

**FREMONT SCHOOL DISTRICT
School Board Meeting
October 13, 2009, 2009
6:30 P.M.**

**School Administrative Unit #83
Blackrocks Village
5 Hall Road, Unit 1
Fremont, NH 03044**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Jeff Rowell called the October 13, 2009 meeting of the Fremont School Board to order at 6:35 PM at the School Administrative Unit #83, Blackrocks Village, 5 Hall Road, Unit 1, Fremont, NH 03044.

II. ROLL CALL

Present were Chairman Jeff Rowell, Peg Pinkham, Deb Genthner, Sharon Girardi, Ida Keane, Superintendent William Lander, Financial Administrator Bonnie Sandstrom, Middle School Principal John Safina and Elementary School Principal Dawn Lewis.

Members of the public included: Abby Dobson, Debra Almon, Laura Coyle, Cathy Herrmann, Carol Cohen, and Mary Hale.

III. OLD BUSINESS: Q & A

Questions and answers from previous minutes/meetings were addressed.

Ms. Girardi asked if there was an answer from Sanborn about correct tuition payment by Fremont. Ms. Sandstrom replied that she did get word from Sanborn that Fremont did not have to pay the \$73,034 (that was encumbered in tuition to Sanborn) and that she got a check for \$6,000. Ms. Sandstrom said she still needs to reconcile numbers but that the auditors know to take off the \$73,034 now that she heard from Sanborn. Ms. Sandstrom said there was still a deficit.

Ms. Pinkham followed up her question about having laptop computers around town (e.g. post office) to play the video of the student keynote speaker. She said she could try to get a few laptops for this purpose. Ms. Keane suggested showing the video to the PTA

Ms. Pinkham asked what was being done with old laptop computers at school. Mr. Safina replied that some Paraprofessionals are using them and that all but one or two were being recycled.

IV. AGENDA REVISIONS

Mr. Lander suggested switching the non-public session to follow Board/Superintendent Communications in tonight's agenda.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. AUGUST 25, 2009

Deb Genthner made a motion to approve the public minutes of August 25, 2009 as amended. Sharon Girardi seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.

B. SEPTEMBER 8, 2009

Deb Genthner made a motion to approve the public minutes of September 8, 2009 as amended. Ida Keane seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.

C. SEPTEMBER 22, 2009: TABLED

Deb Genthner made a motion to table the public minutes of September 22, 2009 until the next meeting. Ida Keane seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.

Mr. Rowell said that, in the future, first draft of minutes should be in agenda packets for review and vote.

VI. BOARD, SUPERINTENDENT COMMUNICATIONS: DISTRICT GOALS UPDATE (SHEET)

Mr. Lander distributed new information he got regarding NHSBA Resolutions for information only.

Mr. Lander distributed a document that reviewed Fremont School District 3-5 Year Goals. Listed were: strategies for success, indicators of success and other indicators of school success for each goal. Goals are: improving student achievement, communication, Professional Development support, and completion of strategic plan to provide quality education to all students.

Mr. Rowell asked Mr. Lander to clarify the process for developing a mission statement. Mr. Lander said that a District mission statement could be made as a first step.

Mr. Rowell said he got a letter from Seacoast Charter School expressing interest in coming to a Fremont School Board meeting. The Board collectively agreed to reply saying that the Board would welcome the visit. Mr. Lander mentioned that Seacoast might consider asking for tuition because of financial strain. Ms. Pinkham then asked if, at the time of the visit from Seacoast, there could be information available regarding state mandates and the District's policy on tuition and charter schools. Mr. Lander said he would report back to the Board.

Ms. Keane asked if there will be a schedule when the School Board would get assessment results regarding accomplishing District Goals throughout the year. Mr. Lander said that could be possible over a period of time.

VII. NON-PUBLIC SESSION

At 6:55 PM, Deb Genthner made a motion to enter non-public session per RSA 91-A:3, I and II, (3) and (5). Ida Keane seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.

VIII. RETURN TO GENERAL SESSION

At 8:00 PM, Deb Genthner made a motion to return to general session. Ida Keane seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.

(October 14, 2009: email vote by School Board members to seal the non-public minutes of October 13, 2009 for one year)

IX. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. PRINCIPALS' REPORTS (INCLUDED WITH AGENDA)

Ms. Lewis reviewed her report on current events at the elementary school.

Mr. Safina reviewed his report on current events at the middle school.

Ms. Pinkham clarified that there would be a letter going out to parents ahead of the SASS (Sexual Assault Support Services) presentation in March 2010 and Mr. Safina said that was correct. He said that the presentation was about bullying and sexual harassment and not about sex education. A sample letter to parents was included in the agenda.

A building report by Mr. Brown was included in the agenda packet.

B. FINANCIAL REPORT: INSERT

Ms. Sandstrom reviewed her unaudited financial report dated September 30, 2009.

Ms. Sandstrom clarified the date on her cover letter should read "7/1/2009 – 9/30/2009".

Ms. Sandstrom reported that health and dental insurance encumbrances still need to be adjusted with any changes in coverage for current or new employees.

Ms. Girardi asked if the supply line items that were over budget were now frozen. Ms. Sandstrom said she's asking where people who are putting orders in are taking the money from in their budget.

Ms. Sandstrom clarified for Ms. Girardi that the 2320 Office of Superintendent / 5441 Rent line was under-budgeted (even after the propane line was moved) though she did not know why.

Ms. Sandstrom clarified for Mr. Rowell that the money in the graduation expense line was needed elsewhere.

Ms. Girardi asked if stipends can be used from cross-country, baseball and softball that have not been used for athletic transportation or basketball uniforms. Mr. Lander said

that he wouldn't use baseball or softball stipends but if cross-country took place and it wasn't expended, money could be applied for transportation. Mr. Safina clarified that they are trying to replace the basketball uniforms. Ms. Sandstrom said that softball is in a contract so it can't be cut now.

C. TECHNOLOGY PLAN BUDGET: TABLED

X. PUBLIC INPUT: N/A

XI. ACTION ITEMS

A. MANIFEST REPORTS

Ms. Keane reviewed highlights of Manifest #8:

- equipment/replacement/repair	\$11,437
- supplies	\$10,502
- new equipment	< \$1,000
- textbooks, curriculum material	\$7,638.55
- Café Services	\$15,932.50
- computer desktops, parts	\$8,335.83
- contracted services	\$3,200
- staff workshops	\$1,300
- regular transportation	\$37,357
- Handwriting Without Tears	\$4,097 (w/ grant money)
- tuition, private/other	\$6,847
- tuition reimbursement	< \$3,000
- Waterford Early Reading Program	\$13,850 (w/ Title IIA money)
- maintenance agreements	\$17,879
- electricity	\$5,479.96
- legal bill	> \$2,000

Ida Keane made a motion to approve A/P Manifest #8 in the amount of \$156,475.34 dated October 13, 2009. Peg Pinkham seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.

B. REPORT CARD PRESENTATION & APPROVAL

Ms. Lewis reviewed her Powerpoint presentation on report cards, parent guides and progress reports at the elementary school. Information and sample report cards were provided in the agenda packet.

Answering Mr. Rowell, Ms. Lewis said that reports will have the mission statement that the School Board devises.

Ms. Genthner asked if teachers will still look at benchmarks as far as determining if students who meet all benchmarks are considered exceeding expectations. Ms. Lewis replied that there will be students like that so that benchmarks would need to be adjusted for them. Ms. Lewis explained that working on goals does not end at each

trimester end. Progress reports for grades K-2 won't go home the first trimester. Grades 3 will go home then if there is a concern and definitely grade 4 will go home the first trimester. Ms. Keane asked how feedback parents would get feedback without progress reports. Ms. Cohen said that teachers talk to parents on a regular basis via email, parent/teacher conferences, etc.

Mr. Safina reviewed his Powerpoint presentation on middle school report cards and progress reports. Information and sample report cards were provided in the agenda packet.

Mr. Safina said that if students meet expectations for standards reported out for Trimesters 1 and 2, this will be acknowledged in the end of the year report. Ms. Girardi asked they were based on the number scale and Mr. Safina said that it depended on what the assignment was but they are trying to equate the expectation levels with a letter (e.g. Exceeding Expectations is overall like an A, etc.) He said letter grades are not cumulative but reflect individual trimester work. Each individual standard will be tracked. Numbers might be assigned by teachers such as 4 is EE, etc. and then averaged to a letter grade. Mr. Safina showed an example. Mr. Rowell said there would be summative informative assessments on record as well. Mr. Safina said they are looking at number (1-10 and 1-4) and letter scales.

Ms. Girardi had a concern that if assessments won't be the same on the 2nd trimester report card, parents won't have a snapshot of students meeting expectations until the third trimester. Mr. Safina said students might not meet expectations until the 3rd trimester. If a skill is below expectation in the first trimester, it would be worked on during the 2nd trimester. Work can be cyclical, such as in math. The final report card in the third trimester will report to parents but there will be individual communication throughout the year. Ms. Girardi favored having notification of progress/assessment throughout the year. Ms. Keane said that portfolios go home during the year. Mr. Safina agreed that a lot of information is sent home regularly on student progress.

Mr. Safina noted that, over the summer, staff worked on limiting the report on standards, etc. to make a shorter report card.

Ms. Pinkham suggested having this information available early on next year for the handbooks. Ms. Girardi suggested recording Mr. Safina's Powerpoint presentation on October 21, 2009 and put it on the Website so people can view it.

Mr. Safina said that report cards will go out Friday before the parent information night. Ms. Keane would have liked to have seen parent feedback before the reports went out. Mr. Safina said that the progress reports are more of a snapshot and rely on comments that teachers know will be necessary.

Ms. Cohen said that since teachers are excited about the report cards, it will help show support to parents.

Ms. Herrmann asked how the reporting will be explained to the students so they understand it. Mr. Safina said that teachers will work with students individually to review how to meet standards. He will do a presentation and have teachers talk about it with students. Ms. Herrmann was concerned about students not knowing how to get to certain levels of achievement. Ms. Keane said that students have heard before that they

couldn't meet expectations during the first trimester because they will not have done GLEs yet. Now, she said that with the benchmarks that will be possible and that is a change since Mr. Safina has been Principal to the middle school. Ms. Keane said she liked the report card. Mr. Safina said that a lot of work was done by staff over the summer. He said that there is still work to be done on bring together the two practices together for assessment and Mr. Rowell said that an area of concern is uniformity among teachers. Mr. Safina said that there will be a formal summative assessment that is school-wide.

Mr. Rowell asked to pass along the Board's thanks for the work done on this.

Deb Genthner made a motion to approve the progress reports and report cards for the elementary and middle schools as presented. Peg Pinkham seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.

Ms. Pinkham noted that the District had been approached by a group of citizens to help them understand the procedures of bringing SB-2 to the Town. She said that Fremont is under a Charter. Ms. Pinkham said that SB-2 (Senate Bill 2) changes the voting format so that all (monetary) items, Warrant articles, etc. would be voted at the polls rather than at a District Meeting. Ms. Pinkham said that the charge of the School Board is the welfare of the Fremont School District and children. She said that a charter protects the integrity of the informed voter while still allowing for some of the benefits of voting at the polls.

Ms. Keane felt that the issue should be taken to the voters of the town. As a School Board member she felt that she should support what the people of the town want. She said she thought it may take a super majority. She felt that the town will do the right thing as long as it is communicated what is best for the schools. She felt that the School Board should not have an agenda on SB-2 one way or the other. Reasons to keep the charter are: the schools' best interest and the Board's thoughts of what might happen if SB-2 was in place. She said that SB-2 could either turn out voters who are in favor of a stronger school financially or voters who are not informed and vote no on everything.

Mr. Lander said that he has had experience with SB-2 for eight years. He said that fewer people attended Deliberative Session and more and more people turned out who were not well-informed of the issues. There have been efforts throughout the State to return to District Meetings after becoming SB-2 but that fails because of the super majority. Personally, he did not like SB-2.

Ms. Pinkham said that, when working on an operating budget, the SB-2 situation does not have the possibility of discourse and correction of misinformation that a District Meeting has so that voters might not be as informed as they are in a Charter form of governance. She felt that the District Meeting should be preserved.

Ms. Genthner agreed that the voters should bring the option of SB-2 to vote if that is what they want. She did not want the School District to use the limited funds it has to bring this to a vote. She said that money was spent to update the charter only a few years ago for the benefit of the Fremont District and she personally felt it should be kept that way.

Peg Pinkham made a motion to recognize the charter format as it stands as the method of governance. Deb Genthner seconded the motion.

- Sharon Girardi: abstain (need more information on SB-2 outcome)
- Ida Keane: abstain (felt should support what town desires in town's best interest)
- Jeff Rowell: yea to keep charter format (felt has already played out and is a want of some people who did not like the outcome)
- Deb Genthner: yea
- Peg Pinkham: yea

Mr. Rowell asked what the percentage was who voted the adoption of the charter. Ms. Pinkham thought it was around 65%. Mr. Rowell said it wasn't necessary for him to make a decision.

Peg Pinkham made a motion to not bring forth a change in the voting format to SB-2 as a Board. Deb Genthner seconded the motion.

- Peg Pinkham yea
- Deb Genthner yea
- Ida Keane yea (not at this time)
- Sharon Girardi: yea
- Jeff Rowell: yea

Mr. Rowell summed up the outcome of the vote to mean that the Board will do what is incumbent on it as a District but that citizens need to put the SB-2 issue to a vote if they want to.

XII. FUTURE AND FOLLOW UP AGENDA ITEMS

Board Policies	Ongoing
Fremont Cooperative Planning Committee	Ongoing
Public Relations – Newsletter	Ongoing
Adult Education Program	TBD
Policy- Project Management Plan	TBD
Long Range Facilities Planning Committee	TBD
Strategic Plan	Ongoing
Fixed Asset Appraisal Company	Ongoing
Health Care Study Committee	TBD
Special Needs Overview	TBD
Grant Overview	TBD
Mission Statement	10/27/09

XIII. NEXT MEETING: OCTOBER 27, 2009 at 6:30 PM

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

At 9:44 PM, Deb Genthner made a motion to adjourn. Sharon Girardi seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Perry, School Board Secretary

QUESTIONS FOR SEPTEMBER 22, 2009:

1. Ms. Pinkham followed up her question about having laptop computers around town (e.g. post office) to play the video of the student keynote speaker. She said she could try to get a few laptops for this purpose.
2. Mr. Rowell asked Mr. Lander to let the Board know what the mission statement was. Mr. Lander said that a District mission statement could be made as a first step.
3. Mr. Rowell said he got a letter from Seacoast Charter School expressing interest in coming to a Fremont School Board meeting. The Board collectively agreed to reply saying that the Board would welcome the visit. Mr. Lander mentioned that Seacoast might consider asking for tuition because of financial strain. Ms. Pinkham then asked if, at the time of the visit from Seacoast, there could be information available regarding state mandates and the District's policy on tuition and charter schools. Mr. Lander said he would report back to the Board.
4. Ms. Keane asked if there will be a schedule when the School Board would get assessment results throughout the year. Mr. Lander said that could be possible over a period of time.
5. Ms. Sandstrom reported that health and dental insurance encumbrances still need to be adjusted with any changes in coverage for current or new employees.