

Guilford SEPTO Meeting
Thursday, December 14, 2017
6:00 – 7:30 pm
Guilford High School

Meeting Minutes

Guest Speaker: Dr. Paul Freeman, Superintendent of Schools

- 6:10pm meeting called to order
- Welcome and introduction of Dr. Paul Freeman led by Kim Beckett
- Guest Speaker Dr. Paul Freeman
 - Budget is always a work-in-progress and Dr. Freeman recommends that parents follow the conversations being had at all the different opportunities
 - How the budget process “works”:
 - Starts with public comment – what is the community looking for (past interests include full day kindergarten, Special Education, current interests include start times at high school, art and music contact times, the importance of paraprofessionals)
 - Meetings with building principals, and departments for their view
 - Administrative draft
 - Present to Board of Education and public – Jan 8, 2018
 - Reviewed continuum of services now present at GPS from preschool – age 21 (presented by Jason Scanziano at the November Guilford SEPTO meeting) – less outplacements are easier on budget so important to continue to build local continuum
 - Discussed structure of budget
 - The budget is a series of projections (“buckets”) – 5-10 year look back
 - Special Education budget includes tuitions, special services and transportation
 - Special Education enrollment numbers are low but the costs are high
 - Staffing is assigned to each building’s budget – all employees work for the district
 - Gave examples of how staff is not divided by Special Ed services and regular education budget because of the programs that are offered – it would be too hard to classify. Some examples include:
 - Crossroads, TLC programs
 - Co-teaching
 - 60-65% of town budget is education
 - 80-85% of education budget goes towards salaries and associated benefits
 - Special education budget looks good this year with incoming tuitions, outplacements aging out and overall fewer outplacements
 - It was a tough year for transportation – at least \$250,000 increase
 - Looking to increase music for elementary levels from 30 minutes per week to 60 minutes

- Discussion of ECS (Education Cost Sharing) grant – example of good work by town and district to prepare for loss of outside monies by creating umbrella and emergency budgets
- Discussion of transportation issues
 - Bus regulations have not been changed
 - Problem is length of ride due to Guilford geography not capacity
 - 5-year contract is up and needs to be renegotiated
- Discussion of unfunded mandates including the difficulty of having state mandates that are not backed by funding (figures into budget)
 - Discussion of restraint procedures – prefer to have a more well-trained core of people to respond then having everyone trained, but not well
- Discussion of student anxiety and student anxiety related to smart phones
 - Grassroots parents group formed to better educate community on technology
 - Screenagers aired at high school and Adams and is coming to Baldwin MS Feb 1st (open to Guilford public)
 - Goal is to help kids figure out how use as a learning technique – GPS policies re-written
 - Chromebooks being sent to grade 5+ - educate parents and provide parents with tools to make their own decisions, need to be educating parents on Chromebook usage and safety
 - Guilford Youth and Family Services offers terrific workshops on internet & tech safety on current & up to date topics
 - The GPS website will include some new resources such as mindfulness strategies and current technology
 - Shoreline TECH, How to Manage Technology W Jan 24th (*date has changed to Feb 1st since meeting minutes per Sarah Kellogg)
 - Point made that universal academic expectations of our county are a huge contributor of student’s anxiety
- Discussion of a state controlled budget – “like auto insurance”, annual cost based
- Discussion of local voting tendencies – 14% attendance on local referendum, but 60%+ for Presidential primaries
- Dr. Freeman wants to present a budget that protects all present services while also offers an enhancement – music contact time in elementary schools likely to be that enhancement for this year
 - January 8th Dr. Freeman’s budget will be presented at Board of Education
- Approval of October meeting minutes – motion by Wendy Staschke and 2nd by Erin McCallum, unanimously approved
- Approval of November meeting minutes – motion by Gus Kellogg and 2nd by Ginny Brown, unanimously approved
- Meeting adjourned at 7:53pm - Motioned by Matt McCleery

**Next meeting Monday January 22th 6-7:30pm at the Guilford High School Library
Speaker to include State Senator, Ted Kennedy, Jr. and State Rep. Sean Scanlon**