

Farmington River Regional School District

School Committee Meeting

Meeting #439

Farmington River Elementary School Library
Monday, October 2nd, 2023
7:00 PM

MINUTES

Members Present: Melissa Bye, Deb Fogel, Denise Hardie, Phil Magovern, Douglas Miner, Carl Nett

Also Present: Tim Lee, Caroline Stamm, Carol Sauerhauser

Absent: Carol Lombardo

- 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, Phil Magovern, Douglas Miner, Carl Nett
- II. **Public Comment:**
 - A. There were no public comments at this time.
- III. **Acceptance of Minutes:**
 - Meeting #438 from September 11th, 2023
 - A. Phil Magovern made a motion to accept the minutes from Meeting #438 from 9/11/23.
 1. Deb Fogel seconded the motion.
 2. **VOTE:** Melissa Bye, Deb Fogel, Denise Hardie, Carol Lombardo, Phil Magovern, Douglas Miner, and Carl Nett were in favor. Carol Lombardo was not in attendance and therefore did not vote. There were no objections, and the motion passed to accept the minutes from Meeting #439 (9/11/23) with the corrections.
- IV. **Superintendent's Report:**
 - A. **Quarterly Financial Update:** Presented by Carol Sauerhauser
 1. FY23 End of Year Report: Carol was given an extension for this report for end of Oct.
 2. For FY24, there are no concerns at this time.
 3. ESSER II Grant funds have been spent down.
 4. ESSER III Grant funds are available until September 2024.
 5. Boiler Repairs - unexpected expense, but there are savings in other areas to cover this.
 - a) The cost to get up and running is in the range of \$5-10K which is savings compared to initial estimate,
 - b) Tim is looking to have repairs done in the next week.
 - c) Tim also reviewed what repairs will be done to the boilers, as well as complete cleaning and service of boilers.
 - d) We are considering using Industrial Steel Boilers of Chicopee as our main service provider for boilers
 6. FY24 Budget planning begins in November and December with the Finance Subcommittee, and will present it in December.
 - B. **School Improvement Plan:** Presented by Laurie Flower
 1. Overview: The School Improvement Plan (SIP) is an annual document that is an overview of the School Council Goals.
 2. Laurie presented the new School Improvement Plan, which is currently a 2 year plan.
 3. **Goals:** Increasing Enrollment (provide more funding for more activities/events), Establish Foreign Language Program, Implement new Writing Program for K-3 and 4-6

4. Tim explained that the SIP is a document of the Principal and the School Council, and the role of the School Committee is to review it and make sure the process is happening. It is already approved at this time, so there isn't room for suggestions at this time.
5. Teachers use this plan to design their goals that stem from the SIP.
6. The Brochure (mentioned in the SIP) and other parts of the SIP will come forward to the School Committee as the SIP is implemented.

C. 2023 Tier 2 Review: Presented by Mike Saporito

1. Mike Saporito presented an update of the mid-term Tier 2 review/audit, we are in year 3 of the 6-year improvement cycle, and just moved up to Tier 1.
2. These reviews look at each district to assess how much help they need based on a number of markers, such as budget/complaints/graduation rates/etc. to establish tiers. This year, they were looking at the regulations around staff certifications and timelines.
3. The SEPAC was a big part of the improvement - thanks to Dana Pustinger and Denise Hardie and other parents for their support in reviving the SEPAC.
4. SPED and Civil Rights policies were well supported, thanks to Rob Putnam who helped ensure these policies were current and in place.
5. Mike will work to have the report accessible for others to review.

D. Accountability Results from 2022-2023 School Year:

1. Tim reviewed what the accountability report is and what each of the classifications are, and explained the greater context of determining classifications. He also explained areas that we gained points in, as well as areas that we can improve in, and walked the committee through reading and understanding the report results.
2. Our report is based primarily on the 2023 MCAS, but there are other factors that go into it, such as attendance/etc.
3. Our overall classification is: 2. Not Requiring Assistance/Intervention.
4. Tim explained how we can apply this information to goals moving forward:
 - a) Focus on improving ELA scores in MCAS and writing instruction specifically (the SIP includes a target at writing improvement, which will directly impact ELA scores).
 - b) Unifying the writing/ELA instruction across all grades - may include acquisition of curriculum for the whole school, or refining what we already do, as well as how we provide intervention for reading/ELA (through Tiered Support frequently assessing and identifying students)
 - c) Tim noted that the biggest obstacle is often time - when it is ideal to do the targeted work. Additionally, learning to read is a very developmental process and we have to differentiate for the students moving at their own paces. He also cautioned that while it is important to make progress on MCAS, we have to be careful not to make it an end-all-be-all because students and teachers need more support than just that.

V. School Committee Policies:

- A. The following policies were presented to the School Committee as a second read for further discussion:
 1. BG: School Committee Policy Development (Second Read)
 - a) Carl Nett made a motion to accept the Policy BG: School Committee Policy Development as a second reading.
 - b) Phil Magovern seconded the motion.
 - c) The School Committee discussed the policy and made a few modifications.

- d) VOTE: Melissa Bye, Deb Fogel, Denise Hardie, Carol Lombardo, Phil Magovern, Douglas Miner, and Carl Nett were in favor. Carol Lombardo was not in attendance and therefore did not vote. There were no objections, and the motion passed to accept the Policy BG: School Committee Policy Development as a second reading.
- 2. BGB: Policy Adoption (Second Read)
 - a) Carl Nett made a motion to accept the Policy BGB: Policy Adoption as a second reading.
 - b) Phil Magovern seconded the motion.
 - c) The School Committee discussed the policy and made a few modifications. There was a discussion regarding accepting policy at a general majority or a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority. Denise will check to see if there is any legal reason that we can't have a strong consensus at a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote to pass/adopt policies and will discuss further at the next meeting
 - d) VOTE: Melissa Bye, Deb Fogel, Denise Hardie, Carol Lombardo, Phil Magovern, Douglas Miner, and Carl Nett were in favor. Carol Lombardo was not in attendance and therefore did not vote. There were no objections, and the motion passed to accept the Policy BGB: Policy Adoption as a second reading.
- 3. IGA/IGD: Curriculum Development and Adoption (First Read)
 - a) Carl Nett made a motion to accept the Policy IGA/IGD: Curriculum Development and Adoption as a first reading.
 - b) Phil Magovern seconded the motion.
 - c) The School Committee discussed the policy and made a few modifications.
 - d) VOTE: Melissa Bye, Deb Fogel, Denise Hardie, Carol Lombardo, Phil Magovern, Douglas Miner, and Carl Nett were in favor. Carol Lombardo was not in attendance and therefore did not vote. There were no objections, and the motion passed to accept the Policy IGA/IGD: Curriculum Development and Adoption as a first reading.
- 4. Denise will follow up to see if voting is necessary for the acceptance of a first/second/third reading.

VI. Other Policy Discussion and New Subcommittee Discussion

- a. Family Handbook:
 - i. Tim brought it up as there is a lot of district policy in the handbook, and the SC has the responsibility that we are not communicating anything in the handbook that is contrary to district policy.
 - ii. There should be a procedure on which documents need to be updated when a policy is updated, including this process Policy, as well as the date of implementation.

VII. Subcommittee Reports:

A. Clarify and Confirm Membership:

- 1. Policy and Finance membership is set.
- 2. Buildings and Grounds: currently has Carol, Deb, Phil, but was originally Douglas, Deb, and Phil, with Douglas as Chair.
- 3. Discussion on subcommittee membership should have representation from both towns - if we would like to change this, it should be voted upon and approved by the School Committee in a public meeting.
- 4. Superintendent Evaluation Subcommittee: waiting to confirm membership until the next meeting when Carol is present.

B. Finance:

1. There are no updates, and will have more before the next meeting.
- C. Building & Grounds:
 1. They have not met since the last general School Committee meeting on 9/11/23.
- D. Policy:
 1. The Policy Subcommittee met again earlier this evening at 6:00 PM.
 2. They are working to put the policy on curriculum development before the Committee.
 3. They will meet again in November to review Section B (on Board Governance), and at the November School Committee meeting would like to discuss with the committee particular policies of note and how this section functions overall.
 4. The Subcommittee reviewed the proposal from MASC of \$10,500 to rework the Policy Manual and would have 24 months to complete. (There is an additional, separate cost to maintain the manual.

VIII. RAAC Update:

- A. The RAAC has not had another meeting since the last general school committee meeting.
- B. Denise and Jon Sylbert received communication from Christine Lynch and Michelle Griffin from DESE who reviewed FRRSD's RDA and made comments on each section on things that need to change, as well as the list of terms.
 1. The School Committee's responsibility is to go to the towns to request for terms for withdrawal and let them vote if they would like to withdraw (not the RAAC's).
 2. There was a discussion to clarify confusion that neither town wanted to withdraw, but rather would like to amend the RDA Withdrawal Amendment to define the terms for withdrawal - should they be needed.
 3. Denise will follow up with the School Committee's attorney for more guidance.
- C. Carl brought up a concern from Christine & Michelle about the compliance of the current composition of the committee. The current composition is 4 from Otis, 3 from Sandisfield (based on census, rounding to the nearest whole number), however the amendment may need to be updated so that this breakdown is stated and/or checked more frequently than the 10 years as previously stated in the agreement.

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

- A. Special School Committee Meeting: October 17th at 6:00 PM at FRES Library
- B. MASC Training: The School Committee training was completed over the last few weeks. The consensus was that the training was very focused and organized, and the review of Robert's Rules was very helpful.

X. Suggestion Items for Future Agendas:

- A. Review of Section B of the Policy Manual
- B. Gifts Policy: The PTA will give an annual support report at the November meeting
- C. Action Items: Have a compiled list to track actions items (like a projects list).
 1. Carl will present a proposal on how best to track these action items.
- D. Finalize Subcommittee Assignments, including Superintendent Review

XI. Motion to Adjourn:

- A. Carl Nett the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:59 PM
- B. Phil Magovern seconded the motion.
- C. Vote - Roll Call: Melissa Bye, Deb Fogel, Denise Hardie, Phil Magovern, Douglas Miner, Carl Nett

Respectfully submitted,
Caroline Stamm