

# Farmington River Regional School District

## School Committee Meeting

Meeting #438

Farmington River Elementary School Music Room

Monday, September 11th, 2023

MINUTES

7:00 PM

**Members Present:** Deb Fogel, Denise Hardie, Carol Lombardo, Phil Magovern, Douglas Miner, Carl Nett

**Also Present:** Tim Lee, Caroline Stamm

**Absent:** Melissa Bye

I. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Denise Hardie.

A. **Roll Call:** Melissa Bye, Deb Fogel, Denise Hardie, Carol Lombardo, Phil Magovern, Douglas Miner, Carl Nett

II. **Public Comment:**

A. There were no public comments at this time.

III. **Acceptance of Minutes:**

- Meeting #436 from August 7th, 2023

A. Carol Lombardo made a motion to accept the minutes from Meeting #436 from 8/7/23.

1. Deb Fogel seconded the motion.

B. A discussion was made on a few minor corrections to the notes.

C. Carl Nett made a motion to accept the minutes from Meeting #436 with corrections.

1. Deb Fogel seconded the motion.

2. **VOTE:** Deb Fogel, Denise Hardie, Carol Lombardo, Phil Magovern, Douglas Miner, and Carl Nett were in favor. Melissa Bye was not in attendance and therefore did not vote.

There were no objections, and the motion passed to accept the minutes from Meeting #436 (8/7/23) with the corrections.

IV. **Superintendent's Report:**

A. **Beginning of School:**

1. School began on August 30th, 2023 with a half day and has been going smoothly.

2. The current enrollment is 131 in PK - 6th, with a potential new 5th grader who is shadowing and likely to enroll.

B. **Back to School Night:**

1. Back to School night will take place on Thursday, Sept. 14th from 6-7pm.

2. SC Member Involvement: It would be helpful to have members of the School Committee present so families can learn who is on the Committee

C. **Staffing:**

1. The staff have their first Staff Meeting on Wednesday, Sept. 13th

2. The school is almost fully staffed:

a) The position of Food Service Assistant has been filled and the new hire will begin on Sept. 18th.

b) The position of Assistant to the Business Administrator was filled earlier in the summer and she began mid-August.

c) There was also a new Paraprofessional hired earlier in the summer who began at the beginning of the school year.

3. Additional Stipended Position: After-School Program Leader
  - a) Tim explained that the position was not originally part of the negotiated contract, but was seeking School Committee approval in formally creating the position for this year only.
  - b) The position is fully funded by the ESSER III grant.
  - c) Currently the After-School Program is run by 1 lead teacher and 1-2 paraprofessionals supporting. The Paraprofessional support is separate and already budgeted per the ESP contract.
4. Carl Nett made a motion to formally create the After-School Program Leader position for the 2023-2024 School Year.
  - a) Phil Magovern seconded the motion.
  - b) VOTE: Deb Fogel, Denise Hardie, Carol Lombardo, Phil Magovern, Douglas Miner, and Carl Nett were in favor. Melissa Bye was not in attendance and therefore did not vote. There were no objections, and the motion passed to formally create the After-School Program Leader position for the 2023-2024 School Year.

D. Transportation Challenges:

1. Overview: Transportation slightly improved over last week with minor route corrections with some route times in excess of an hour.
  - a) The transportation route is complex with the geographic size of the district and the ages of the students going to multiple schools on different schedules.
  - b) Tim is working with Terrie Gardino from Dufour to identify some solutions.
2. EK Transportation:
  - a) For PK/EK students, the District is only required to provide transportation for students identified with special needs.
  - b) In the past the District was able to offer empty seats on the District Vans to non-identified PK/EK students that were not required to transport.
  - c) Currently, we are pausing on these offerings until later in October when we can better see how our vans are playing into a bigger transportation solution.
3. Bus Driver Behavior: If parents have an issue with bus driver behavior, they should report it to the School who can discuss concerns with the bus company directly.

E. Boiler Update:

1. Since the last SC Meeting, the inspector from the insurance company, Liberty Mutual, came to complete the annual liability inspection of the boilers.
2. Tim reviewed the inspection report - noting that the inspector recommended that a boiler in this condition "should be removed from service."
3. On Thursday, the contracted engineer and a technician will be at the school to start up the boiler to see if the leak stops when it's hot. We will have more information for the next meeting after this.
4. Our engineer also made contact with the inspector who wrote the report to determine which components are most critical to repair.
5. It appears that the primary issue is only with one of the two boilers, though the other may need routine maintenance as well.
  - a) The school can operate off of one boiler if needed as the second one is for redundancy if one should fail, and there is access in the supply/return lines to add temporary access to a trailer boiler should we need as well.

F. Financial Updates:

1. Carol Sauerhauser, from TMS, will start to provide the school committee with general

information updates quarterly, starting with the next meeting in October.

2. We know what we've projected to spend and what we've already spent so far (budgeted vs. actual), extraordinary circumstances such as boiler work/consultants (which may require journal entries and transfers from one line to another).
  3. E&D Certification: We file our information around the end of October, and in late November/December will have certification.
- G. Tim rounded out his report by recognizing the work of the staff and Principal Flower in getting the school up and running, and enjoys getting to know the students here.
- H. MCAS Results: We currently only have preliminary results, but will have more information at the next meeting for the formalized review.

**V. School Committee Policies (First Read):**

- A. The following policies were presented to the School Committee as a first read for further discussion at the next School Committee meeting for the second reading.
1. BG: School Committee Policy Development
  2. BGB: Policy Adoption

**VI. Other Policy Discussion and New Subcommittee Discussion:**

- A. Formation of the new subcommittee: Evaluation of Superintendent:
1. Overview: Annual requirement of DESE, using DESE format for standards based format, the Superintendent identifies goals and discusses what evidence would be indicative of achieving those goals.
  2. Process:
    - a) Time Requirement: at least 3 meetings and a training session.
    - b) 1st Meeting: establishing goals/evidence with Superintendent
    - c) 2nd Meeting: mid-term check-in/review of goals
    - d) General SC Meeting: Summative Evaluation Survey/Ratings from School Committee Members for review
    - e) 3rd Meeting: All comments/ratings from SC members to write formal document of evaluation
    - f) The timeline for final review can shift: either in April (before the School Committee Elections in May) or at the end of the Fiscal Year in June.
  3. Formation of Superintendent Goals: These goals do not need to align with the School Committee Goals, but rather the goals they would like to work on.
  4. Subcommittee Members: Carl, Douglas (may be willing), Denise.
- B. Student/Parent Handbook: Ready to be reviewed, but the School Improvement Plan (which is included in the Handbook) will need to be presented and approved by the School Committee Meeting at the next meeting in October.

**VII. Subcommittee Reports:**

- A. Finance: *Comprised of: Phil Magovern (Chair), Carl Nett, Douglas Miner*
1. The Finance Subcommittee has their next meeting on September 25th with TMS.
- B. Building & Grounds: *Comprised of (for now): Carol Lombardo (Chair), Phil Magovern, Deb Fogel*
1. On the agenda for the next meeting is to review the members on the Buildings & Grounds Subcommittee so that there are representatives from both towns on the subcommittee.
  2. The Subcommittee compiled a list of major and minor things that need to be done and will review what can be completed within the established budget.
- C. Policy: *Comprised of: Denise Hardie (Chair), Douglas Miner, Melissa Bye*
1. The Policy Subcommittee met last week and discussed a "plan of attack" on how to review policies, as well as the format of the Policy Handbook - both physical and online.

2. They also brought forth the two policies (BG and BGB) for the rest of the School Committee to review.
3. In November, they are beginning to look at Section B on Board Governance.

**VIII. Follow-Up on School Committee Retreat of 8/23/23:**

- A. The School Committee reviewed the notes from Jake Eberwein on the goal-setting session of the retreat.
- B. Denise was also able to locate an old copy of FRRSD's Portrait of a Student in a copy of the Student/Parent Handbook.
  1. The Committee discussed adding a marketing element to the Portrait of a Student to give us competitive differentiation specific to FRES to boost enrollment.
  2. This will be discussed further at the November meeting.
- C. The School Committee decided to schedule a Special Meeting on Tuesday, October 17th, 2023 at 6:00 PM to discuss and establish goals for the district.

**IX. Discussion/Follow-Up from RAAC Meeting of 8/29/23:**

- A. Request for Secretarial Support:
  1. There was a request from the RAAC to have someone available to take notes and complete minutes so that the members of the RAAC can do the work they need to without having to take notes at the same time.
  2. There is nothing dedicated in the budget for this, and are unsure of the number of meetings. The requirements for the minutes are minimal
  3. The Committee proposed that there should be a rotating secretary - where all members on the RAAC take turns as the secretary so the work is evenly distributed.
    - a) Denise will follow up with this suggestion and to determine the exact terms of their needs for secretarial support: time commitment, scope of duties, and any additional responsibilities.
- B. Request for Terms for Withdraw:
  1. Following the last meeting where the Committee charged the RAAC with reviewing and updating the RDA, there was a request from the RAAC to come up with the terms for withdrawal.
  2. Denise reached out to Christine Lynch, a DESE consultant to gather a list of terms for withdrawal that must be included the RDA amendment.
    - a) Now that the School Committee, through the work of Denise, has fulfilled the request to know the requirements of the Terms for Withdrawal, the work is now passed back to the RAAC to determine the specifics of the terms.
    - b) Christine has looked at the RDA and is waiting to hear back from her colleague, and they should be able to respond back soon with comments on what needs to change in the RDA to make it DESE compliant.

**X. Other items for discussion not reasonably anticipated by the Chair 48 hours before the meeting**

- A. Recording of Meetings:
  1. Carl Nett made a motion that the recording of the meetings be posted publicly for 1 year from the date of the meeting beginning today and going forward.
    - a) Phil Magovern seconded the motion.
    - b) VOTE: Deb Fogel, Denise Hardie, Carol Lombardo, Phil Magovern, Douglas Miner, and Carl Nett were in favor. Melissa Bye was not in attendance and therefore did not vote. There were no objections, and the motion passed to publicly post the recordings of the meeting for 1 year from the date of the meeting beginning today and moving forward.

2. Carl Nett amended the motion that only the recordings of the regular school committee meetings be posted publicly.
  - a) Carol Lombardo and Deb Fogel seconded the motion.
  - b) VOTE: Deb Fogel, Denise Hardie, Carol Lombardo, Phil Magovern, Douglas Miner, and Carl Nett were in favor. Melissa Bye was not in attendance and therefore did not vote. There were no objections, and the motion passed to only publicly post the recordings of regular school committee meetings.
- B. Degree of Public Involvement:
  1. The School Committee discussed the degree of public involvement outside of the public comment at the beginning of the meeting.
  2. The School Committee decided to continue to have a dedicated Public Comment section at the beginning of the agenda. Additionally, on items that will be discussed and action taken, and after school committee deliberation, the public will be invited to comment before the school committee takes a vote (at the discretion of the school committee chair).
  3. There is a policy currently in the handbook regarding Public Comment (Policy BI) stating that there will be a section at the beginning of the meeting for Public Comment. When the Policy Subcommittee arrives at modifying that policy, they will look at writing the aforementioned decision into policy.
- C. BHRSD: The contract with BHRSD was agreed upon and locked in last week.
  1. For the contract with LPS, the contract was never executed by FRRSD - the only signatures on the contract are with the Lee School Committee Chair and the Lee Superintendent. The Finance subcommittee will look at this contract.
- D. TemporaryAlternate Warrant Signature:
  1. Denise will be out of town and the committee will need to designate an alternative signer during that time.
  2. Douglas Miner volunteered to sign warrants temporarily in Denise's absence.
  3. Carl Nett made a motion to delegate warrant signing temporarily to Douglas Miner for the next warrant cycle.
    - a) Deb Fogel seconded the motion.
    - b) VOTE: Deb Fogel, Denise Hardie, Carol Lombardo, Phil Magovern, Douglas Miner, and Carl Nett were in favor. Melissa Bye was not in attendance and therefore did not vote. There were no objections, and the motion passed to delegate warrant signing temporarily to Douglas Miner for the next warrant cycle.
- E. Agenda Items for the October School Committee Meeting:
  1. If you have anything to be included on the October agenda, please email Tim and Denise

**XI. Motion to Adjourn:**

- A. Carol Lombardo the motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:14 PM
- B. Douglas Nett seconded the motion.
- C. Vote - Roll Call: Deb Fogel, Denise Hardie, Carol Lombardo, Phil Magovern, Douglas Miner, Carl Nett

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Respectfully submitted,  
Caroline Stamm

## FRRSD School Committee

### Policy BG

#### School Committee Policy Development

The Farmington River Regional School Committee will develop policies and put them in writing so that they may serve as guides for the discretionary action those whom it delegates authority.

The formulation and adoption of these written policies will constitute the basic method by which the School Committee will exercise its leadership in providing for the successful and efficient functioning of the school district. Through the study and evaluation of reports concerning the execution of its policies, the School Committee will exercise its control over school operations.

Policies are principles adopted by a School Committee to chart a course of action. They tell what is wanted, they may include why and how much. Policies should be broad enough to indicate a line of action to be followed by the administration meeting day-to-day problems, yet be specific enough to give clear guidance.

The policies of the School Committee are framed, and are meant to be interpreted in terms of state law, regulations of the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education,, and other regulatory agencies of the various levels of government.

## Farmington River Regional School Committee

### Policy BGB

#### Policy Development

Adoption of new policies or changing existing policies is solely the responsibility of the Farmington River Regional School Committee. Policies will be adopted and/or amended only by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the FRRSD School Committee when such action has been scheduled on the agenda of a regular or special meeting.

To permit time for study of all policies or amendments to policies and to provide an opportunity for interested parties to react, proposed policies or amendments will be presented as an agenda item to the Committee in the following sequence:

1. Information item - distribution with the agenda
2. Discussion item - reading of the proposed policy or policies, response from Superintendent, report from any advisory committee assigned responsibility in the area, Committee discussion and directions for any redrafting
3. Action item - discussion, adoption, or rejection.

Amendments to the policy at the action stage will not require repetition of the sequence, unless the committee so directs.

The School Committee may dispense with the above sequence to meet emergency conditions.

Policies will be effective upon the date set by the School Committee. This date will ensure that affected persons have an opportunity to become familiar with the requirements of the new policy prior to its implementation.

Farmington River

## **Follow-up Retreat Notes**

8.31.23

*Captured by H. Jake Eberwein*

These notes follow the 8.23.23 session held in Otis and serve as a supplement to the agenda that can be found [HERE](#).

### **Follow-up/Considerations from Liz Lafond session**

- Can the meetings (agendas/recordings) be found easily? If not, improve access.
- Should the Committee post a recording (audio and/or video) of the meeting?
- Should comments be allowed during the course of a meeting from the general public, for example, at the point of discussion on a particular topic?
- Emphasis on gaining trust among the community by erring on the side of transparency.
- Publish information packets ahead of time, in easily accessible form.
- Process for working through policy via MASC
  - Use MASC to conduct a full sweep of policies with a focus of updating language, references to regulation/law, and contemporary format
  - Dive deeper into subset of identified policies that require more substantial conversation, research, and public vetting
- Add more funds to professional development line for the Committee

### **Notes/Prompts from Jake's session**

#### **Prompt: Sharing of "bucket list" items**

- Start piano lessons again
- Visit Alaska (2)
- Successfully retire completely
- Become a grandfather
- Travel everywhere
- Clean
- Learn to say no
- Mow the lawn
- Visit my nephew in LA
- Catch up on Honey-Do list
- Vacation without kids
- Take more vacation
- Move more, for a better me
- Be patient and do more for others
- Kayak more
- Learn a new language
- Spend more time with kids
- Visit South America



- Learn basics of welding
- Learn to fly a plane
- Learn to play a basic song on guitar
- Run another major marathon

**Prompt: Identification of member “agendas”**

- Sustainability (doing nothing is not an option for sustainability)
- Make FRRSD a school choice destination
- For language before and after school in order to attract students
- Upgrade for library
- Become a school of choice for all families in the district
- Pulling additional resources into the district
- Adding possible grant writers
- Curriculum alignment
- Quality of offerings

**Prompt: Things I need to learn**

- The school district data and finances
- Funding sources, grants, etc.
- DESE to legislature, how it works (governmental processes)
- Policies familiarity
- Transportation facts
- More about food program at schools, USA criteria & reimbursements
- Finance office operations (vendors, payroll, etc.)

**Prompt: Skills at the table**

- Former professional educators (schools, higher education)
- Competitive retail (marketing, working in stressful environments)
- Close writing analysis, editing
- Corporate leadership, knowledge of transformations, consolidations, change
- Private sector manager (finance)
- Parent
- Design business owner, management
- Persistence

**Prompt: I commit to statements (made by SC members)**

I commit to:

- Listening
- Staying focused on student outcomes
- Ensuring everyone has a voice
- Being open to new and/or different ideas
- Taking the necessary steps to learn from my peers and access all the information available to be effective

- Doing all I can to create a sustainable future for the district
- Making our school the best it can be
- Creating the best education for all students
- Advocating for every student to ensure success for Otis and Sandisfield
- Always assume positive intentions

**Prompt: Portrait of a FRRSD Student based on various prompts (dots signify number of endorsements that each characteristic received beyond the initial reference).**

Note: I've generated some themes, but you are welcome to add to, edit, and move around. It's a starting point:

#### Attitudes towards learning

Curiosity (3)  
 Open minded (1)  
 Thirst for education (2)  
 Love of Learning (2)  
 Inquisitive (1)  
 Sense of wonder (2)  
 Able/willing to ask questions (1)  
 Values learning

#### Interpersonal qualities

Resilient (1)  
 Adaptable (1)  
 Able to persevere (1)  
 Self-sufficient  
 Has confidence (2)  
 Respectful (3)  
 Motivated  
 Positive and cheerful  
 Well behaved (1)

#### Attitudes towards others

Compassionate/Kind (4)  
 Considerate (1)  
 Compassionate (1)  
 Helps others (1)  
 Is advocate for others  
 Has empathy  
 Team player (3)

#### Creativity

Creative (1)

Access to art/painting/drawing/dance (1)

Habits of mind

Critical thinker

Problem solver (3)

Gritty, accepts challenges (1)

Engaged in transformative moments (1)

Open to new experiences (1)

Independent thinkers (2)

Hands on (2)

Analytical (1)

Logical, able to debate (1)

Connections to community

Community-minded/service (1)

Is a good citizen (3)

Community connected

Has friends (1)

Helpful

Plays well with others (1)

Cares/protects environment

Has supporting home environment that supports education (2)

Important experiences

Has access to field experiences

Has time for play/time/sports

Receives a “good” education (2)

Student skills

Strong reader (3)

Understanding of history

Has access to vocational experiences (2)

Has competence

Has necessary skills (1)

Well rounded