

# GARDNER – SO. WILMINGTON HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT #73

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## BOARD BRIEFS

### *Highlights of the Regular Meeting*

**January 20, 2021**

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#### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

No public at tonight's meeting.

#### **PRINCIPAL'S REPORT:** Principal, Mr. John Engelman, reported on the following:

- Since returning from Winter Break – GSW currently has only 3 students out due to Covid related issues with no positive cases to report.

#### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT(S):**

- Athletic Director, Mr. John Engelman, reported on the following:
  - IHSA update = Grundy County has been moved to Tier 1 – which means practices can be held. Spiritline and Boys basketball started this week. Basketball is still considered a High Risk Sport, which means we can't play "games." Volleyball is a Medium Risk Sport, which means practices can start on Feb. 15 and games can be played. IHSA has another meeting on January 27 to determine the sports calendar, and hopefully we will have more answers and direction after this meeting.
  - Orange & Black Night – GSW would like to hold a smaller version sometime in February, with Senior parents allowed as spectators / audience.
  - Senior Banners – A lengthy discussion about the Senior sports banners and what groups are considered "teams" and which ones are considered "clubs" was questioned. Mr. DeLong has previously requested that the Athletic Boosters purchase banners for the senior members of the trap shooting team. There has been a lot of discussion regarding that request at the Booster's meeting. The board requested that the administration categorize sports, clubs and activities so that everyone knows what groups they fall into and then present that to the Boosters.
- Technology Director, Mr. John Williamson, submitted his Technology Update Report to the board via electronic spreadsheet. The biggest project will be 1:1 devices for students next school year. We are looking at receiving a \$57,000 grant that can be used to close the digital gap. Mr. DeLong states that the plan is to be 1:1 for next year. Details on how that will look will be coming later.
- Academics Coordinator, Ms. Angel Dallio, will submit her Student Services report to the board in February. Students are currently MAP testing at this time, so the report will be submitted next month.

#### **BUILDING AND GROUNDS REPORT:** Mr. Josh DeLong presented the following:

- Building update = The boiler is working and keeping the building warm this winter, but we are having steam leaks often. Mr. Debelak is repairing pipes on a weekly basis. An epoxy floor was installed over Winter Break by the gym area near the band room and weight room stairways. It looks great.

#### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:** Mr. DeLong presented on the following:

- End of first semester: Mr. DeLong commended the staff and Mr. Engelman for a job well done in helping the at-risk students / failing students. They provided extra help to get most grades up to passing for 1<sup>st</sup> Semester. They also transported some students to and from GSW after regular school hours.
- GAVC Director's Award Winner – for the month of December:
  - Austin Niccum — Culinary Arts
- Discussion on extending the school day - GSW is looking to expand the school day to a 2 or 3PM dismissal, starting most likely on March 15 for the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter. This would be the last 9-weeks of the school year. This will have an impact on the 12% of the students who are currently enrolled in the

remote learning option if they choose to stay that way for the 4th quarter. More information on this plan will be rolled out in the coming months.

- Tentative calendar discussion for the 2020-2021 school year – This calendar would be approved next month, as we are looking to be comparable to GAVC. Students would start school on August 17 and May 25 would be the last day for the 2021-22 school year.
- Board opening(s) update – We will have 4 seats available, and there are 4 people running for election.
  - Mr. Timothy Harvey
  - Mrs. Kristen Ashley
  - Ms. Allison Wright
  - Mrs. Terry Schultz
- Springfield update – Extending 15-days at the end of the school year did NOT pass. The Budget is still unknown at this time. To date, GSW has only received one mandated categorical payment this year. The second should be coming soon and it is unknown when and if we receive the third or fourth payments this year.
- Extension of FFCRA days – After December 31, the government did not extend days. GSW decided to extend them through March 31, 2021.
- Discussion on extra-curriculars, graduation, prom, others, etc. – A committee will be formed soon to make plans for upcoming events. Tentative plans for prom are underway. Currently all options are on the table including bringing it back locally since we are in a different region than the current prom venue is. A graduation committee is being assembled to review all options for a graduation this year. Mr. DeLong stated his desire to be more proactive and aggressive in terms of opening back up activities and athletics. He stated there is a fine line between the safety of all parties involved and the mental and physical well being of our student athletes. He has sent letters to the governor and local legislators but wants us to move forward with any wiggle room that we can.
- Solar farm abatement – The 15 taxing bodies impacted by the pending solar farm came to an agreement with the company, Blue Sky, after several negotiation meetings between them and the 3 local superintendents. Blue Sky was seeking \$4 million in tax abatements over the first 4 years of the project. The final numbers came in a \$2 million dollar abatement over the first two years of the project. Mr. DeLong stated that while he was still sold more on learning toward zero dollars than 4 million, the 2 million dollar difference for GSW is the equivalent of \$240,000 more in income over the life of the project. The final agreement is one that all the taxing bodies were comfortable with and should allow the company the ability to make this project competitive and move closer to actual development.

### **BOE MEMBERS REPORTS:**

None at this time.

### **ACTION ITEMS:**

- Destruction of closed session audio recording 18-months and older
- Opening of Board of Education closed session minutes from July 2020 – December 2020
- Intergovernmental Transportation Agreement for transportation bid
- Authorize the superintendent to begin the bid process for a transportation contract
- Resolution for tax abatement agreement with Blue Sky Solar Energy, LLC
- Part-time Spiritline coach resignation – Devin Fisher

### **BOARD OF EDUCATION**

President: Pam Brooks  
Vice-President: Katy Wepprecht  
Kristen Ashley, Cindy Gerber, Tim Harvey,  
Kori Speed & Allison Wright  
Principal: John Engelman  
Superintendent: Joshua DeLong