

Frenchtown School Board of Trustees Meeting

April 19, 2022 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 Vice Chair Gordon Schmill. Trustees Bryce Simpson, Noah Peters, Jami Wright and Debbie Lester were in attendance. Also in attendance were Superintendent Les Meyer, Principals Jodi Hall, Riley Devins, Aaron Griffin and Jake Haynes, Assistant Principal/Activities Director Kipp Lewis, Special Services Coordinator Jennifer Demmons and District Clerk Shauna Anderson.
- II. **Pledge of Allegiance:** The meeting opened with the pledge at 7:00 p.m.
- III. **Board Recognition – none.**
- IV. **Public Comment Period – none.**
- V. **Individuals and Delegations to Address the Board**
 - A. Student Council: Student Council Representatives Kaden Hanson and Evan Ellington talked about upcoming activities with Spring Fling week, with the intent of togetherness and maintaining excitement for the remainder of the year. Events for the week include Man Puff Volleyball, a kickball tournament, FHS softball games, as well as dress up day themes such as office vs. construction, country vs. country club and anything but a backpack day. The Bette Paskey Memorial softball tournament will also have a Bette Paskey theme day. Speech and Debate members will perform, and student council members will be making posters to advertise the weekly events. Board members asked questions about the events and thanked the student council representatives.
 - B. Frenchtown Community Coalition – none.
 - C. PTSA - none.
- VI. **Staff Presentation – none.**
- VII. **Approval of Minutes**

Jami Wright made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Debbie Lester seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – none. Unanimous.
- VIII. **Administrative Reports**

Highlights of the administrative reports were 1) Maintenance Supervisor Sean Mecham distributed a maintenance report to board members. Questions were asked about possible resurfacing projects on both campuses. 2) Technology Coordinator Arron Rowan discussed ongoing projects for the IT department, including updating the Vo-Ed and Business center in the HS. Questions were asked about the interns, and whether or not IT services may need to be outsourced. New onboarding software will save time for school year start up tasks. 3) Special Services Coordinator Jennifer Demmons discussed National Para Appreciation Day on April 6th, and the week of appreciation, gifts and treats for the paras in hopes they know how much they are appreciated. Also acknowledged were playground aides and bus drivers, all of whom are essential to the staff. Principal Jodi Hall discussed the creative teaching and test preparation techniques at the elementary. Questions were asked about the recent Science Palooza event and early kindergarten registration and a recent correspondence from OPI regarding EK. Superintendent Meyer discussed the legislature’s concern for EK funding and the District response and documentation send to OPI. Principal Hall explained the EK program lesson focus on early literacy and kindergarten readiness. Principal Riley Devins discussed Smarter Balanced testing for grades 3 – 8. Science Palooza was a great event and very successful, with thanks to all of the contributors listed in the packet. Curriculum development was discussed, with committee work on foreign language, HPE, coding and business classes. Principal Aaron Griffin talked about Little League opening ceremonies and the need for open green space in the area. A new development in O’Keefe Ranch will have park space which should alleviate the District usage. Also

discussed what the first National Honor Society induction at the Middle School, participation levels in MS sports and transportation challenges. Principal Jake Haynes talked about the science department and recent grants received to study the Clark Fork and raise trout in the classroom for eventual release. Community service projects for Clark Fork clean up at Erskine fishing access is coming up with 60 students participating and taking pride in their community. AD Kipp Lewis discussed spring sports and the Bette Paskey Memorial softball tournament coming up with Ms. Paskey's daughter Joey throwing out the ceremonial first pitch at the event. 4) Superintendent Les Meyer talked about the spring board walk about and facility priorities with the elementary painting and parking lot resurfacing. Also discussed were position vacancies, graduation and upcoming FCA negotiations. Superintendent Meyer discussed concerns over the CI-121 ballot initiative and its impact on the school district. Middle School activity fees were discussed and the increasing costs for officials. Superintendent Meyer recapped the year for the district and the many positive accomplishments during this challenging time.

IX. **Business**

A. Old Business

1) Information/Discussion: School Election/Mill Levy Information

Superintendent Les Meyer discussed upcoming election and mill levy information. An FAQ document was distributed at Science Palooza and will be available at the Little League opening ceremonies. Mill levy information will also be included in the newsletter and is available on the district website.

2) Information/Discussion: Current Budget Projections for 2022-2023

Superintendent Les Meyer discussed impacts to the general fund budget such as staff salary cost increases, insurance increases and inflation, utility costs and fuel increases that are challenging to the District general fund. An increase to the general fund is anticipated due to enrollment increases but costs to the district have increased dramatically. Food services will also be impacted as it is likely the current USDA free lunch program will not be continued.

B. New Business

1) Review/Action: Adoption of Health Curriculum documents

Superintendent Les Meyer discussed curriculum committee recommendations to adopt the health curriculum as presented in the board packet. This is the third year Frenchtown has developed and adopted curriculum independently. Principal Riley Devins discussed the selection process and vendors considered. The curriculum proposed meets the state standards for health instruction. Debbie Lester made a motion to adopt the health curriculum as proposed and recommended by the curriculum committee. Noah Peters seconded the motion. Public discussion: Community member Nate Tollefson spoke about concerns with board policy and curriculum with some books and movies that may not be appropriate for the curriculum. Mr. Tollefson would like the policy reviewed and expressed concern over books and movies used in English courses with offensive language and content. He expressed concern over a movie that was shown to students without parental permission. The concern with the subject matter was discussed and although students can opt out they were then given different work and isolated from the class. Concerns were with content that is not allowed in spoken word yet can be read and watched, and would like curriculum to be void of vulgar, immoral or inappropriate content. High School teacher Kari Mazzola read a prepared statement by the English department regarding the need for students to be able to recognize facts and make judgements which also improves reading skills. Ms. Mazzola discussed the importance of including diverse text that represents the students' generation, with engaging contemporary literature. This improves student interest, test scores and reading skill. This literature is often supported by a movie version. It is possible to provide parents with a list of texts and movies that will be covered in the English curriculum. Librarian Ann Gentry, speaking as a parent, read a letter composed by her son regarding books available in school for a reason, and although sometimes uncomfortable require empathy and consideration. Community member Chris Kaneff thought this was an opportunity for the board to assemble a panel for review, possibly including community members for input and offered to volunteer. Principal Riley Devins discussed the health

- and business curriculum being reviewed and indicated English is up for review next year. A wide range of books are reviewed each year and teacher teams are utilized to review texts. The curriculum proposed and textbooks to purchase are not regarding the issues being discussed. Board discussion – regarding clarifying the curriculum up for vote and the document under review is health and not English. Superintendent Meyer acknowledged public comment and discussed policy for curriculum documents. Unanimous.
- 2) Review/Action: Approval of the purchases: Textbooks and High School Flooring
Superintendent Les Meyer recommended the purchase of Health and Wellness materials from McGraw Hill for \$27,309.39 and Asi Se Dice 2016 Spanish Curriculum from McGraw Hill for \$22,690.13. Noah Peters made a motion to approve the purchases for Health and Wellness and Spanish as recommended. Debbie Lester seconded the motion. Public discussion – Principal Riley Devins listed other books and costs for other subjects that the curriculum committee has reviewed. Also discussed were curriculum committee meeting frequency and upcoming meetings to develop additional curriculum documents that will be presented at the May meeting. Unanimous.
Superintendent Meyer discussed the high school commons flooring. Recommended for approval is a bid of \$41,500 from Western Interstate Construction to remove the aged carpeting and planter from the high school commons and polish the concrete floor. Jami Wright made a motion to approve the bid by Western Interstate Construction. Bryce Simpson seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – regarding the funding for the project, which will be utilizing ESSER funds for improved sanitation and easier cleaning of the area. Superintendent Meyer discussed contacting East Helena High School regarding their polished concrete floor. Unanimous.
 - 3) Review/Action: Hiring Tenured Teachers for 2022-2023
Superintendent Les Meyer discussed the accomplishments of FTSD, including remaining open and at full capacity and continuing activities throughout that challenges of the pandemic. Superintendent Meyer presented a list of tenured teachers recommended hire for the 2022-2023 school year. Noah Peters made a motion to approve hiring tenured staff as listed. Debbie Lester seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – none. Unanimous.
 - 4) Review/Action: Hiring Non-Tenured Teachers for 2022-2023
Superintendent Les Meyer recommended the hiring of non-tenured teachers as listed in the board packet. Jami Wright made a motion to approve the hires as listed. Debbie Lester seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – none. Unanimous.
 - 5) Review/Action: Hiring Administration for 2022-2023
Superintendent Les Meyer recommended the hiring of south campus administration and the Special Services Coordinator: Jodi Hall, Riley Devins and Jennifer Demmons. Superintendent Meyer recommended tabling the hiring of north campus administration due to potential reorganization of duties. Jami Wright made a motion to hire south campus administration and special services coordinator, and table north campus administration due to possible restructuring. Debbie Lester seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – none. Unanimous. Superintendent Meyer discussed possible changes to north campus administration and indicated that more discussions will be held regarding this matter.
 - 6) Review/Action: Hiring Staff
Superintendent Les Meyer recommended the following for hire: Sue Davis, Sub Para 2022-2023; Dan Lucier, High School Head Football Coach; Michaela Delaney, HS/MS Spanish; Don Medina, Part-Time Custodian; Sarah Drew, Psych Testing; Josh Criner, Middle School Track; Tim Bakker, Assistant HS Golf; Karen Hardy, Assistant HS Girls Soccer; and Student Workers Bow Petersen and Dugan Yonce. Jami Wright made a motion to approve the hires as listed. Debbie Lester seconded the motion. Public discussion – regarding staffing needs as identified in the mill levy documentation. It was asked if the need for additional staff included administration. Discussion was held on the administrative needs based on the number of teachers in the district, which is determined by enrollment, desired class sizes and what is best for Frenchtown students. It was asked that this information be clarified in the newsletter. Board discussion – regarding state determined numbers of administrators, including curriculum coordinator staff levels. Unanimous.

- 7) Information/Discussion: Resignations
The resignations of teachers Paul Hutchison, Joe Youngberg, Julia Crocker, Elise Harris, Justine Luebke, Activities Secretary Nicole Day, Special Services Secretary Veronica Phippen, Custodian Hunter Cross and Senior Technology Coordinator Arron Rowan were discussed. Also discussed was the retirement of Sue Davis, Paraprofessional.
- 8) Review/Action: Termination
Superintendent Les Meyer made a recommendation to terminate Bus Driver Kevin Sprague. Bryce Simpson made a motion to terminate Kevin Sprague as recommended. Jami Wright seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – none. Unanimous.
- 9) Review/Action: Approve 6th grade participation for Middle School Soccer for 2022-2023 School Year
Superintendent Les Meyer recommended approving 6th graders to participate in MS soccer for the 2022-2023 school year. Bryce Simpson made a motion to approve 6th grade participation in MS soccer as recommended. Noah Peters seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – none. Unanimous.
- 10) Review Action: Bus Route Changes
Numerous bus routes have been changed due to route consolidation and driver shortage. Recommended for approval were routes 2A to 2B, 4 to 4A, 7A to 7B, 8B to 8A, 13A to 13 and 14C to 14D, as well as suspending routes 5B and 6A. Jami Wright made a motion to approve the bus route changes as listed in the board packet. Bryce Simpson seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – none. Unanimous.
- 11) Review/Action: Obsolete/Surplus Equipment
Superintendent Les Meyer recommended a list of obsolete equipment for disposal. Debbie Lester made a motion to approve Resolution #4192022-1 for disposal of public property as recommended. Jami Wright seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – none. Unanimous.

X. **Policy Review – none.**

There will be a policy committee meeting scheduled prior to the May meeting.

XI. **Approval of Warrants/Approval of Financial Report**

Bryce Simpson made a motion to approve the warrants and financial reports as presented. Noah Peters seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – regarding the current status of revenues to expenditures and how this year will be challenging financially to finish. Unanimous.

XII. **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).

XIII. **Correspondence – none.**

XIV. **Adjournment**

ADJOURNED 8:56 p.m.

Approved: May 17, 2022

Respectfully Submitted,

/s/ Jami Romney FitzGerald
Board Chair

/s/ Shauna Anderson
District Clerk