

**FREMONT SCHOOL DISTRICT
School Board Meeting
October 14, 2008
6:30 P.M.**

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

I. CALL TO ORDER

School Board Chair Jeffrey Rowell called the October 14, 2008 meeting of the Fremont School Board to order at 6:32 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 Chairwoman Peg Pinkham, Christine Kenneway, Deb Genthner, Marian Guidoboni, Superintendent Normand Tanguay, Financial Administrator Annmarie Scribner, Interim Middle School Principal Bill Marston, and Elementary School Principal Dawn Lewis.

Members of the public included Maura Milner (school nurse), Gail Miller (Para Educator), Nancy Lathrop (Educator), Kathy Whitehouse (Educator), Carol Cohen (First Grade Teacher), Jason Carey

III. PRESENTATIONS

A. GARY BAKER, NESDEC: STRATEGIC PLAN PRINCIPAL SEARCH

Mr. Baker noted that there were three documents of import: the mission statement, the timeline and the school profile (of District). He used documents provided by Mr. Tanguay to formulate a timeline that would integrate the strategic planning process and the search for Middle School Principal. He was seeking suggestions from the School Board.

Mr. Baker distributed a draft timeline of tasks and target dates.

Mr. Baker said that the mission statement came out of actual publications of the Fremont School District such as the handbook, Special Education report, etc.) He said that the mission statement was a draft and the purpose of it was to identify the main purpose of the School District. He said that revisions could be made as progress was made.

Mr. Baker said that he would like to come up with a date for 3 focus group meetings: 1, for the School Board and Administration Team; 2, for the people associated with the school; and 3, for Town Representatives and parents.

Mr. Baker hoped that goals would be developed and a working outline would be made by early December 2008 and that the Principal vacancy would be published in early January 2009. He said that he could play a role in the screening process, hopefully to begin in March 2009. He could screen out those whom he felt were unqualified for the position or he could suggest/identify a number of people who would be good to interview. The School Board would let him know what role he would have.

Mr. Baker hoped to have a contract signed in mid-April 2009 and part of the contract would provide for a “stakeholder retreat.”

Mr. Rowell asked how long the strategic planning would take if the Principal search were not going on as well. Mr. Baker said that the process would typically take 3 months, allowing for the different number of focus groups, either more or less.

Ms. Pinkham said that an issue was to find out who would be available to participate in focus groups on certain dates. Mr. Rowell agreed. Mr. Baker said that he could be available whenever was the best date and he gave examples of what has worked in other Districts regarding times and the different focus groups.

Mr. Rowell asked if strategic targets could be identified from information garnered from focus groups. Mr. Baker said that this was possible and that there would be a summary of what all three focus groups provide. Mr. Rowell thought that there should be an arbiter for the 3 different groups (to make final decisions.) Mr. Baker said that usually there was some decision between all 3 groups but that each group would have some different concerns. He said that a “successful candidate profile” (e.g. a common quality like communication skills) would be created during the Principal search.

Ms. Pinkham felt that there was a “short window of invitations”: only about two weeks to get 3 focus groups together and invite people to become part of the process. She asked what Mr. Baker’s experience was with that. Mr. Baker replied that it was not expected that everyone would attend the focus groups but that it was important to have a good cross-section of teachers who could make the meeting. Mr. Rowell asked if there were other ways to solicit input. Mr. Baker said that Internet surveys could be done. Mr. Rowell thought that maybe a combination could be used for those who could not attend a focus group meeting. Mr. Baker said that it was important to give enough notice for parents. It was mentioned that perhaps a flier could be sent home to parents with students.

Ms. Kenneway asked if the focus groups would deal only with strategic planning and Mr. Baker said that they would also look at favorable qualities sought in a new Principal.

Ms. Kenneway suggested that communication going out to the public regarding focus groups should state that those already involved in the focus group process could also be part of the Screening Committee for the Principal search. Mr. Baker agreed and noted that people would not be pressed into being on the Screening Committee.

Mr. Rowell asked if Mr. Baker had surveys already prepared and Mr. Baker said that he did and that simple surveys worked best.

Ms. Pinkham suggested that information of the focus groups be put in the Town newsletter. Ms. Genthner said that the deadline to provide content for the November 1 newsletter was

October 15, 2008. Mr. Baker said he would write a blurb tonight and give it to the Board for submission to the Town newsletter.

Mr. Tanguay asked if the Screening Committee would be involved in the interview process. Ms. Kenneway said that typically the interview committee would come forth with 3 to 4 recommended individuals with whom the School Board would meet. Mr. Baker said that, based on experience, the Screening Committee should recommend 4 finalists to the School Board and he suggested that the Screening Committee not rank the order of finalists (names should just be provided alphabetically.) He said that sometimes the candidate favored by the Screening Committee might not be the same as the one favored by the School Board. Ms. Pinkham suggested that this be made clear regarding the charge of the Screening Committee.

Mr. Tanguay asked if there should be a community part as well as a technical (professional) part of the Screening Committee and Mr. Baker said the indeed it could be done that way since each group would bring different questions. Ms. Guidoboni asked if there should be no School Board members on the Screening Committee. Mr. Baker said that some School Districts have one School Board representative on the Committee to coordinate the process and to answer questions. Ms. Guidoboni felt that, if she were a Board member on the Screening Committee, she would have a difficult time not ranking finalists. Ms. Pinkham agreed and said that teachers might want to see one thing but parents might want to see something else (in a Principal.) Ms. Pinkham asked if Mr. Baker acted as a facilitator of the Screening Committee process and he responded that he could observe, lead discussions, or do what the group wanted. He said that he would not sit in on interviews and that he would only help prepare the Screening Committee beforehand. He said that NESDEC had been accused in the past of influencing a Board to go in a certain direction. He said he facilitates a workshop with the Screening Committee to help with preparation and direction.

Ms. Kenneway asked if the focus group information could go out via Alert Now (e.g. for high school students too.) Mr. Tanguay said that could be done.

The School Board decided that there would be two focus group dates: November 11, 2008, prior to School Board meeting (for School Board and Administration) and November 12, 2008 at 5:30 (for “stakeholders”: Town workers, parents.)

Mr. Baker distributed a Profile of the Present State of the District, noting that he took information that was within the past year. Ms. Guidoboni asked why the NELMS information was not provided and Mr. Baker said that he felt it was not recent enough but that he could certainly include it. Mr. Rowell agreed that the NELMS report “captured” the School District’s current strategic plan and would be important to include in the District Profile. Mr. Baker asked the Board members to email him with any suggestions.

B. MAURA MILNER: REPORT FROM NURSE’S OFFICE

Ms. Milner reported that Hannaford presented a play on nutrition for the elementary school and that the students enjoyed it.

Ms. Milner stated that an issue in the nurse's office was a lack of what parents know was needed. She said she provided pamphlets for incoming students and that information was also on the website regarding information on physicals, etc. that the nurse's office needed.

Ms. Milner noted that Ellis got an AED from Epping in June 2008 and that if 75% of staff was certified, Ellis would be deemed a "safe school." The cost was \$60 per person and Ms. Milner wondered if money might be available for wellness or other promotions. She said that anyone who has Health Trust would be reimbursed for the AED course. She said that she would like to see a majority of the staff be certified.

Ms. Milner explained that the AED would stay in a box outside of her office. The box could not be locked but it could have an alarm. The AED would need to be registered with the State. She wondered if training could be done as part of teacher workshop time.

Ms. Milner said that the part time nurse was working out well. She would like to have another SNAP Health Center license so she could use the laptop with the SNAP program (cost was \$675 for a second license.) She said she could use her helper more if she had this second license.

Ms. Guidoboni asked if the PTA still had the Teacher Grant (?) and Ms. Genthner said that there was a new one this year.

Ms. Pinkham asked if there was a "request mechanism" for each teacher regarding budget requests and Mr. Marston said that forms were going out to the faculty tomorrow. He said that the deadline for the staff was October 20, 2008.

C. BILL MARSTON AND DAWN LEWIS: EVERYDAY MATH

Carol Cohen gave a presentation on what Everyday Mathematics was. She said that this year Ellis gained "open response" in the third edition of Everyday Mathematics, which was developed by the University of Chicago School Math Project (how children learn and develop math power.)

Ms. Cohen gave a PowerPoint presentation that explained Everyday Math and how it was a problem solving approach based on everyday situations. She summarized by stating that it

- revisited concepts regularly
- frequently practiced basic skills, often through games
- based lessons on activities and discussion, not text
- went beyond basic arithmetic

Ms. Kenneway asked any concrete materials were used to manipulate amounts in class. Ms. Cohen replied that math manipulatives were placed in different areas of the classroom. Ms. Kenneway clarified that she meant "counting-out items" and Ms. Cohen responded that manipulative kits (including bears, crayons, etc.) were used.

Ms. Cohen said that games could be played online at home with passwords and frequent practice became part of students' "fun-at-home life." Some games included: Beat the Calculator and timed math tests with recording. She said that parent involvement was important and came in the form of classroom volunteering, parent letters at the beginning of

each unit, assistance with games and study links at home, practice of fact triangle cards, and reading math literature books.

Ms. Cohen explained that multiple algorithms were specific series of steps that give the right answer every time.

More information could be learned at www.wrightgroup.com and Ms. Cohen explained that The Wright Group had just bought MacGraw Hill.

Ms. Cohen distributed to the Board members handouts on Everyday Mathematics.

Ms. Lewis concluded the presentation explaining how Everyday Math was taught, how assessments were done for each unit (and on a daily basis in the classroom), and how mathematics continued after Ellis. She explained that eighth graders took Algebra if they tested into the class and all in-coming ninth graders tested into Algebra I or went on to Geometry. She said that there were two tracks at the high school: the traditional textbook track and track 2, which used “Core Plus Mathematics” in the spirit of Chicago/Mathscapes (recommended for AP students because it developed a “higher order of thinking skills” and served as college preparation course.

Mr. Rowell asked if the new requirements were competency-based and Ms. Lewis said that they were but that she had not worked with Sanborn High School enough to know what they would have (for mathematics curriculum.) Mr. Rowell thought that it was required to have a curriculum-based mathematics program.

Ms. Lewis said that Ellis was on the right track to maintain a consistent approach to math.

Ms. Guidoboni asked if tools were budgeted to meet all goals. Ms. Lewis said that reading scores had improved and the math coach position would provide more support.

Ms. Guidoboni asked if parents should go to teachers about problems their children might be having and Ms. Lewis said that teachers should go to parents to report where children were and what was being done to help with skills. She said that the double-block of specials could be used to help students with expectations. She said that class size and qualified staff were vital.

Ms. Guidoboni thought that the presentation tonight was helpful and she noted that sometimes parents panic when children did math differently than they were used to. She said children could use various ways to do math problems (not just what the book says.) Ms. Cohen agreed and said that parents could tell teachers that they worked on homework with their children and ask if the teacher could work with the students in class.

Ms. Guidoboni said that parents needed to take initiative also. Ms. Kenneway said that the School District should send home definitions of the “educational language” that might confuse parents (e.g. “algorithms”.) Ms. Guidoboni said that definitions do go home but that it was important for parents to go over them when they receive them. Ms. Cohen said that the grade website included “parent letters.”

Ms. Lewis reported that there would be a meeting in November to go over math language with preschool and kindergarten parents.

Ms. Pinkham asked if there was consistency in parental information and Ms. Cohen said that there was. Ms. Pinkham said that children learn differently today but that parental responsibility should not have changed. She said that it was the School Board's responsibility to get information to parents in a clear, easy way.

Ms. Cohen said that she worked with Annemarie Wright on the Everyday Math web page (success stories, games, etc.)

IV. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. PRINCIPALS REPORTS: BILL MARSTON, MIDDLE SCHOOL

Mr. Marston reviewed the report he provided with the agenda. Highlights included: NECAP Science Results for 2007, October 3 Professional Day, NECAP testing, Fremont Student Progress at Sanborn Regional High School, NWEA testing.

Ms. Kenneway asked if NWEA scores were given immediately and Mr. Marston said they were and that the information could be helpful now. He said that preparation for testing resulted in a loss of instruction time so that he was not going to recommend doing NWEA testing in the spring, where it was tested in the fall.

Mr. Marston talked about the new Website technician's tasks which include: adding links, editing school pages, helping teachers with site creation, monitoring teacher pages, meeting with administration, improving appearance of website, and incorporating students in the creation of newsletters and their design. Ms. Pinkham asked what the position's hours were and Mr. Marston said that there was not a set number of hours and that it was a stipend position with a cost of \$2,500.

V. NON PUBLIC SESSION: RSA 91 – A: 3 II (c)

Peg Pinkham made a motion to enter into non-public session per RSA 91 – A: 3 II (c) at 9:12 PM. Christine Kenneway seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.

VI. RETURN TO GENERAL SESSION

Marian Guidoboni made a motion to return to general session at 9:25 PM. Christine Kenneway seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: SEPTEMBER 23, 2008

Deb Genthner made a motion to approve the public minutes of September 23, 2008 as amended. Christine Kenneway seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.

VIII. BOARD, SUPERINTENDENT COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Tanguay talked about the Education Law Conference (handling complaints, update Right to Know law, collective bargaining, defending retaliation.)

Mr. Tanguay said that the September/October 2008 student enrollment was 531.

Mr. Tanguay provided information (study of NH School Districts) in response to Ms. Pinkham's question about State statistics regarding schools that use Everyday Math and how they were faring.

IX. INFORMATION ITEMS**A. PRINCIPAL REPORT: DAWN LEWIS, ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

Ms. Lewis reviewed the school report she provided with the agenda. Some highlights included: NECAP testing, My Voice Survey postponement; NECAP Science, Standards Based reporting; Principals Math Challenge awards distribution last week; 137 identified Special Education students (ages 3-21); Speech Therapist position still open.

Ms. Lewis said that the "actual special education tuition cost for Sanborn was \$6,204 but \$5,000 was budgeted at the time."

Ms. Kenneway said that students were not taking science because of a lack of interest. Ms. Lewis explained a few examples of activities being done at Ellis in math to get students interested (e.g. the herb garden.)

School Board consensus approved having the Holiday concert at Sanborn Regional High School on December 12, 2008 to accommodate everyone.

Ms. Kenneway asked if Mr. Brown's report on Medford Electronics' Intercom System estimate for \$5600 needed to go out to bid and Mr. Tanguay said he would check that.

B. FINANCIAL REPORT

Ms. Scribner reviewed the general fund financial report for September 30, 2008 that was provided with the agenda. She said that she would send a copy with explanations to the Budget Committee.

Ms. Kenneway requested that a written report accompany the agenda on a regular basis.

C. NHSBA PROPOSED 2009 RESOLUTIONS

The School Board will give Ms. Pinkham feedback for the NHSBA Proposed Resolutions for 2009 presentation at the Delegate Assembly on January 17, 2009.

D. SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS**1. BUDGET COMMITTEE: PEG PINKHAM**

Ms. Pinkham said that the last Budget Committee meeting centered on Town-related reviews. She said that the Budget Committee was basically pleased with the School budget report.

Ms. Pinkham mentioned that the Budget Committee wanted to know what was mandated and what was recommended (e.g. classroom sizes.) She asked if Ms. Scribner could provide this. Ms. Genthner said that this information as well as student: classroom ratios were available. Ms. Kenneway said that the DOE website had this information. Ms. Kenneway did not feel the need to ask SAU staff to make comparisons for the Budget Committee and Mr. Tanguay said that information was available in areas where the Budget Committee members could search themselves. Ms. Guidoboni expressed that the budget needed to be explained to voters. Ms. Pinkham favored having information in an easy to read format such as a newsletter or flier. She thought the Budget Committee could let the School board know what format they would like the school budget to be presented in, in a reasonable format. She gave a flier made by Bedford Schools as an example of an easy-to-read and comprehensive flier-formatted school information report. Mr. Tanguay noted that Fremont's Special Education report was more comprehensive.

Ms. Pinkham said that she could ask the Budget Committee what they liked about last year's presentation and what if anything they needed to see differently. Ms. Scribner said that if there was something that the School District did not give the Budget Committee, that was one thing but that it took a lot of time, work and effort to provide information in an easy way for the budget book. Ms. Kenneway agreed that the School District had always given good information to the Budget Committee. She said that they could give the Budget Committee a copy of State Mandates. Mr. Rowell said that the budget book could be seen as a work-in-progress.

Ms. Pinkham said that it was important to consider the financial happenings in today's world and that it was the Budget Committee's job to look at each part of the community to see how spending was being done. Ms. Guidoboni said that the School District has always been aware/knowledgeable of financial situations and Ms. Kenneway agreed.

2. LONG RANGE FACILITIES PLANNING COMMITTEE: PEG PINKHAM

Ms. Pinkham reported that the next Long Range Facilities Planning Committee meeting would be on October 22, 2008 at 6:30 PM at the Ellis School Library.

E. NEWSLETTER: DEB GENTHNER

Ms. Genthner provided a report on the PR Committee. She said that the next newsletter would be released in mid-December 2008 (deadline for submissions to be December 1.) Some ideas for the newsletter included the School Board's purpose, overview of Everyday Math (tonight's presentation would be on DVD at the SAU for anyone who wants to view it), grading system process report, Para-educator contract, acronym glossary and interviews with Para-educators and Mr. Herrmann. She said that the PR Committee members would do the interview parts but that the Superintendent, Principals and/or the Board would write the other parts.

Ms. Genthner asked if the last newsletter could be on the School Board website.

Some concerns raised at the PR Committee meeting included: more information for the community, having SAU 83 updates in the Carriage town News, and getting information into the school newsletter (Ms. Lewis said that people who regularly put information into the newsletter know to go to the principals first but the School Board agreed that more communication about submissions needed to be done.)

Ms. Pinkham brought up two questions put forth by the Budget Committee:

- Given the current state of the economy, was there a mechanism to support Para-educators if there was no agreement?
- Asking voters to re-consider the vote made by the Town in 2006 (appropriating money to purchase conservation land) with the current economy the way it is.

Ms. Lewis asked if the newsletter could have information on the Budget and Voting processes and Ms. Genthner suggested that Ms. Pinkham could provide that best.

Ms. Kenneway listed the negotiation dates, all at 6:30 PM at the SAU: October 21, November 5, and November 19, 2008.

X. NON-PUBLIC SESSION: RSA 91 – A: 3 II (b)

Motion was made by Peg Pinkham and seconded by Marian Guidoboni to enter into non-public session per RSA 91 – A: 3 II (b) at 11:25 pm. Vote was 5:0.

XI. RETURN TO GENERAL SESSION

Motion was made Christine Kenneway and seconded by Marian Guidoboni to enter into general session at 11:55 pm: 5:0.

XII. NEXT MEETING: OCTOBER 28, 2008 at 6:30 PM

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

At 12:00 AM, Deb Genthner motioned to adjourn. Christine Kenneway seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously; 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Perry, School Board Secretary

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS:

- Ms. Kenneway asked if Mr. Brown's report on Medford Electronics' Intercom System estimate for \$5600 needed to go out to bid and Mr. Tanguay said he would check that.
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