

MINUTES OF SCHOOL BOARD MEETING August 10, 2021

A regular meeting of the Fairmont Area Schools Board of Education was held on Tuesday, August 10, at 5:00 p.m. in City Hall. Members in attendance were Rufus Rodriguez, Nicole Green, Mari Myren, Julie Laue, Dan Brookens, and Mike Edman.

A motion was offered by Dan Brookens, seconded by Mari Myren, and carried to approve the July 13 & 20 school board meeting minutes.

A motion was offered by Julie Laue, seconded by Mari Myren and carried to approve the August 10, 2021 school board meeting agenda.

Jeff & Sue Greischar presented to the Board a \$70,000 donation in support of vocational education in Fairmont. The dollars will be divided and used toward purchasing equipment for the new vocational building, funding accessibility / transportation for special needs students to access vocational classes, and providing scholarships to students who need to purchase tools for their vocational field. The Board thanked the Greischars for their very generous gift and expressed appreciation for the many ways in which they have continuously supported Fairmont Area Schools!

Principal Kim Niss and Kayla Westra, Dean of Liberal Arts at MN West Community and Technical College, presented news of an exciting offering for students at Fairmont High School. Effective with the 21-22 school year, students will have the opportunity to earn an Associate of Arts degree in conjunction with their Fairmont High School diploma. Ms. Westra is the key contact person who approves credentialed high school teachers to instruct the courses that will apply to an AA degree. The MN West college team has worked closely with FHS to develop a plan for students who want to earn an AA degree while still in high school through a combination of college in the school classes, online classes, and transfer courses. At this time, all but a few courses needed for the AA degree can be completed at Fairmont High School. Those not offered at FHS would be completed at MN West or online.

Superintendent's Report

- Superintendent Traetow began by expressing his gratitude for the support received from the Board in naming him superintendent. Mr. Traetow indicated he is humbled by the opportunity and looks forward to working with the Board, staff, students, and the community in his new position.
- Back to School registration is completed. Mr. Traetow was pleased to report that 75% of the high school registrations are complete, which is a substantial increase over prior years. This success is due in great part to more parents completing registration online. Registration was also a success at the elementary level. A very positive note was that 131 students have registered for kindergarten, which is the highest number Fairmont has seen for several years.
- Mr. Traetow confirmed with the Board that distance learning will not be offered this year. The District is working with the South Central Service Cooperative on online learning options for students.

- Face covering policies, quarantine expectations, and mitigation strategies for the upcoming school year are being researched and plans will be finalized in the coming weeks. Safety of staff and students will remain a top priority in the decision-making process.
- Mr. Traetow touched briefly on the issue of critical race theory (CRT), indicating that the District's social studies curriculum does not currently include instruction on CRT. Review and revision of the MN social studies standards is currently taking place and scheduled for implementation for the 26-27 school year. A [public comment survey](#) is available for parents to provide feedback. The deadline to provide feedback is August 16, 2021. Parents unable to use the survey can send public comment via email to mde.academic-standards@state.mn.us or by postal mail (postmarked by August 16) to: Minnesota Department of Education, 1500 Highway 36 West, Roseville, MN 55113.

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A resolution was offered by Dan Brookens, seconded by Nicole Green and carried to unanimously accept the following donations:

1. \$70,000 from Jeff & Sue Greischar for vocational education in Fairmont
2. A used 2001 Ford F150, valued at \$3,000, from Robert Gould for the HS Auto Academy

A motion was offered by Julie Laue, seconded by Mari Myren and carried to approve wire transfers for 7/9/21 – 8/5/21, single checks for July, 2021 and payment of the July 27 and August 10, 2021 bills.

A motion was offered by Nicole Green, seconded by Mari Myren and carried to approve redesignating the following assignments for the 21-22 school year:

1. Andy Traetow to serve as Home School Coordinator
2. Andy Traetow to service as the MDE Identified Official with Authority

A motion was offered by Julie Laue, seconded by Nicole Green and carried to approve the 2021-22 payroll / benefit management agreement with Southern Plains Education Cooperative.

A motion was offered by Rufus Rodriguez, seconded by Nicole Green and carried to approve a 3-year contract for Andy Traetow as superintendent, per negotiated settlement.

A motion was offered by Julie Laue, seconded by Mari Myren and carried to accept the following:

1. Megan Aust, special ed paraprofessional, resignation effective 6/2/21
2. Laura Olsen, special ed paraprofessional, resignation effective 6/2/21
3. Marlys Christians, special ed paraprofessional, retirement effective 6/2/21
4. Rebecca Denaway, special ed paraprofessional, resignation effective 6/2/21
5. Kristina Kullman, kindergarten teacher, resignation effective 7/29/21

A motion was offered by Mike Edman, seconded by Mari Myren and carried to approve employment of the following for the 2021 – 2022 school year:

1. Brian Grensteiner as an elementary co-principal
Salary per principal's contract Effective: 8/1/21
2. Nick Johnson as a high school English teacher
BA, Step 1 Effective: 8/24/2021
3. Shannon Reichel as a long-term substitute special education teacher
BA, Step 1 Effective: 8/30/21 – 11/23/21
4. Sandy Malo as a long-term substitute special education teacher
BA, Step 1 Effective: 8/30/21 – 12/22/21
5. Special Education Paraprofessionals
Step 1 Effective: 8/26/21
 - a. Cassandra Shumski
 - b. Jody Hemann
 - c. Tara Hedberg
 - d. Toni Meier
6. Maggie Eisenmenger as a kindergarten teacher
BA, Step 3 Effective: 8/24/21

A motion was offered by Julie Laue, seconded by Nicole Green and carried to approve the following employee medical leaves of absence:

1. High school teacher, effective 9/13/21 – 12/22/21
2. Elementary paraprofessional, effective for 2021-22 school year
3. High school paraprofessional, effective for 2021-22 school year

Board members reported on the following: Policy Committee Meeting of 7/26; Staff Welfare Committee Meeting of 7/29.

In closing, Dan Brookens thanked those students who worked on developing a District Equity Statement for their thoughtful efforts and insight.

A motion was offered by Mike Edman, seconded by Dan Brookens, and carried to approve adjourning the school board meeting at 5:44 p.m.

Mari Myren, Clerk