

GORHAM SCHOOL DEPARTMENT
Minutes of Regular Meeting
October 9, 2024

Present:	Mia DeSanctis	Anne Schools
	Michelle Littlefield	Jennifer Whitehead
	Stewart McCallister	Nicole Yeo-Fisher
	Sarah Perkins	Heather Perry, Supt.

The Regular Meeting of the Gorham School Committee was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairwoman Perkins and the roll was called.

Administrative Reports

There was a presentation by the GMS Outdoor Club.

Brian Jandreau reported on the recent NEASC Accreditation findings and next steps.

Communications

There was no public comment.

The student representative reported the following:

- Our homecoming was last weekend with a football game and dance to celebrate the school year.
- GHS has earned its continued accreditation by NEASC
- GHS's RampAGE, a book club, has started for any students interested in reading more
- Our fall play, *The Crucible*, will be performing November 8, 9, and 10th! Make sure to come out and support the theater program.
- Auditions for the annual musical, *Little Shop of Horrors*, will be held on October 16th.
- Students have expressed a desire for harassment policies like Title IX to be publicized so students know exactly where to bring these concerns to. To combat these issues and empower students we have clubs like GirlUP and SafeBae which strive to educate students on the importance of consent and the power each student's voice has to spread awareness about sexual violence. I am glad to see that Gorham Schools are consistently updating these policies and have posted them online.
- School safety has been a major concern for our students here at GHS and around the nation. We've seen a recurring violence against the children of this nation in the past few months at Apalachee High School, Joppatowne High School, and many other schools which have fallen victim to gun violence. Although Gorham seems to be a small town hidden from the horrors of gun violence, we continue to receive threats which leave our students shocked and afraid to come to a place where they are promised safety. The school's efforts to combat this issue are rooted in the ALICE protocol. This year each grade received a presentation during advisory on the ALICE protocol and what to do in case of an emergency.
- We will have a voter registration table on October 15th during all lunches in the back of the MPAC. I, along with Mr. Welsch, Mr. Panagakos, and Mr. Jandreau felt it was important for students to take action within our democracy on a local and national level. The purpose of this registration drive is not to push students to vote for certain candidates but instead to educate them on the importance of their vote leaving an impact.

The Superintendent noted the following:

- October 1 enrollments and all staffing information is being uploaded to the state as we speak. The final report is due to the state by Oct. 30 for both student enrollment counts and for staff NEO reporting. Both reports have significant impact on our annual ED 279 subsidy calculations.
- Similarly to enrollment reports we have until the end of October to finalize Free/Reduced lunch information with the state. I have reached out to Michael to see about preliminary numbers and will share those once I get them.
- For the recent thought exchange we had a total of 600 participants. A little over 200 staff, almost 400 parents, and 80 community members! I am working on summarizing results now and will share them with the School Committee at your Oct. 23 workshop meeting.
- There are TWO ballot questions on the upcoming Nov. 5 ballot asking for approval of THREE capital projects involving the schools. The first question, if approved, would allow us to move forward with a cafeteria expansion and modular classroom expansion project at GHS as well as with a HVAC

replacement project at Narragansett Elem. School. The second project requests funds to allow us to rebuild the existing tennis courts due to disrepair and to move the tennis courts from the current GHS site to a new site at GMS expanding from 4 courts to 6 courts. For the 6th court we are looking to engineer this so that we can add 4 pickleball courts as well. We have added information to our website for folks to review if they want to learn more about the What's, Why's, When's of these projects as well as how they came about. Please encourage folks to go to the website to learn more.

- Right now we are down 2 full time bus drivers in the transportation department. We are also down 6 full time special education ed techs in the Special Education Department. We continue to seek additional substitute teachers. Please spread the word that we are in need of these positions and have folks reach out to me if they are interested in applying!

School Committee Standing and Special Committees

Finance – Mr. McCallister reported that the Finance committee met on October 2 and reviewed the new Facilities Use fee schedule, Workers Compensation RFP, and the Thought Exchange survey on budget development. The committee also reviewed warrants, overtime and credit card statements. The next meeting will be on October 23.

Policy – Mr. McCallister reported that the Policy committee met earlier tonight and reviewed the Facilities Use and Competitive Food Sales policies that are on tonight's agenda for a 1st Reading. The next meeting is November 26.

Personnel – Ms. Schools reported that the Personnel committee met on September 9 and reviewed the self-assessment form and the 2023-2024 goal evaluation form. The next meeting will be after the November elections.

Vocational Education – Ms. Whitehead reported that the first advisory committee meeting of the year is scheduled for tomorrow at PATHS.

Gorham Teaching & Learning - First meeting is scheduled for Nov. 6 at 3:30 p.m. via zoom.

Anti-Racism & Equity Committee - First meeting is scheduled for Oct. 17 at 5:30 p.m. at GHS Library

Drop Out Committee - Has not met since last meeting. Next meeting TBD.

Alternative Education Vision Committee - First meeting is scheduled for Oct. 16 at 3:30 p.m. at GMS Library.

Fiscal Sustainability Committee - Ms. Littlefield reported that the committee met on September 23. Next meeting scheduled for Oct. 28 at 6:00 p.m. in the Superintendent's Conf. Room.

New Business

There was a 1st Reading of the following policies:

- Community Use of School Facilities Policy (KF)
- Competitive Food Sales Policy (EFE)

Ms. Yeo-Fisher moved, seconded by Ms. Littlefield to go into executive session at 7:59 PM to consider the School Committee's self-evaluation pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A., Section 405 (6)(A). The motion passed 7 YES, 0 NO.

The School Committee came out of executive session at 8:55 PM.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 PM.