

**Fremont Community Schools
Board of Trustees
Meeting Summary
February 16, 2015
6:00 PM
Fremont Community Schools
Administration Office
1100 West Toledo Street
Fremont, Indiana**

Board Members Present: President Marty McNeal, Vice President Laura McLatcher, Secretary Jill Cox, Liaison Officer Peggy Bailey, Gary Baker, Kim Bennett, Anna Creager

Administration Present: Superintendent Lori Vaughn, Corporation Business Manager Brandon Penrod, Head Start Director Susan Swager

Visitors in Attendance: Joni Thompson, Ken McClung, Kenny McClung, Vita Geller, Heather Etheridge, Melissa Hardwick, Barbara Wheeler, Nancy Swager, Mary Sacquitne, Mark Fowerbaugh, Mark Sherbondy, Roger Probst

Following the Pledge of Allegiance Board President Marty McNeal welcomed visitors in the audience to Regular Meeting #4.

CALL TO ORDER

1. Adopt agenda

The meeting agenda was adopted with the following changes:

- 1) Additional item under COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD – ISTEP+ Update
- 2) Removal of two coaching EMPLOYMENT RECOMMENDATIONS due to incomplete paperwork
- 3) Addition of two bus driver EMPLOYMENT RECOMMENDATIONS pending satisfactory completed paperwork

The agenda was adopted with the above-noted changes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting #1 - January 12, 2015

Special Meeting #2 – January 12, 2015

Special Meeting #3 – January 20, 2015

Executive Session – January 20, 2015

All minutes approved as presented.

FINANCIAL REPORTS AND CLAIMS APPROVAL

Business Manager Brandon Penrod presented brief overview of the monthly claims and also reviewed the updated cash flow worksheet. All claims approved as presented.

COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD

1. **Donations to Fremont Elementary School**

Elementary Principal, Barbara Wheeler requested recognition to the following groups for donations to Fremont Elementary School:

PADNOS Plastics Solutions Inc. – hats, gloves/mittens

Fremont United Methodist Church Congregation – hats, gloves/mittens

2. MS and HS Band Recognition

Miss Melissa Hardwick, Fremont Middle and High School Band Instructor, shared with the Board and audience that 27 Fremont Middle and High School Band students competed in the State District Solo & Ensemble Contest on Saturday, February 7, 2015. Out of 27 competitors 25 brought home gold medals, 1 brought the silver and 1 the bronze. Our saxophone quartet with members Isabelle Carmona, Travis Ethridge, Madison Jackson, and Hailey Lepley received a gold rating and the right to compete at the State Level Competition on February 28, in Indianapolis. Alto saxophone player, Hailey Lepley, will also be competing at the state competition. 8th grade flutist, Kenny McClung received a perfect score from the judges for his exemplary flute solo. The students got our meeting off to a great start by performing for the Board and members of the audience.

CONGRATULATIONS to Miss Hardwick and her students for their outstanding performances and representation! Good Luck at the state competition!!!

3. Student Enrollment

Superintendent Vaughn reported on the latest enrollment numbers at Fremont Community Schools. Between the time period of September 12, 2014, and February 2, 2015 (both student count days for school funding purposes), Fremont enrolled 24 students but lost 48, making the total decline 24 students. Out of the 48 withdrawals, 25 were in-state transfers, 19 were out-of-state and 4 fall under the “other” category, which might include on-line learning, home school, etc. The majority of withdrawals relocated in Michigan. Superintendent Vaughn continues to be concerned about declining enrollment as student numbers dictate dollars for the General Fund which covers salary and benefits for most of our employees, sharing that our current student count is 959.

4. ISTEP+ Update

Superintendent Vaughn reported that the ISTEP+ practice tests were underway in both the Elementary and Middle School. Concerns continue to surround the increased length of the test. Governor Pence announced last week that he had hired two outside testing experts to make recommendations on how to shorten the test. Currently the grade three Spring ISTEP+ test length is going from about 5 hours to 12 ½ hours. In grade eight the test goes from five hours to just over 11 hours. The Indiana Department of Education has presented a plan to the State Department of Education to reduce the total time. Any change to the current test will require legislative action. The IDOE is collaborating with the Governor and legislative leadership to reduce time while maintaining the validity and reliability of the test. Ms. Vaughn stated that superintendents were advised last Friday that greater details would be released early this week. In the meantime Superintendent Vaughn reiterated that we will continue the use of the practice materials in an instructional format and continue to foster and promote a positive testing climate with and for our students. Testing windows will remain the same for both Part 1 and Part 2 ISTEP+ tests.

Part 1 – February 25 – March 13

Part 2 – April 27 – May 15

UNFINISHED OR OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

1. Employment Recommendations

Retirement/Resignations:

Nancy Herber, EL Teacher

Drew Kuespert, MS Technology Mentor

Hiring:

Jean Baker, MS Technology Mentor

Vickie Brandenburg, JV Girls' Softball Coach

Brent Byler, MS Intramural Tennis Coach

Kayla Johnson, JV Girls' Assistant Softball

Coach – pending complete and satisfactory

paperwork

Alexis Skeens, Varsity Girls' Assistant Tennis

Coach – pending complete and satisfactory

paperwork

Raedene Stewart, Bus Driver (ISD/ISB Bus) –

pending complete and satisfactory paperwork

Jeff Wilson, Substitute Bus Driver – pending

complete and satisfactory paperwork

Angela Wirick, MS Intramural Volleyball Coach

Eric Wirick, MS Intramural Volleyball Coach

2. Additional Elementary School Volunteers

Mrs. Wheeler submitted a list of additional Elementary School Volunteers. All appropriate background checks have been satisfactorily completed.

3. Leave Requests

The Board unanimously approved leave requests for the following two employees:

Kathy Belcher, EL Secretary/Treasurer

Karel Ross, Bus Driver

4. Promise Indiana

Superintendent Vaughn requested permission to sign the Memorandum of Agreement to participate in the Promise Indiana Community Pilot program initiative coming to Steuben County. Promise Indiana is a grassroots, community-driven effort, to address the need for a college-going culture that supports all youth with the means to pursue their dreams beyond high school by engaging families in the process, planting the seeds of hope at an early age, and rallying community around the issue of educational attainment. The Program also helps increase awareness of both the benefits of saving and the tax benefits of a 529 college savings account. The FCS Board unanimously approved supporting this worthwhile program.

5. Corporation Acceptance of Credit Cards

Business Manager Penrod provided information to the Board about the possibility of allowing credit card use for textbook rental and student fees which would provide parents with additional payment options, and thus in turn may increase expected and sometimes uncollected revenue. No action taken. However, Mr. Penrod assured he would continue gathering additional information for the Board.

6. Head Start Report

Director Susan Swager proudly announced that improvement was seen in School Readiness Goals.

Complying with the 128 days requirement, Mrs. Swager announced that Head Start would also be making up classes missed due to weather.

The annual self-assessment has begun. One area of particular focus will be issues needing improvement.