

**SANBORN REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

October 4, 2017

(The 9/20/17 School Board Video can be viewed at www.sau17.org under School Board)

A regular meeting of the Sanborn Regional School Board was held on Wednesday, October 4, 2017. The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. by Sanborn Regional School Board Chairperson, Peter Broderick. The following were recorded as present;

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS:

Peter Broderick, Chair
Dr. Pamela Brown, Vice Chair
James Baker
Larry Heath
Taryn Lytle
Tammy Mahoney
Corey Masson

ADMINISTRATORS:

Thomas Ambrose, Superintendent of Schools
Michele Croteau, Business Administrator

1. **CALL TO ORDER** at 6:06 PM by Mr. Broderick with Pledge of Allegiance
2. **ACTION ON MINUTES** –Mr. Broderick asked for a Motion to approve the Minutes of 9-20-17. Motion made by Mr. Baker, seconded by Ms. Lytle.
No discussion.

Vote: 6 in Favor, 1 abstention (Mr. Masson).

3. **COMMUNICATIONS**

- 3.1 **Manifests-** Expenditures Check register #7 in the amount of \$505,562.85 dated 10-4-17, Expenditures Check register #7A in the amount of \$21, 890.00 and the Payroll Check Register #7 in the amount of \$814,940.40 dated 10-5-17.
Signed/approved by Board and Administration.
- 3.2 **Resignations-** None
- 3.3 **Nominations-** None

- 3.4 10/1 Enrollments-Superintendent Ambrose reported that compared to 2016 enrollment numbers, the District is down by 64 students with a summary as follows: Bakie-357 (9-1) and 354 (10-1), Memorial-268 (9-1) and 268 (10-1), Middle School-339 (9-1) and 335 (10-1) and the High School-650 (9-1) and 644 for (10-1). Fremont students, 211 (9-1) and 197 (10-1)
District Total- 1,614 (9-1) and 1,601 (10-1)

Regarding Fremont, Mr. Ambrose commented that 14 students is a fair number to fluctuate with 1,600 students and regarding the district total of -64 students, they are distributed somewhat evenly across the district per school, per grade. He added that our enrollments are relatively stable but we continue to experience a mild downward slope.

Mr. Masson commented that it will be interesting to see the state trends/projections and where we are in the scope of things which Mr. Ambrose said he would like to address in the budget process.

- 3.5 Retirements-three people have asked for early retirement and this will be discussed further in the non-public session.
- 3.6 Bake Sales/Fundraiser Exemptions-Mr. Ambrose/Ms. Croteau reported that based on surveys of schools by the NHDOE, bake sales and fundraisers selling non-compliant foods (sweets) will be limited to 9 per school per year.
- 3.7 Superintendent's Report- Mr. Ambrose reported that he had 5 "Coffee with the Superintendent" gatherings and although the number of attendees was small, he wanted to thank those people that did attend, saying they had great questions and seemed to appreciate the opportunity. The feedback he received was that the District is doing a good job in helping students be the best that they can be, however they had concerns involving the budget and the effect that any potential cuts would have. Mr. Ambrose mentioned the confidentiality of the process right now, but urged them to attend the November 1st meeting when the budget will be presented and discussed. He will host another coffee event closer to budget time.

Mr. Ambrose also shared that he sent his first newsletter out to the staff and to the community for total reaches of 3,500. The "open rate" was 31% or over 1000 people which he is pleased with as starting consistent communication is critical. Next, he is planning a personal Facebook page that will reach people faster, but he is working on the parameters surrounding that.

He attended a law seminar hosted by NHSBA which helps focus on our policies and compliance.

Finally, the Administrative team met for 6 hours to work on the budget process keeping in mind the Board's directives of 1) What do you need to achieve our goals, 2) What would the budget look like from one year to the next with the same staffing and usual salary increases, and 3) What would the budget look like if we kept it flat from year to year and reduced the amount of the difference (salary increases) which is about \$800K or 2-3% of the budget. He is working on a proposal that everyone will see in detail on November 1st.

Mr. Baker asked about the -2% budget option which Mr. Ambrose replied is the previously mentioned difference in salary increases from year to year.

4. **STUDENT COUNCIL REPORT-** Ms. Lanseigne apologized for missing the last meeting as she suffered an injury in her dance class and her parents drove her to the hospital for treatment. The High School Penny Wars fundraiser put on by the Student Council raised \$600 which went towards a great charity called Shelter Box, USA (which Ms. Lanseigne found on Charity Navigator, a website that screens charity websites by their attributes) and will go towards rebuilding homes for those affected by recent hurricanes and other natural disasters.

Homecoming was a bit rainy but enjoyable and juniors won overall and seniors came in second place.

5. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- 5.1 Policy- Dr. Brown reported that the committee met tonight and will have some 2nd Reads later this evening. They are looking forward to NHSBA's review of the District's policy manual and are also working on several policies that will be presented to the Board soon. The next meeting will be held 11/1 at 4:45 PM.
- 5.2 EISA-Dr. Brown informed the group that the next meeting is October 18th at 5:00 PM.
- 5.3 Facilities- Mr. Masson reported that the subcommittee met this evening and the topics covered were the Greenhouse project, the Homeland Security Repeaters project and the development of a proposal for a partial or full demo of the three buildings at the old high school campus. All three items will potentially be brought to the Board at the next meeting for a full discussion. The next meeting is November 1st at 4:30 PM.
- 5.4 Finance -No report

- 5.5 Public Relation- Ms. Lytle reiterated the subcommittee's purpose to "investigate and execute every opportunity to promote district-wide knowledge and awareness of facts related to school programs at all levels" and "to disseminate information promoting the district as a whole." The subcommittee met on 9/22 to discuss how to best meet those goals. To that end, a brief portion of the future Board meetings will periodically showcase a particular student, teacher or event or activity happening in the schools. They will also be inviting various students to lead the Pledge of Allegiance as a way of honoring their accomplishments and give our meetings a positive focus. Lastly, they will be publishing Press Releases regarding district news. Ms. Lytle added that she will be presenting results of the Superintendent Survey later this evening. The next Public Relations meeting will be held on October 20th at 12:30 PM.

Mr. Baker asked about the agenda changes and whether they are recommendations or already set. Mr. Masson responded that he is working with Superintendent Ambrose on a schedule related to both the student and staff engagement portions which will be presented at the next Board meeting. Mr. Ambrose has discussed this with Leadership and a draft calendar has been created for the year and sent them and to Mr. Masson for the subcommittee's review. He added that the Administrators mentioned having a group of children say the Pledge too. Another idea is having the children create a video with high school students that feature their events and playing it at the school board meeting.

Dr. Brown thanked Ms. Lytle for "breathing new life" into the Public Relations Subcommittee and thanked her for her work.

- 5.6 Personnel- Mr. Baker reported that the subcommittee was part of the interview committee for the Counseling Director position and had extensive, good interviews with candidates. Recommendations will be forwarded to the Superintendent who will interview them and come back to them with further recommendations and hopefully the School Board will get to meet with the two top candidates.

Mr. Broderick commented that after discussion at the meeting regarding this process of interviewing, it was agreed he would bring the following forward. There will be two candidates as stated in upcoming policy, but if the Superintendent feels strongly that there is one candidate that he prefers, do we still go through with bringing two people forward?

Ms. Lytle spoke for the Policy Committee saying that the hiring policy that they are working on will bring one person forward, nominated by the

Superintendent to the School Board, given that there are Board members on the interview committee.

Mr. Masson commented that he supports a process for interviewing the candidates which allows the Superintendent to ultimately be comfortable with the decision.

Mr. Baker commented that the School Board is elected on behalf of the community and he is not comfortable with two school board members on a committee or not on a committee making the decision for the whole Board. He believes that all school board members should be involved in making recommendations on positions of leadership. So, would prefer being able to interview the two candidates as a full board.

Mr. Broderick agrees that there is no right or wrong answer here but feels that if the Superintendent is ultimately responsible for working with this person on the Leadership team, then to overrule his recommendation is difficult as he is the person commandeering the team. He also feels that there may be a time when Mr. Ambrose has two candidates that are equally good and he would ask the Board to weigh in.

Ms. Lytle added that the Board's representation on the Interviewing Committee would change so it would not always be the same person. She agrees that we should allow the Superintendent to make the recommendation as he is the one employee of the Board. By the time they come to the Board they are already vetted. She is invested that the hiring is done appropriately and that we hold the Superintendent accountable and pay attention to what the Leadership team does.

Mr. Baker suggested having other Board members present for interviews.

Mr. Heath commented that the Board is elected to represent all the people, however, he stressed that we hired the Superintendent as the CEO of this organization and his job is to ensure that it runs smoothly and firmly. If the Board does not trust his decisions, then possibly the Board is not trusting each other which is a bigger problem. He added that the Board hired the Superintendent because they trust his decisions so his Recommendation should be all that is needed. If it is determined that the Board has more questions for a candidate, then bringing in the person to ask those is questions is fine, but it should not be a full-blown interview as it has already been done.

Mr. Baker commented that it is not a matter of trust but ensuring that full evaluations are done by the Board and not just rubber-stamped.

Mr. Masson commented that there is a chain of command and the Superintendent should make those nominations.

Ms. Mahoney commented that it is not productive to talk about trust between Board members and she is more interested in the community trusting that the Board has done their due diligence. She would rather have two people to compare than one person and she would like to participate in the interview process, otherwise it feels like a rubber-stamp.

Dr. Brown commented that the Policy Committee has not formed a recommendation yet on the hiring policy as it is still in review. She agrees with Mr. Baker that the Board approves the nominations of the Superintendent but they also veto those. Dr. Brown pointed out that in Economics, there is something called a Preference Ordering (e.g. brownies to pears and pears to apples) saying she would not know what her options are if she were to veto someone who comes before the Board as a nominee. She does not want the Board to be forced to review numerous applications and /or interviews but would rather craft a hiring policy that gives the Board the discretion of participating by at least observing the interviews and reviewing the resumes if they choose, so that there is transparency and complete information. She added that the Leadership team has great influence on the Superintendent in helping him put together his plans and the Leadership Team is also one of the few areas that the Board can have some input when it comes to selection. It is not about mistrust but rather with the many controversies swirling around in public education today. Should she veto a person, she will know the top three candidates available to better understand why there might be someone waiting in the wings that may suit her preferences and reflect the communities' goals and desires.

Mr. Broderick commented that if the Superintendent feels that several candidates are equally qualified, he would expect him to send all of them to the Board for their review. However, the idea of vetoing a nomination made by the Superintendent is something he cannot visualize. His preference would be to have the option to ask questions of the one candidate and if an issue arises, they can say "keep looking".

Superintendent Ambrose commented that he is grateful for their sensitivity to the trust issue and he appreciated their emphasis on it not being about him but about the hiring process, transparency and the community, which he values as democracy in action. He added that he will do what the Board asks him to do, and that bringing forth two candidates is legal. However, in his 18 years in education, the only

person that has been interviewed by a school board is the Superintendent, so bringing forth one candidate is a big shift, bringing two is huge and bringing 3 would take a lot of time to do it thoroughly and well. Then, if his choice is vetoed, he would have an issue with trust because of the thread of administrators involved in the recommendation. He stressed that what he needs from the Board is a clear, concise process that he can follow. He does not want the focus on the process be one that loses sight of the candidate as they are the most important people we hire are our leaders. He appreciated the debate going on about the process but hopes once it is decided, that everyone supports it.

Mr. Masson asked for a Motion to provide Mr. Ambrose with the opportunity to hire a Counselor Director position with a salary not to exceed the salary of the current position, seconded by Ms. Lytle.

Mr. Baker commented that salary discussions are done in private sessions and the “not to exceed” a salary as it does not take into account the multiple years if the person holding the former position. In addition, the Motion cuts out the school board entirely.

Mr. Masson made a Motion to amend the salary portion to say it will be discussed in Non-Public, seconded by Ms. Lytle.

Ms. Mahoney asked for clarification on whether we are bypassing the previously discussed process of bringing 2 members forward.

Mr. Masson responded that yes, the Motion gives Mr. Ambrose the power to make the decision for this position. He feels the position needs to be filled quickly given the important responsibilities of the role. Me. Lytle agrees and Mr. Baker does not, saying that we are rushing the process.

VOTE: Motion to provide Mr. Ambrose with the opportunity to hire a Counselor Director position with a salary to be discussed and decided in Non-Public session. Vote: 4 in Favor, 3 Opposed (Brown, Baker and Mahoney). Motion passes.

5.7 SST- No Report

5.8 Seminary Discussion-Dr. Brown reported that the group met on 9/28 and are still lacking an extra board member due to Ms. Pierce’s departure and hoping a former Kingston Board member will volunteer to join them. They looked over the only appraisal they received and will discuss it in Non-Public session this evening and thanked Business Administrator, Michele

Croteau for giving them the cost of maintaining the Seminary over the last 2 years.

Mr. Broderick asked Mr. Heath to participate on the Seminary committee which he is happy to do.

- 5.9 Budget- Ms. Mahoney reported that the committee met on 9/28 and they worked on the process related to the District's Budget Timeline from which they developed a timeline of their own. They are looking forward to Ms. Croteau's presence at the next meeting to review requested documents and they are also interested in talking to the Department heads for information gathering purposes and for budget deliberations. Ms. Mahoney asked for the official enrollment numbers and for the school board goals when they are finalized. They are feeling optimistic about the more collaborative feeling going on but do feel the time constraint of having only from November 1 to the 15th to absorb all the information. The next meeting is October 12th at 7PM.

Mr. Ambrose added that he and Michele had a productive meeting with Ms. Collyer and Mr. Broderick to adjust that timeline and make the process more efficient.

6. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- 6.1 **Brittany Thompson-Fremont School Board** appreciates the commitment to supporting the social-emotional needs of the students coming to Sanborn which she heard mentioned several times tonight.

7. **OLD BUSINESS**

- 7.1 School Board Goals- Mr. Ambrose reviewed the two board goals as follows:

Goal #1: The Board will work to ensure that that all policies in SAU 17 are in compliance with Federal and State laws.

Action Steps:

- A. Employ NHSBA for a comprehensive policy review.
- B. Seek input from stakeholders for policies that require local decisions.
- C. Work collaboratively with administration and staff to decide which recommended and optional policies will be adopted.

Goal #2: The board will develop a common definition of Student Success.

Action Steps:

- A. Review any pertinent laws (Essa, etc.)
- B. Seek input from stakeholders from all areas of organization.
- C. Develop a clear, concise (no more than one page) definition of student success that will be used to drive the strategic plan revisions.

Mr. Ambrose brought up Mr. Baker's goal (which had been tabled due to Ms. Croteau's absence) as follows: ***Prepare a Proposed budget based on an analysis of costs and benefits including possible reallocation of resources if needed.*** Mr. Baker decided to remove the goal saying that he is satisfied with the assurances he has received over the last 2 meetings and with the commitment to thoroughness promised in the budget process.

In relation to Mr. Baker's other suggestion for a sub-part of Goal #2 Item 'D' related to academic progress as follows: ***Evaluate where the District is regarding meeting goals of the Strategic Plan, by line item pages 21-41 of school year 2016-17,*** Mr. Ambrose commented that we must first look at defining success and then at the Strategic Plan again which should not be limited to certain pages.

Mr. Masson commented that we shouldn't limit ourselves to certain action steps but look at them as progress measures.

The group looked at Mr. Baker's last suggestion for Goal #3 to: ***Form a community committee on short and long-term facilities needs and planning.*** Mr. Baker pointed out that this group would be similar to the Seminary Committee with community members and Board Members participating in the process of working on the District's facilities. Mr. Ambrose thinks this is a valuable goal as there are many decisions to make.

Ms. Lytle made a Motion to adopt the 3 Goals, including Mr. Baker's recommendations, seconded by Mr. Masson. (See Goals below)

Goal #1: The Board will work to ensure that that all policies in SAU 17 are in compliance with Federal and State laws.

Action Steps:

- A. Employ NHSBA for a comprehensive policy review.**
- B. Seek input for stakeholders for policies that require local decisions.**
- C. Work Collaboratively with administration and staff to decide which recommended and optional policies will be adopted.**

Goal #2: The Board will develop a common definition of Student Success

Action Steps:

- A. Review any pertinent laws (ESSA, etc.).
- B. Seek input from stakeholders from all areas of organization.
- C. Develop a clear and concise (no more than one page) definition of student success that will be used to drive the strategic plan revisions.

Goal #3: The Board will form a community committee on short and long-term facilities needs and planning.

Action Steps:

- a. Form a committee made up of community members and school board members.

Vote: All in Favor

7.2 Liability of Old High School Campus- Ms. Croteau reported that a proposal for a comprehensive scope of work is being developed to determine the following:

- a. the costs of demolishing just the garage section of the wooden white structure attached to the back of the Science building
- b. the costs of demolishing the garage and the wooden structure
- c. the cost of demolishing the wood structure plus the brick building

Mr. Masson informed the group that the estimate is less than 4K to oversee the process for the scope of work.

Ms. Lytle asked how this meshes with potentially selling the Seminary. Chair Broderick explained that liability exposure demands immediate action.

8. **CONSENT AGENDA-** none

9. **NEW BUSINESS**

9.1 **Policy 1st Reads**

Dr. Brown explained that Policy **EFAA -School Lunch Program Meal Charges** is tabled for further review as well as **EHB-R- Local Records Retention Schedule**.

9.2 Policy 2nd Reads

9.2.1 **EHB-Data Records Retention-Mandated Policy**

Dr. Brown asked for a Motion to approve Policy EHB, moved by Ms. Mahoney and seconded by Ms. Lytle. Vote: All in Favor

9.2.2 **IHAMA-Teaching About Alcohol, Drugs and Tobacco**

This is a priority policy that we will have to codify in our policy manual.

Dr. Brown asked for a Motion to approve Policy IHAMA, moved by Ms. Mahoney and seconded by Ms. Lytle. Vote: All in Favor

9.2.3 **JLCK- Special Physical Health Needs of Students**

Required policy that is new to Sanborn's Policy Index.

Amended as recommended by Nurse Karen Scanlon to strike "daily" from text as High School schedule is different from the younger grades for Physical Education.

Dr. Brown asked for a Motion to approve Policy JLCK, moved by Ms. Mahoney and seconded by Ms. Lytle. Vote: All in Favor

9.3 Joint Board Meeting with Budget Committee on Thursday 11/30/17

Mr. Ambrose pointed out that they will be sharing meetings with the Budget Committee to address budget questions.

9.4 Fremont Tuition Negotiation- Mr. Ambrose discussed a part of the bill that was contested due to contractual language that doesn't address all issues.

9.5 **Superintendent Ambrose asked for a Motion to negotiate with the Superintendent of Fremont to resolve these payment issues, moved by Mr. Baker and seconded by Ms. Mahoney. Vote: All in Favor**

9.6 Superintendent Survey Results- Ms. Lytle highlighted the results of the week-long anonymous survey that brought 273 results from a cross-section of the community with 50.2% from Newton, 42% from Kingston and 7% from Fremont. The SRSD responses from schools came from 37% elementary staff, 26.1% High School, 20.7% Middle School and 16% district wide staff.

The Top 5 Priorities for the District by Stakeholders was School Culture & Climate, Staff Retention, Adequate Resources (including staffing & materials), Budgeting and Increasing Test Scores.

The Top 5 Qualities Identified in a Superintendent was knowledgeable, Student Centered, Professional, Approachable and Engaged with the Community.

10. **OTHER BUSINESS**

10.1 Next Meeting Agenda

- a. Greenhouse Project
- b. Student Tutoring Proposal (M. Giordano)
- c. TBD

10.2 Announcements

10.2.1 The next Sanborn Regional School Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 18 from 6-9 PM in the Library at Sanborn Regional High School. This will be a Joint Board meeting with Fremont.

10.2.2 The next Budget Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, October 12, 2017 at 7PM in the Library at Sanborn Regional High School.

11. Non- Public Session- **Chair Broderick asked for a Motion to go into a Non-Public session, moved by Ms. Lytle and seconded by Mr. Baker. A Roll Call Vote of the Board was made by Mr. Broderick.**

12. Meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM

Minutes Respectively Submitted by:

Phyllis Kennedy
School Board Secretary

Minutes of the School Board meetings are unofficial until approved at a subsequent meeting of the School Board.