

Frenchtown School Board of Trustees Meeting
September 21, 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, Noah Peters and Jami Wright were in attendance. Also in attendance were Superintendent Les Meyer, Principals Aaron Griffin, Riley Devins, Jake Haynes and Jodi Hall, 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 – none.**
 - IV. **Public Comment Period**
Frenchtown Community Coalition representative Reagan Mecham discussed the new signage used throughout the district, and informed the trustees of an upcoming presentation by Michael Deleon of Steered Straight, Inc. There will be student assemblies during the school day and also an evening presentation for parents and members of the community titled “Vaping Me Crazy” on October 28, 2021 from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. Board members asked questions about the presentation. Principal Jake Haynes said this has received excellent reviews and the High School is looking forward to the event.
 - V. **Individuals and Delegations to Address the Board**
Agenda item V. moved to after VII. Approval of Minutes.
 - VI. **Staff Presentation**
New teaching staff members were welcomed to Frenchtown School District. In attendance were Middle School Teacher Rae-Ann Beaulieu and 4th Grade Teacher Skye McMaster. Both teachers introduced themselves and spoke about their background. Trustees and administrators welcomed our new teachers to the Frenchtown team.
 - VII. **Approval of Minutes**
Shiloh Lucier made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Noah Peters seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – none. Unanimous.
- Individuals and Delegations to Address the Board (from item V. above)**
- A. Student Council
Student council officers Kaden Hansen and Evan Ellington discussed the goals for the student council this school year, with the number one goal of getting students involved in school and building school pride. Homecoming week activities were discussed, including the parade, shirt sales, the two day kickball tournament, and daily theme days. Questions were asked about the events and how younger students are participating. Also discussed were FTN News productions and the upcoming Blood Drive in October.
 - B. PTSA
Moved to after item VIII. 2) below.
- VIII. **Administrative Reports**
Highlights of the administrative reports were 1) Maintenance Supervisor Sean Mecham discussed the format of the maintenance report in the board packet and answered questions about work on the campus security cameras, and 2) Technology Coordinator Arron Rowan discussed work in progress and what the student intern is assisting with including deploying Chromebooks and iPads.

Individuals and Delegations to Address the Board (from item V. above)

B. PTSA

Lauren Bieber, PTSA representative, discussed the possibility of hosting another holiday craft fair at the north campus. The spring craft fair was held in the spring outdoors and was very successful even with a wind event in the afternoon. The PTSA would like to hold the holiday craft fair in December and will need to begin securing vendors soon. Questions were asked regarding COVID concerns, the number of vendors and custodial needs. Also discussed was the possibility of allowing the event contingent upon schedule conflicts and status of the virus. Ms. Bieber will contact Activities Director Kipp Lewis to discuss the schedule and complete a facility use form. Also discussed was the recently launched PTSA annual fundraiser where they keep 50% of the proceeds.

Back to **Administrative Reports**

Special Services Coordinator Jennifer Demmons spoke about the fantastic new teachers and the start to the school year, and new curriculum being utilized. The extra PIR days for training new staff was very beneficial this year.

Trustee Debbie Lester arrived at 7:43 p.m. Principal Aaron Griffin arrived at 7:50 p.m.

Principal Jodi Hall spoke about the Early Kindergarten program and its benefit to the Frenchtown community. New teacher Shanelle Shirey has been terrific and has created a developmentally appropriate great learning environment for our youngest students. Principal Jake Haynes discussed the skills learned during the Jimmy Casas training for staff and its benefit toward building culture. Questions were asked regarding the high school dual credit courses and teacher credentials and the benefits of these courses to our students. Principal Aaron Griffin spoke about the new outdoor court space that has been a great additional outdoor space for the middle school. The community, parents, staff and students were commended on a great start to the school year. Superintendent Les Meyer discussed enrollment numbers and the growth of the district as well as upcoming meeting agendas. Ongoing transportation challenges were discussed and the difficulties surrounding traffic congestion. The District saw some challenges with behaviors in the beginning of the year that were difficult for the maintenance department, administration and the School Resource Officer that the district as a whole is working through.

IX. **Business**

A. Old Business – none.

B. New Business

1) Review/Action: Approve Out of State Travel for Band to Disney World

Band director John Nelson discussed the band and choir trip to Disney World. The high school bands and choir auditioned and were accepted to perform at Walt Disney World in Orlando Florida in February 2022. This is a great educational experience and required a video audition and now the development of a 30-minute program to represent Montana. Both the bands and choir participating in this event shows the cohesiveness of the Frenchtown music department this year. Fundraising efforts were discussed, and questions were asked about the schedule, trip safety and chaperones. A trip chaperone was in attendance and spoke about supervision and trip insurance. Shiloh Lucier made a motion to approve the out of state travel for the band and choir trip to Disney World. Bryce Simpson seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – none. Unanimous.

2) Information/Discussion: I Love You Guys Foundation – Thursday, September 30

Superintendent Les Meyer discussed the upcoming staff training by the “I Love You Guys” Foundation on K-12 Standard Response Protocol (SRP). This SRP training will be held on September 30, 2021 for all staff members and consists of training, practicing and drilling the incident response protocol that will be adopted by the district to prepare for any hazardous incident using common language and practiced actions. Questions were asked about the program and board members supported the training and the administration’s confidence in this protocol.

3) Information/Discussion: Curriculum Review – Arts, Business, Coding, Media Arts

Principal and Curriculum Director Riley Devins discussed the upcoming content areas under review. Sample textbooks will be requested and reviewed by teaching staff and the curriculum committee will be presented a recommendation at a later date.

4) Information/Discussion: Update of the Continuity of Services Plan

Superintendent Les Meyer discussed the Frenchtown School District Safe Return to School and Continuity of Services Plan, which is available to the public on the district website. This plan has been and will continue to be updated as appropriate. Recent updates were added to the plan with regards to educational plans for COVID related quarantines and illnesses.

Board discussion followed the presentation. Questions were asked regarding the criteria necessary to change this plan. Administration discussed situations such as bus driver shortages, food service staff shortage, county requirements, staffing, and case percentages as potential factors that may require the school to adapt the plan. Board members asked questions about potential positive cases in the schools and notification to parents. A question arose from a parent communication regarding the notification process. Another issue is the source of the information and the involvement of medical professionals and the county health department. Frustrations were communicated with the timing of notifications, and the delays with the health department and various other situations impacting the district, such as situations where the school is not notified of a positive case or if close contacts to a positive case are not named. The District follows the health department protocol when positive cases are reported. This is a very difficult situation administratively as the school does not have quarantine authority and each instance is unique.

Absenteeism rates at the school level were discussed. Per the Continuity of Services Plan, homework and access to google classroom is offered to all. Board members asked questions about remote learning, and the principals were asked about absences in each school with students and staff. Administrators discussed the challenges to the teaching staff with remote and in person instruction and the difficulties and work load this creates for our teaching staff.

Board members debated a notification protocol requirement. Each administrator was asked about the procedure in place for their school if they are notified of a positive test, as grade level does impact contact identification. Privacy concerns were discussed as well as many different scenarios potentially impacting each school. Medical and/or county health department documentation was also discussed. Superintendent Meyer reported case information known at the time, how this is a constantly changing number and this discussion has been a clear demonstration of what the district is facing each day of this challenging school year. Board members again debated notifications and requested a district protocol to be published.

5) Review/Action: MOU with Certified Staff Regarding Leave

Superintendent Les Meyer met with representatives of the FEA who presented a MOU document. This will need to be reviewed by the negotiations committee so the action item was tabled.

6) Review/Action: Hiring

Superintendent Les Meyer presented a recommended list of hires. This list included: Elaina Blass and Karolei Petroff, Elementary Music; Cody Warner, Middle School Wrestling; Amy Albertson, Middle School Ticket Taker; Mark Richardson, High School Assistant Soccer Coach, Playground Aide and Route Bus Driver; Brittney Hogue and Julia Denisovich, Paraprofessional; Steve Beck, Amy Diehl and Jeanne Zenner, Sub Playground Aide; Robert Patacini, Sub Bus Driver; Tom Aichlmayr, Head Custodian; Roger Smith, Sub Custodian; Stacey McKinney, Maria Merkley and Laura Finley, Sub Teacher; Sean Mecham and Jesse Mecham, .5 Assistant Track Coach; Phil McLendon, High School Yearbook; Dalene Normand, Destination Imagination and Gifted/Talented Consultant; Rocky King, Mary Jo Duncan and Roclyn King, Concessions; Janell Habeck, Beth Hall, Beth Terzo and Robyn Richardson, Ticket Takers; Jenna Pitts, Winter Cheer Coach. Bryce Simpson made a motion to approve the hires as listed. Gordon Schmill seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – none. Unanimous.

7) Information/Discussion: Resignations

The resignations of Steve Serrano, Head Custodian, Bart Hosman, Grounds and Madison Irwin, Permanent Substitute were discussed.

- 8) Review/Action: Approve Discretionary Non Resident Students
Shiloh Lucier made a motion to approve the discretionary non-resident students as listed. Bryce Simpson seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – none. Unanimous.
- 9) Review/Action: Set Lunch Prices – Approve Sale/Disposal of Obsolete/Surplus Equipment
Superintendent Les Meyer recommended the disposal and/or of items listed in the board packet. Bryce Simpson made a motion to approve the sale or disposal of obsolete/surplus equipment as recommended. Gordon Schmill seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – regarding the status of the well pipe for sale. Unanimous.
- 10) Review/Action: Purchases
 - a. Superintendent Les Meyer recommended purchases of additional security cameras, as well as a service contract for existing security cameras from Systems Northwest for \$29,440.65. Technology Coordinator Arron Rowan discussed the service proposal and value to the District. Bryce Simpson made a motion to approve the service contract with Systems Northwest as recommended. Jami Wright seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – regarding the effective date of the service agreement. Unanimous.
 - b. Superintendent Les Meyer recommended the presenter agreement with Joseph M Sanfelippo, LLC for \$20,000 for professional development services in August of 2022. Gordon Schmill made a motion to approve the agreement as presented. Jami Wright seconded the motion. Public discussion – regarding the cost of the proposal and the reason it appears to be high. Mr. Sanfelippo is one of the top presenters in education in the country and demand is very high. Board discussion – none. Unanimous.
- 11) Review/Action: Individual Transportation Contract
Superintendent Les Meyer recommended approving an Individual Transportation Contract with isolation status for a family in the school district. District Clerk Shauna Anderson explained the contract and the situation. Jami Wright made a motion to approve the Individual Transportation Contract as presented. Bryce Simpson seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – none. Unanimous.
- 12) Review/Action – Bus Route Change – none.
- 13) Information/Discussion: Title IX – Update
All staff are required to complete mandatory Title IX compliance training.
- 14) Information/Discussion: ESEA Consolidated, IDEA, Perkins Grants
Superintendent Les Meyer discussed all of the grants submitted to date and their approval status.
- 15) Information/Discussion: Strategic Plan
The Strategic Plan is being addressed and discussions have been held regarding the “Description of a Desired Future”.

X. Policy Review – none.

XI. Approval of Warrants/Approval of Financial Report

Jami Wright made a motion to approve the warrants and financial reports as presented. Gordon Schmill seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – regarding the ESSER grant budget. Unanimous.

XIII. Committee Reports

- A. Policy (Shiloh Lucier, Jami Wright, Noah Peters)
- B. Insurance (Debbie Lester, Gordon Schmill, Bryce Simpson)
- C. Negotiations/Labor Relations (Jami Romney FitzGerald, Gordon Schmill & Bryce Simpson)
- D. Transportation (Debbie Lester & 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 IT (9/29/21 at 5:00 p.m.), Negotiations (9/28/21 at 7:00 a.m.), Policy Committee and Transportation. Trustee Debbie Lester was appointed to the Transportation and Insurance Committees to fill the vacant spots.

XI. **Correspondence – none.**

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

ADJOURNED 10:47 p.m.

Approved: October 19, 2021

Respectfully Submitted,

/s/ Jami Romney FitzGerald
Board Chair

/s/ Shauna Anderson
District Clerk