

**FREMONT SCHOOL DISTRICT
School Board Meeting
December 1, 2009
4:00 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 December 1, 2009 meeting of the Fremont School Board to order at 4:05 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, Vice Chair Peg Pinkham (arriving at 6 PM), Deb Genthner (arriving at 4:08 PM), Sharon Girardi, Ida Keane, Superintendent Bill Lander, Elementary School Principal Dawn Lewis, Middle School Principal John Safina, and Financial Administrator Bonnie Sandstrom. Secretary Susan Perry arrived at 4:45 PM.

III. BUDGET WORK SESSION

Ms. Keane asked about 1100 5561: Tuition Public HS. Ms. Sandstrom confirmed that the number of Fremont High School students is 212 and not 210. Ms. Sandstrom said that the total initial budget amount for that line is now \$3,134,611.20.

1200: SPECIAL EDUCATION

Ms. Keane asked if the salaries line included Step increases. Ms. Sandstrom said that if a teacher were at the top Step, he/she would stay there.

Mr. Rowell asked what the 22 % increase signified in the preschool teacher salaries line and Ms. Sandstrom explained that was a new person with a Step increase.

Ms. Keane asked about the Tutor Salary line. Ms. Lewis said there were two tutoring services: 504 tutoring (more academic) and the aide/tutor contracted services (cost of Para-professionals at high schools or out-of-district placements). Ms. Lewis said that the net gain was \$7200 because of some students leaving, some services changing and the additional Para-professional at Sanborn Regional High School. Ms. Lewis explained that the \$8,000 number in the Tutor Salaries line fluctuates depending on need, but there is no one on staff that tutors for \$8,000. Ms. Keane noted that those services are paid in 5330 and Ms. Lewis said it was because the District is obligated to pay for those services. It was noted that there was a cut in this area last year.

Ms. Keane asked about the ESOL Tutor Salaries line (1270-5121) Ms. Lewis explained that specific testing determines the level of services has to be and now a teacher is required and is

paid through the grant. If the level of services at the end of the year determines that a tutor is needed, there would be money in for the tutor. The grant money only picks up the teacher part.

Ms. Lewis explained that Sanborn Regional High School has a different pay scale is higher for Para-professionals since they do get benefits.

Ms. Girardi asked if Fremont had a copy of the regular education agreement with Sanborn and Ms. Sandstrom said yes.

Ms. Keane asked if there was anything encumbered for the aide/contracted services line and Ms. Lewis said yes.

Ms. Keane wondered if one of the \$8,000 increases could be eliminated since this year, the District is using the Aide/Contracted Services for the tutoring used by 2 or 3 students after school. Ms. Lewis said she would have to look at IEPs again to see if they could be refigured but the only uncertainty is the ESOL tutoring service. She noted the importance of leaving funds there for unpredictable emergencies.

Ms. Keane asked if students without IEPs can use the 5121 tutor salaries line and Ms. Lewis said yes, there are some students who are under "response and intervention" though now, no one is serviced without a plan for budgetary reasons. She said that there could be instances of medical emergencies where a student might need tutoring services.

Ms. Keane asked if there was an anticipated 34 Special Education students going to Sanborn Regional High School. Ms. Lewis said yes and that \$7,000 was budgeted. Ms. Keane referred to special education high school projections (1200-5561) and Ms. Sandstrom said that was only for Sanborn. Ms. Lewis said that students placed in another NH high school come under the "Tuition Public High School" line. Tuition to a private or non-NH public high school comes out of the "Tuition Private/Other" line.

Ms. Keane noted that two Fremont children attend Portsmouth High School at a cost of \$101,724 (line 1200-5561). She asked Ms. Lewis to provide a breakdown of what that amount incorporates. Ms. Lewis said she would look at the tuition.

Mr. Lander explained that other schools might offer programs that benefit certain children more than Sanborn.

Ms. Keane noted that invoices from Portsmouth or private schools are based on tuition and Para-professional cost (contracted services). Mr. Lander noted that tuition rates for schools such as Portsmouth are set by the State. Ms. Girardi wondered if there is a way to find out what services are not being offered for students in grades K-8. Ms. Lewis said that, thankfully, very few students in grades K-8 have services out-of-district. She said that lack of space is a factor in providing services. Ms. Girardi thought it would be helpful to see if it would be more cost-effective to provide services rather than sending students elsewhere for services. Ms. Lewis said that they try hard to service students at Ellis and if there is no sufficient space, etc., then the team makes a decision to make placements. Mr. Lander said that there was a Special Education Person at the State who oversees these matters.

Ms. Lewis confirmed that there are 8 students (in 6 different places) under the Private/Other Tuition line.

p. 9: Ms. Keane asked about the ESL Tutor Salaries line (1275-121). She wanted to know if this was for contracted services and if not why was it called salary. Ms. Lewis said that this person is being paid out of the recovery money (\$57,085.00 out of the grant money).

Ms. Girardi asked if the ESOL teacher gets benefits. Ms. Sandstrom said that the benefits are being covered under 1200 instead of 1270. Ms. Girardi wondered why they were not in the ESOL function. Ms. Sandstrom said that 1200 and 1270 share the same function code. Ms. Girardi asked why in 5220 FICA, \$612 is left and Ms. Sandstrom explained that there is \$8,000 in tutor salaries and tutors would only get FICA and no benefits. Ms. Lewis explained that using this line depends on need.

1400 ATHLETIC/EXTRACURRICULAR

Ms. Sandstrom said that this line item is flat-lined.

(Ms. Perry arrived at 6:45 PM)

Ms. Girardi asked for a report on the extracurricular salaries for last year since the actuals are not in round numbers like the stipends are. Ms. Sandstrom distributed a list of stipends that were paid. Ms. Sandstrom said that there was an odd amount of \$163.65 due to someone who went with the ski team as an aide and got paid per trip.

Ms. Lewis said that the Science Club did not run last year. (CORRECTION per 1/14/09 School Board meeting: the club did run but the organizer did not get paid).

Ms. Girardi and Ms. Keane noted that stipends were spent for lines not used last year (e.g. if no teams ran). Ms. Sandstrom said she would get a list of items that did not run last year.

Ms. Keane asked for a list of what is covered under line 1400-5113: Extracurricular Salaries for \$20,700. She reasoned that coaches were doubled-up for a few teams perhaps. She said that Athletic Salaries was budgeted at \$17,600. Ms. Sandstrom said that a lot of the extracurricular stipends were for overnight trips. Ms. Keane said that the Athletic Director is supposed to come out of Athletic Salaries. Ms. Sandstrom said she would check on that and that maybe it was miscoded.

Ms. Sandstrom said that \$17,600 was promised in the contract for Athletic Salaries and \$20,700 was promised in the contract for Extracurricular Salaries. Mr. Lander said that the District should not be paying more for these lines than is contracted.

Ms. Keane mentioned a question Ms. Girardi had had regarding the \$6500 spent on supplies. One of the items was for the PBIS guides for parents. She said that \$2469 was spent to print around 500 guides (one per student). She asked if the District would pay this every year. Ms. Lewis said that some families do not have Internet access so it would be beneficial to print them. Ms. Keane wondered if it would be better to print one book per family rather than per student since there may be more than one child per family attending Ellis. Ms. Lewis said that extras are helpful for new students or for students who lose their copy, etc. Mr. Safina noted that teachers get copies as well.

In the Program Supplies line (1400-5610), Ms. Keane noted that \$4,820 was spent but \$10,000 is budgeted and she asked if that could be reduced. Ms. Lewis said that some things might not have been done last year that should have been done. Ms. Lewis also said that program costs

are steadily increasing. This also covers after-school program materials and materials for Response to Intervention programs. She said she felt confident that the amount is a safe estimate.

p. 11: 2120: GUIDANCE

Under Teachers Retirement, Mr. Rowell asked about the decrease of \$66.39 and Ms. Sandstrom said that it was due to new staff and a percent increase (salary multiplied by percentage). He wondered if there should be a note there to explain that.

p. 12: 2130 HEALTH

Ms. Keane asked why it was showing a decrease on the salary account report regarding the assistant nurse. Ms. Sandstrom said the increase was due to a contract change but she would look at that again. Ms. Sandstrom said she gets an automatic Step because she is in the Teachers Union. Ms. Sandstrom saw that there was a difference of \$90. Currently, the salary is \$19,872.

Ms. Girardi asked about any effect of a staff salary increase that was discussed at the last Board meeting. She asked if Steps are based on years of service. Mr. Lander said if the contract were approved, this staff member would get the Step increase.

p. 13: PSYCHOLOGICAL

Ms. Keane noted that there is a 3% increase in this line item. She asked if the \$54,564.00 for Psychological Salary included the raise voted on this year. Ms. Keane had previously said this person was listed twice in the salary adjustment line for raises (p.27) but she realized the raise is not put in the budget twice.

There was a discussion about putting salary adjustment numbers in it's own line and providing explanation for the Budget Committee, etc.

Ms. Girardi asked if everything was encumbered for what they expect to cover this year for 5330: Psych Contract Services. Ms. Lewis said that is what they know they can encumber but that it is flexible and hard to project since it depends on student need. Ms. Lewis said it is for services to students in preschool to age 21.

p. 18: Ms. Girardi asked if there were no students who needed PT Contracted Services since there is a zero budgetary increase for next year. Ms. Lewis said that it comes and goes but the best guess is shown in the budget.

Ms. Keane asked if the librarian was on the teacher contract and Mr. Lander said yes.

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2225 COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY

Mr. Rowell asked if the numbers are reflective of what Mr. Carey provided and Mr. Lander said yes, as well as from the administration and staff.

Ms. Keane asked if the planned salary were given, as well as the planned contracted services, the cost would be about \$52,500 altogether. She noted that in 2008-09, \$52,368 was paid in

Computer Tech salaries (as contracted services at that time) and \$6405 in contracted services. She said that amounted to \$58,773 and if equipment is getting older, she wondered, at the salary given, if the amount of \$52,500 would be enough. Mr. Safina said that if some equipment were replaced, it would help the technician so that fewer repairs would be necessary, etc. Mr. Lander noted that the new server would help too.

Ms. Girardi asked about Medicaid being under the School Board function (or the regular education function). She felt it should be under Special Education. Ms. Lewis said that Medicaid revenues go to the general fund, not Special Education. Ms. Lewis did not know why the Medicaid was listed under School Board. Mr. Lander said that he had seen it under Special Education in his previous District.

The suggestion was to put the Medicaid number in 2330.

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2320: OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Ms. Keane asked about the current salary for the Executive Secretary. Ms. Sandstrom said it is \$34,870 and that it was budgeted to be one position at 30 hours/week but is now one position at 40 hours/week.

Ms. Keane noted that the Budget Committee recommends no raises this year for Town employees and she was concerned about Ms. Sandstrom doing extra work (calculations to separate out the raises) unnecessarily.

Mr. Lander said that professional staff who are not part of the Evergreen Clause do not get the step, while those covered in the teachers contract do get the step, and they work side by side so it is important to recognize compensate those people as well. Ms. Keane said it was a matter of the Town's affordability and not about people deserving raises or not. Ms. Lewis noted that there is a critical shortage especially for Speech Pathologist and that it would be more cost-effective to do the raise rather than contracting out. Mr. Safina agreed.

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2330: SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION

Ms. Keane asked if the Out of District Coordinator/High School Coordinator now on stipend has helped and Ms. Lewis said that it helps the Principals' workload.

Ms. Girardi asked about the supply lines, which total over \$90,000 for the year. Her concern was function 2400 for School Administration. She said last year, \$6500 was budgeted for this line and the budget was changed to \$19,000 for that line this year. Ms. Sandstrom said that the paper for the whole building was put there. Mr. Safina said that the paper cost was \$15,310 and noted the increase in shipping cost because of the increased gasoline prices at the time of purchase. Ms. Sandstrom said that previously, the paper cost was spread out throughout the budget items.

Ms. Girardi wondered why the supply line for ESOL was \$1000 but the supply line for preschool is only \$400. Ms. Lewis said that the ESOL line also included Gifted and Talented even though that position was gone but she has assumed the role and they still need supplies.

Ms. Girardi mentioned that she ran numbers and figured that there was a supply cost of roughly \$50/student just in the supply amounts in function 1100 only for the year and she wondered if there were any supplies that could be cut. Ms. Lewis said that there had been cuts and that she was not sure where else cuts could be made.

Ms. Sandstrom noted that supplies were moved from function 1100 to 2400 to keep the cost of the paper all in one place and this is why the line item was increased last year.

Ms. Keane suggested noting the decrease from one line to the other.

Ms. Girardi said that the District only spent \$1175 on paper and encumbered \$99.53. Ms. Sandstrom said it should all be encumbered and that she would check that.

Ms. Sandstrom noted that the Operation of Plant line was kept level and noted that the price of oil was 1.999/gallon for 15,000 gallons and estimated at \$2.50/gallon.

2721: REGULAR TRANSPORTATION

Ms. Sandstrom noted that, with the new regular education transportation bid, the cost would be \$330,310.

Ms. Lewis said that it is difficult to predict Special Education transportation due to events such as changes in placements.

Ms. Sandstrom mentioned that, after corrections are made, she could run the budget by function and then by object so supplies would be put together and Ms. Pinkham thought that would be a good idea.

Ms. Girardi asked if nothing was spent in Extracurricular Transportation this year. Ms. Sandstrom said that \$521 was spent so far this year. She said this would be reflected in the final budget report before going to the Budget Committee.

Ms. Sandstrom said that she got rid of the tuition reimbursement line (2900-5240) because it was just sitting there in the budget.

Mr. Lander did not think it was important to have the 22-1000 Federal Funds Not Obligated Expenses line and he suggested showing what the grants are in a separate report. He said it was not accurate information. He said that the planned grants are not in the operating budget. He said all of Special Education is to supplement not supplant. Ms. Sandstrom noted that Federal Funds were not listed this way in the previous administration.

Ms. Keane asked if there was a budget for the \$288,224 for Not Obligated Expenses. Mr. Lander said that a grant needs to be requesting how to spend those funds and the Department of Education approves it.

Ms. Pinkham noted on page 41 that the amount of \$288,224.00 is physically shown under budgetary increase in the grand total. She asked if that would be taken out then. Ms. Girardi said it was figured in the increases line.

Ms. Pinkham said it is important to know where grant money is used within the budget.

Ms. Keane asked if there is a way to say that, if the first grade class does not exceed 70 students and as long as class sizes stay below 20 a new teacher will not be hired but if it goes above 20, a new teacher would be hired. Mr. Lander said that could be done but it would have to go into the budget. If that number were still projected in March, it would have to be in the budget.

Ms. Genthner said it is important to try to keep the students in second grade in the District and that it would be a savings to have the teacher.

Ida Keane made a motion to approve the preliminary draft budget, incorporating the changes discussed tonight and separating into a grant report. Deb Genthner seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.

IV. NEXT MEETING: DECEMBER 8, 2009 at 6:30 PM

V. ADJOURNMENT

Deb Genthner made a motion to adjourn at 7:05 PM. Sharon Girardi seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Perry, School Board Secretary

QUESTIONS FOR DECEMBER 1 2009:

1. Ms. Keane noted that two Fremont children attend Portsmouth High School at a cost of \$101,724 (line 1200-5561). She asked Ms. Lewis to provide a breakdown of what that amount incorporates. Ms. Lewis said she would look at the tuition.
2. Ms. Girardi and Ms. Keane noted that stipends were spent for lines not used last year (e.g. if no teams ran). Ms. Sandstrom said she would get a list of items that did not run last year.
3. Ms. Keane asked for a list of what is covered under line 1400-5113: Extracurricular Salaries for \$20,700. She reasoned that coaches were doubled-up for a few teams perhaps. She said that Athletic Salaries was budgeted at \$17,600. Ms. Sandstrom said that a lot of the extracurricular stipends were for overnight trips. Ms. Keane said that the Athletic Director is supposed to come out of Athletic Salaries. Ms. Sandstrom said she would check on that and that maybe it was miscoded.

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5. Ms. Girardi said that the District only spent \$1175 on paper and encumbered \$99.53.
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