via contract. Some staff positions filled, search continues to fill others.

**VI. Business** *(considered next to follow Superintendent's Report)*

**A. Student Meal Prices**

Greta Shwachman, Director of Food & Nutrition Services, announced that all 6 schools will offer free breakfast and lunch next year.

Due to DESE policy, \$0.25 increase in lunch price is needed for students purchasing additional meals. All first meals are free. New prices for additional lunch: Elementary \$3.25; Middle \$3.50; High \$3.75. Price of additional breakfast is \$2.00.

**JW moved to accept the lunch price increase, as proposed by the GPS Food Service Department, which will apply only for purchases by students of additional lunches, for \$0.25 per meal increase, for the 2022-2023 academic year. KM 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.**

Update on Summer Eats program: new Keep Kids Fed Act allows grab-and-go meals. Parents can pick up breakfast & lunch for their students. Praise for staff who quickly, capably transitioned to grab-and-go format.

## **V. Reports: School Committee**

### **A. Chair (AP)**

Chair Proietti is working with Liz Lafond, MASC, on School Committee Self-Evaluation. Deadline for members to complete self-evaluation July 27, to allow Lafond time to compile.

Redistricting Subcommittee will re-activate with JW as chair, GJM & ED as members. Subcommittee will discuss enrollment projections, NESDEC report, changing start times at GMS/GHS, walkability, ways to support students through K-12.

### **B. Collaborative for Educational Services (ED)**

ED reported on successful, friendly onboarding at her first CES meeting. GPS uses many CES services. Praise for CES's high-quality support.

## **VIII. Budget Update**

Dr. DeBarge reported on wrapping up FY22, including purchase orders & finalizing grants. Some budget lines that currently appear as negative will zero out using funds from revolving accounts, School Choice.

## **VI. Business (continued)**

### **B. Nurse Leader**

Dr. DeBarge noted that the workload of school nursing staff has dramatically increased. Superintendent and nursing staff are recommending a full-time Nurse Leader, not additional stipend work done by a school nurse.

**RW moved to approve the creation of the GPS District Nurse Leader job, as proposed. GJM 2nd.**

Discussion: How other districts structure nurse leadership responsibilities; clarification of "attendance protocols" that offer support for students frequently absent due to medical conditions; guidelines for parents; will fund this position for next 2 years with ESSER money.

**Motion passed unanimously.**

### **C. Surplus Items: Technology**

**SE moved to declare as surplus the GPS technology, as inventoried, on the Spring 2022 IT Equipment Recycling Master List. KM 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.**

#### **D. Surplus Items: Books**

**SE moved to declare as surplus the GPS library materials, as inventoried, on the GHS Library Weeding Log dated 8/1/2021 to 6/5/2022. JW 2nd.** Fifteen library laptops in this inventory are probably also listed in technology inventory; intent is for laptops to be declared surplus either way. Some materials have been removed from inventory because they were not returned or were moved to other schools. **Motion passed unanimously.**

#### **E. Cell phone practices at GMS and GHS for the 2022-2023 school year**

Dr. DeBarge described students' use of cell phones in class as significant impediment to learning, burden on staff to continually and negatively engage with students re: phones. GHS Principal Derek Morrison & Dr. DeBarge visited Chicopee High School, which implemented Yondr pouches last year. In Yondr system, students keep phone in a locked pouch, which is unlocked when they leave school building. Support from Greenfield & State police. For safety, adults in school have wall phones & cell phones.

AP clarified that operational decision to adopt Yondr system is within Superintendent's responsibility, not School Committee's. School Committee does not have a policy re: cell phones.

Discussion:

- Requires upgrade of schools' phone systems for families who need to reach their students.
- Recognize that some students will have emotional difficulty separating from their phones ("withdrawal").
- Phones, social media designed to be addictive.
- Teaching self-control is part of social-emotional curriculum.
- Some parents will object to not being able to contact child directly. Want to seek parents' opinions.
- Cost: \$16,00 for GMS/GHS initial year; \$12,000 annual recurring cost.
- Staff has been in continual confrontational mode with students over phones. Cell-phone-free school will be restorative, allow for relationships.
- Predict that locked cell phone technology will be in every school district within 3 years.
- Request to delay support vote until August to allow members to learn more, hear from community.
- School Committee already approved Student Handbook, which includes prohibition against cell phone use during school day.

**SE moved to charge the Policy Subcommittee with creating a cell phone policy for the Greenfield Public Schools to support administrative efforts toward improving the learning environment for and social/emotional well-being of our students. KM 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.**

Chair Proietti emphasized that administration does not need to wait for School Committee affirmation to move ahead with Yondr purchase.

#### **F. Superintendent's Evaluation**

AP explained that Superintendent's evaluation is annual process.

Dr. DeBarge clarified that evaluation is not a comprehensive look at all her work but rather on specific goals re: Student Learning; Professional Practice; District Improvement. She provided highlights of Year 1's pertinent achievements & ongoing efforts. *(Details in Summative Evaluation Update document)*

Next step is for members to complete individual evaluations, submit to Chair Proietti by July 27.

**VII. Executive Session** pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, s. 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; (7) to comply with, or act under the authority of, any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements (approval of executive session minutes from June 8, 2022 meetings).

RW moved to enter executive session. ED 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

Entered executive session at 8:48 p.m.

Returned to public session at 9:03 p.m.

### **VIII. Unit A MOA**

**RW moved to approve the June 2022 Memorandum of Agreement by and between the Greenfield Education Association Unit A and the Greenfield School Committee. ED 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.**

### **IX. Adjournment**

RW moved to adjourn. GJM 2nd. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Farber

Recording Secretary

### **Meeting Materials**

1. Agenda: July 13, 2022
2. Draft minutes: June 8, 2022
3. Superintendent's Report, June 8, 2022
4. Assistant Superintendent Update, June 8, 2022
5. Financial Reports, June 30, 2022
6. Meal Price Increase Proposal, June 2022
7. GHS IT Equipment Recycling Master List, June 2022
8. Library Weeding Log, June 2022
9. Letter from William Gordon, Acting Chief of Police, to Dr. DeBarge, re: cell phones
10. Superintendent Evaluation, Summative Evaluation Update, July 2022