

Frenchtown School Board of Trustees Meeting

August 17, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

Middle School Shared Common Area

- I. **Call to Order:** The Regular School Board Meeting was called to order by Board Chair Jami Romney FitzGerald. Trustees Gordon Schmill, Shiloh Lucier, Bryce Simpson, David Weber and Jami Wright were in attendance. Trustee Noah Peters attended electronically. Also in attendance were Superintendent Les Meyer, Principals Aaron Griffin, Riley Devins, Jake Haynes and Jodi Hall, Assistant Principal/Activities Coordinator Kipp Lewis, Special Services Coordinator Jennifer Demmons, Technology Coordinator Arron Rowan and District Clerk Shauna Anderson.
- II. **Pledge of Allegiance:** The meeting opened with the pledge at 7:01 p.m.
- III. **Board Recognition**
Board Chair Jami Romney FitzGerald welcomed back the administrators for this upcoming school year, and welcomed all in attendance at the meeting.
- IV. **Public Comment Period – none.**
- V. **Individuals and Delegations to Address the Board – none.**
- VI. **Approval of Minutes**
Shiloh Lucier made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. David Weber seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – none. Unanimous.
- VII. **Administrative Reports**
Highlights of the administrative reports were Special Services Director Jennifer Demmons talking about excellent new staff members and the bios included in the board packet, and is looking forward to the upcoming year. Technology Coordinator Arron Rowan discussed network upgrades in progress and student device deployment. Maintenance Supervisor Sean Mecham discussed summer projects, and the recent failure of the fire system control unit. Questions were asked about the system repair and redundancy in the electrical controls. Board Chair Jami Romney FitzGerald commended the school grounds and the work completed by the maintenance and custodial crew. The Superintendent report will be presented with new business.
- VIII. **Business**
 - A. Old Business – none.
 - B. New Business
 - 1) Review/Action: The Opening of Frenchtown Schools
Board Chair Jami Romney FitzGerald discussed public comment during the meeting, rules of behavior and how the public can participate in this agenda item. Superintendent Les Meyer discussed the requirements for the Frenchtown School District ARP Plan, which demonstrates how FTSD is planning to utilize ESSER funding to safely return to school, and how the District has asked for stakeholder input to develop the reopening plan, including a recent survey sent to the community and staff. This plan will be reviewed and monitored continuously. Superintendent Meyer discussed the success of FTSD throughout the pandemic and the ability to continue in person education throughout while maintaining all safety protocols necessary throughout the year, including instruction time, activities and through the holidays. Superintendent Meyer recommended opening Frenchtown School District for the 2021 – 2022 school year with masks recommended, not required.
Jami Wright made a motion to approve the 2021 Reopening Plan as presented. Bryce Simpson seconded the motion.

Public discussion – members of the public addressed the board regarding the 2021 Reopening Plan and concerns were raised both against and in favor of mask requirements. The District and administration was commended for their efforts throughout the pandemic. Public speakers discussed parental concerns regarding mask mandates and retaining parental authority. Public members discussed the use of masks and the level of transmission of the Delta variant occurring at this time, and submitted statistical documentation regarding COVID transmission and current legislation regarding use of masks. Questions were asked of the administration and school board regarding masks on school buses, as well as any changes that may occur that would trigger a change in mask requirements.

Board members asked union representatives and administrators to discuss their individual opinion of the reopening plan. Both union representatives spoke in favor of the plan after conversations with their membership. Each building principal also spoke in favor of the plan, and discussed support of all families regarding mask usage in school. The goal of all administrators is to safely return to school and to continue the education of Frenchtown students. The success of the current summer school program was discussed as well as the procedures in place to watch and monitor the transmission rates and respond accordingly. Potential for quarantine was discussed, and the school district's role in assisting the county health department with this task. The federal requirement for masks on public transportation, which includes public school buses, was addressed and will be required per federal law.

Board discussion - each board member spoke regarding the proposed plan. Trustee Weber expressed concerns over CDC recommendations and felt the survey was misleading with current CDC guidance. Trustee Weber discussed the high transmission rate in Missoula County at this time, and supported the district plan with the exception of the masks and would like to see a mask mandate. Trustee Lucier thanked the public in attendance at the meeting, expressed confidence in district administration and felt we all shared the common ground of keeping the children of Frenchtown safe. Trustee Simpson felt the support of the plan by staff members was important. The District is in support of anyone who elects to wear a mask, and also supports the plan as presented. Trustee Schmill acknowledged Superintendent Meyer and the work involved with keeping the school open over the last year, including in class learning, online education as well as activities, and knows there are contingency plans if things change. Trustee Peters discussed conversations with physicians who recommended universal masking of students in grades K – 12, and therefore would like an alternate plan with masks required. Trustee Wright discussed living with COVID for many months now and felt that it is a matter of parents knowing what is best for their children, so supports the plan as written. Trustee Romney FitzGerald discussed the fact that children under 12 cannot get vaccinated and adults who chose not to get vaccinated can put these children at risk. Although no one is fond of masks, she believes they are effective, so recommended masks for children 12 and under.

Shiloh Lucier, Jami Wright, Bryce Simpson and Gordon Schmill voted in favor of the motion. David Weber, Noah Peters and Jami Romney FitzGerald opposed. The motion carried 4 – 3.

Break 8:42 – 8:47 p.m.

2) Review/Action: Hiring

Superintendent Les Meyer recommended the following for hire: Middle School Football Coaches Tony Davis and Jesse Mecham, MS Volleyball Official Judy Everett, Food Service Workers Beth Hall, Rachael Sherrill and Jennifer Richardson, Paraprofessionals Casey Lang, Megan Clifford and Olga Denisovich, Special Education Teacher Emily Ketcherside, Substitutes Sarah Hibbard, Jesse Mecham and Jacquelyn McMaster, Regular Route Bus Driver Nathan Farnes, Substitute Bus Driver Mark Richardson, Instructional Aid Tara Trump, Full-time Custodian Sheridyn Johnson, Food Service Substitutes Robin Coltrell and Liz Medina, and Full-time Grounds for the 2021-2022 school year Zackory Palmer. Shiloh Lucier made a motion to approve the hires as recommended.

- David Weber seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – regarding the MS Volleyball official position. Unanimous.
- 3) Information/Discussion: Resignations
The resignations of Paraprofessionals Zackkory Palmer and Cathy Williams were discussed.
 - 4) Review/Action: MOA
 - a. The Middle School National Honor Society advisor position was added after the conclusion of negotiations with the FEA. As such, an MOA is needed to include this position for the remainder of the negotiated contract. Shiloh Lucier a motion to approve the MOA between FTSD and the FEA with regards to the Middle School National Honor Society advisor. Bryce Simpson seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – none. Unanimous.
 - b. The FEA requested a MOA to approve an annual stipend of \$3,000 for the Speech Language Pathologist Kelsie Maricelli. David Weber made a motion to approve the MOA as presented. Jami Wright seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – regarding why this was not addressed during the recent negotiations and the timing of the FEA request. Unanimous.
 - 5) Review/Action: Bus Route Change – none.
New Transportation Tucker Eslinger was introduced and discussed transportation challenges facing the district.
 - 6) Review/Action: Approve Discretionary Non Resident Students
Shiloh Lucier made a motion to approve the discretionary non-resident students as listed. Gordon Schmill seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – regarding administrative approval of these students, and current capacity at each school. Questions were asked about current non-resident students, impact on courses and activities. Unanimous.
 - 7) Review/Action: Set Lunch Prices – Set Breakfast Prices
Superintendent Les Meyer recommended increasing adult lunch to \$4 and adult breakfast to \$2 per USDA requirements. Bryce Simpson made a motion to approve the adult meal prices as recommended. Gordon Schmill seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion –none. Unanimous.
 - 8) Review/Action: Increase P-Card/MasterCard Limit
Superintendent Les Meyer discussed BP7405 and current p-card credit limits in place. The low limit in place is limiting potential rebates, and makes purchasing difficult for the District. The rebate program was discussed. Superintendent Meyer recommended increasing the p-card credit limit to \$90,000. Shiloh Lucier made a motion to approve increasing the p-card limit as recommended. Bryce Simpson seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – asking for feedback in the future from the district office as to the effectiveness of this limit increase. Unanimous.
 - 9) Review/Action: Approve List of Obsolete Equipment for Disposal – none.
 - 10) Review/Action: Purchases
Superintendent Les Meyer discussed the earlier facilities committee meeting and recommended purchases for the network upgrade, Chromebooks, iPads, Ventilator rebalancing and roof repair. Bryce Simpson made a motion to approve the purchases as recommended by the Facilities Committee with the exception of the drainage system estimate, using ESSER funding. Gordon Schmill seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – regarding the Facilities Committee and confirming the recommendation. Unanimous.
 - 11) Review/Action: Set Date for Fall Retreat
Superintendent Les Meyer discussed the fall retreat, it’s intent and asked if the Board would like to schedule a date for a fall retreat. Discussion was held regarding the intent of the retreat and its benefits to the Board. David Weber made a motion to approve scheduling a fun fall retreat. Bryce Simpson seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – regarding potential dates to be sent to Board members. Unanimous.

IX. Policy Review

A. Second Reading – New Policies

- 1) BP3550F – School District Student Club Application. Recommended new policy requiring an application form for student clubs.
- 2) BP4211 – District and School Name, Logo, Imagery and Colors. This model policy requires Board approval for use of the District name, logo, imagery and colors by any group, individual, business, entity or organization.

Jami Wright made a motion to approve BP3550F and BP4211 on second reading. Shiloh Lucier seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – none. Unanimous.

X. Approval of Warrants/Approval of Financial Report

Jami Wright made a motion to approve the warrants and financial reports as presented. Shiloh Lucier seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – none. Unanimous.

XIII. Committee Reports

- A. Policy (Shiloh Lucier, Jami Wright, Noah Peters)
- B. Insurance (David Weber, Gordon Schmill, Bryce Simpson)
- C. Negotiations/Labor Relations (Jami Romney FitzGerald, Gordon Schmill & Bryce Simpson)
- D. Transportation (David Weber & Bryce Simpson)
- E. Safety (Gordon Schmill & Bryce Simpson)
- F. School Improvement/Goals Committee (Jami Romney FitzGerald, Bryce Simpson & Noah Peters)
- G. Ad Hoc Committees – IT (Jami Romney FitzGerald & Jami Wright), Facilities – (Jami Romney FitzGerald, Gordon Schmill, & Bryce Simpson), Curriculum/Professional Development (Jami Romney FitzGerald & Noah Peters), Academic Achievement – (Shiloh Lucier, Noah Peters & Jami Wright), Wellness (Jami Romney FitzGerald & Shiloh Lucier).

Upcoming meetings are needed for Policy Committee and Transportation.

XI. Correspondence – none.

XII. Board Recognition – Send recommendations to the Superintendent prior to the next regular board meeting.

ADJOURNED 9:35 p.m.

Approved: September 21, 2021

Respectfully Submitted,

/s/ Jami Romney FitzGerald
Board Chair

/s/ Shauna Anderson
District Clerk