

School Council Meeting 1/27/2025 230PM – 315PM

Attendees

- Jeff Carovillano – Chair, School Principal
- David Twiss – Parent
- Michael Donahue – Parent
- Amy Murray – Parent
- Erin Duggan – Parent
- Martha Dodge – Teacher
- Alysha Morgan – Administration
- Michelle Brock - Teacher

Apologies

- Savannah Barmore
- Katelyn Brown

Meeting Start Time: 230PM

Meeting was opened via Google Meeting by J. Carovillano.

Approval of last month's minutes

Meeting Minutes: Motion was made by E. Duggan to approve last month's meeting minutes. This was approved by all 7 attendees and there were not any objections noted.

- In addition to the Meeting Minutes, D. Twiss requested that all meeting material like Meeting Minutes or other attachments be made available via PDF distribution in addition to Google Docs; this way people that do not have the ability to access Google Docs will be able to review the materials ahead of time. There were no objections to this request.
- M. Donahue also brought up that Open Meeting Law may require all meetings to return to in person meetings versus virtual meetings. D. Twill also indicated that it appears "Remote" meetings may be discontinued and is not aware of them being extended.
- [Updated guidance on holding meetings pursuant to the Act Extending Certain COVID-19 Measures | Mass.gov](#) (inserted offline)
- J. Carovillano indicated that this Council will comply with Open Meeting Law.

Budget/Override presentation

J. Carovillano spoke at length on the 2025/2025 (FY26) School Budget and the impacts of an Override. He went on to highlight some of the impacts as impact to staff (teachers, administration, support) such as department heads that were eliminated last year the impact to special education. J. Carovillano also went on about other items that are being considered such as charging for transportation, after school activities (e.g. drama, STEM).

Three Budget Options (override dependent):

1) NO Override - \$1,717,292 (Reduction) – Key Highlights entail:

- Elimination of multiple GEA / GESA / Custodial & Maintenance positions
- Class size will increase, and elective options will be reduced; investment in modernizing the curriculum will be stalled.
- Examining and dismantling the small learning communities with administrator expertise and teacher's content/grade level expertise

2) Level Service Budget - \$19,308,512 – Key Highlights entail:

- Limited Modernization / Minimal innovation
- Slower pace of academic growth and improvement

3) Needs-Based - \$20,701,237 - Key Highlights entail:

- In comparison to our neighboring districts on the cost per pupil - GPS is lagging behind.
 - Of the seven (7) North Shore Districts, six (6) of the districts spend more on CPP and have higher accountability data than Georgetown.
 - In 2023 GPS spent the second lowest amount on CPP and had the second lowest MS and HS data.

4) FY2026 Proposed Changes – Key Highlights:

- Grade Level Shifts:
 - Perley PreK moves to Penn Brook with a smaller footprint.
 - 6th grade moves to Middle School.
- Need for Revenue Sources through things like student transportation, increase Pre-K tuition.
 - It was also indicated that Special Education transportation costs can be as high as \$350 a day for one student.
 - Options being considered are leasing vans/buses and using our own drivers.
 - It was also indicated that some schools offer their students the ability to take classes at community college.

- Other items that may be charged for are Drama, STEM which are at no cost currently.

Budget Discussions Entailed:

M. Dodge suggested that information be provided to the general public of what budget cuts would entail and cited that a similar exercise took place in 2011.

- J. Carovillano indicated that there have not been any decisions to that end.
- D. Twiss also indicted that an approach to M. Dodge' suggestion could have damaging effects and cited his experience on FinComm.

D. Twiss also suggested that any communication about budget should be factual.

- D. Twiss also indicated that education funding from the state does not help out communities like Georgetown; community members that want the override need to show their support at events like Town Meeting and local elections.

E. Duggan made a comment on Small Learning Communities.

- J. Carovillano indicated that this is grade specific and that it is something that could be impacted with budget decisions / outcomes

M. Donahue inquired about the Time-Off and if J. Carovillano can confirm that the budget line item(s) for projected time off (FY26) appropriately factors in historical lookback. M. Donahue also indicated that he will be forwarding all the District Time-Off from the past few years that was obtained through public inquiry to J. Carovillano after the meeting to be part of the Meeting Minutes and distribution to the Council Members.

- J. Carovillano indicated that in years past the time-off budget line items were not adequately accounted for.
- D. Twiss also indicated that at times /in the past when teachers were absent and there was not an adequate substitute option that students would gather in the auditorium for their class.
 - J. Carovillano indicated that this was an issue in the past years and for this current school year, students meeting in the auditorium for a substitute class option only occurred three times thus far; this scenario is for extreme cases.

A. Murray suggested that plans be made available for the grade building shift and to provide the community awareness of how the moves will impact teachers / students.

- J. Carovillano indicated that Hope Doran has been regularly meeting parties involved about this and are actively running through several scenarios.
- M. Dodge asked how this was done in the past as many of the 6th grade teachers were around the they were at the GMHS when grades 6-12 were there several years ago.

A. Murray indicated that she was surprised by no additional fees for some afterschool activities like Drama.

- M. Donahue also indicated that his son takes part in the STEM club and would be willing to pay for the afterschool activity as it is beneficial to the students who want to take part in it.
- J. Carovillano indicated that in the past the GYCC assisted in some of the after-school activities cost.
 - E. Duggan indicated that the PTA may try to assist in some capacity.

M. Donahue asked if the SORA App could be a topic of discussion for the next meeting. This was welcomed by J. Carovillano.

M. Donahue asked if we would have a make-up School Council meeting where we did not have one in September; this would for compliance of the School District Policy / Procedure for School Council. J. Carovillano indicated that this will be considered especially with the budget uncertainty.

M. Donahue asked if there was a recent reduction in staff. J. Carovillano indicated that Ms. Weldon recently resigned and that they are actively looking at replacement candidates. Offline the job link was made available:

<https://www.schoolspring.com/jobdetail?jobId=4943826>

Topic that was briefly reviewed and will be carried over to the next School Council Meeting:

- School Safety Plan: [SRP ♥ The "I Love U Guys" Foundation](#)

Meeting ended at approximately 330PM.

Supporting Documentation:

P 1.8.2025 Budget(s) Presentation to Town .pptx