

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP
COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION
MARION COUNTY, INDIANA, HELD MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2023**

PRESENT: Zachary Smith Howard, Doris L. Gowan, Larry J. Walker, Dawn A. Downer, Kelly L. Foulk**, Bruce Hibbard, Jill Britt, Chase Huotari, Sharon Kight, Tyler Knight, Fred McWhorter, Jeff Murphy, Kent Pettet, Kaitlin Porter, Lynlie Schoene and Toni Stephenson

*** Attended meeting remotely*

The Board of Education of the Franklin Township Community School Corporation, Marion County, Indiana, met in Regular Session at 6:00 P.M. at the Administration Offices, located at 6141 South Franklin Road, Indianapolis, Indiana, 46259, on February 27, 2023. All Board Members and news media had been duly notified and the agenda properly posted.

REGULAR MEETING

President Zachary Howard called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. He also led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

President Howard called for a motion to approve the agenda as written. Mrs. Gowan made a motion to approve and Mr. Walker seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

COMMENTS FROM THE COMMUNITY

President Howard opened the floor for comments from the community.

1. Maggie Armstrong stated that she and her husband have lived in Franklin Township for 16 years and have a 4th and 7th grade student. She is concerned that our students are being forced to use their Chromebooks several hours per day instead of being taught by face-to-face interaction with a teacher. She conveyed that she feels the young students are having to self-teach and therefore, are having difficulty with reading and spelling. Ms. Armstrong asked that the Board Members investigate the issue and encourage our teachers to teach the fundamentals to enable our students to succeed in school.

2. Chris Davis shared that he is a Franklin Central graduate and now has a daughter that attends Kitley Intermediate. He is upset that we have severed our contract with the Hamilton Center which addressed the mental health issues of our students. He is concerned that the building counselors don't have the time to spend with the students and feels it is unfair that the parents have to take the students away from their school day to attend counseling sessions. Mr. Davis stated that he feels it was a bad decision to eliminate the program.

3. Christina Cotto stated that she has three children in the district and the youngest has been bullied all year. She explained that she transferred him to a different school within our district and he is still having trouble. She conveyed that she does not agree with the fact that the counselor that is working with her child has never experienced bullying and feels it is unproductive. Ms. Cotto also shared that she is having an issue with the accessibility of our student database software, Skyward, and not being able to report her student's absences or early dismissals.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

President Howard asked for a motion to approve the following list of Consent Agenda Items. Mr. Walker motioned to approve the items and Mrs. Gowan seconded. Ms. Downer referenced the Personnel Summary Report and asked what the impact will be to our budget with the proposed increase in Child Nutrition salaries. Mr. McWhorter replied that the Child Nutrition Department has their own account and it has sufficient funds to cover the increases. Mrs. Betsey Willard, Child Nutrition Director, conveyed that she does not have the CN personnel numbers with her, but she will be glad to forward the information to the Board. Ms. Downer also inquired about the budget impact of the increase in contract days for our Elementary, Intermediate and Junior High

Principals from 213 to 260 days. Mr. Fred McWhorter replied that their contracts remain the same, they are just working more days and with their vacation days included, the increase to the budget is minimal. He noted that as we try and stay competitive with the neighboring school corporations, we feel that the increase is necessary and FTCSC will benefit by having them in their buildings for 12 months. There being no further questions or comments, President Howard called for the vote. The motion to approve the Consent Agenda Items passed 5-0.

- A. Board Meeting Minutes
 - 1. Regular Board Meeting – January 9, 2023
 - 2. Board of Finance Meeting – January 9, 2023
 - 3. Board Work Session – February 9, 2023
- B. Fund and Expenditure Summary Reports (Exhibit No. 23-18)
- C. Accounts Payable Vouchers and Payroll Claims (Exhibit No. 23-19)
- D. Personnel Report (Exhibit No. 23-20)
- E. Donations (Exhibit No. 23-21)
- F. Fundraisers (Exhibit No. 23-22)
- G. Surplus Equipment for Disposal (Exhibit No. 23-23)

Dr. Toni Stevenson congratulated and introduced our newly approved Principal for the New Elementary School, Mrs. Meli Drier and her replacement as the new Director of Early Learning at Wanamaker Early Learning Center, Mrs. Nichole Webb. The Board Members congratulated both of them as well.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

CENTRAL NINE REPORT

Ms. Dawn Downer reported that the Central Nine Governing Board met this month to re-organize and she will remain vice-president of the Board. She added that they voted in favor of keeping the dates and times of the meetings the same as last year and Larry Walker is the C-9 Alternate. Ms. Downer informed the Board that the Auto Collision Program was showcased and these students have the opportunity to work with Skillman Automotive which has employed several students before and after graduating from the program. She shared the discipline data comparisons from SY 2021-22 and 2022-23 as well as the breakdown by School Corporation and by discipline offense. Ms. Downer was happy to announce that construction on the building project has begun. There were no questions or comments from the Board Members.

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP EDUCATION FOUNDATION REPORT

President Howard shared that the Franklin Township Education Foundation Board will be awarding 14 FCHS Seniors with scholarships totaling \$20,000. He stated that the district-wide garden post project is moving along and they hope to have most of the posts planted before the end of the school year. He informed the Board that FTEF has rolled out a new funding initiative called 'Funding in a Flash' in which they will award up to \$500 each month. President Howard noted that the Grant Program will be moved to the fall. There were no comments from the Board Members.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION REPORT

President Howard reported that the Indiana General Assembly has reached its halfway point and they are busy working on the two-year state budget that is to be completed by the April 29th deadline. He shared an overview of HB 1001 (State Budget) which provides several increases to K-12 education categories such as Special Education, ELL, CTE, school safety, Pre Kindergarten and also provides funding to eliminate textbook rental fees currently paid by parents. President Howard asked Mr. McWhorter to comment on the Student Funding Formula Simulation which was presented. Mr. McWhorter stated that the numbers provided are always overstated and the increase of 8.5% includes the cost of textbook fees but in reality, schools will be receiving only a portion of what the textbook fees actually cost. He added that as long as our enrollment continues to grow, the increase in the state budget percentage for schools will prove beneficial for us. President Howard also conveyed that HB 1428 (School Board Elections) which included provisions to move to partisan school board elections, died on its' third reading today. Mr.

Walker asked if we know where Senator Freeman stands on the current budget funding. Mr. McWhorter replied that we have reached out to him but as of today, we have not been able to connect. There were no additional comments or questions.

ACTION ITEMS

APPROVE FCHS BIDS

Mr. Fred McWhorter II referred the Board Members to their copies of the FCHS Classroom Project bid information that was included in their packets. He stated that we had a good number of bidders for the project and he was pleased to announce that we came under budget by \$1 Million. He shared that Skillman Corporation reviewed the bids and he recommended approval of the contractor bids totaling \$11,398,165. Mrs. Gowan made a motion to approve the FCHS bids. Ms. Downer seconded the motion and it carried 5-0. (Exhibit No. 23-24)

APPROVE FT LEARNING CENTER ROOFING BID

Mr. Fred McWhorter II shared that Roof Management has reviewed the bids for the FT Learning Center Roofing Project and we are recommending approval of the Nu-Tec Roofing bid in the amount of \$670,000. He added that we are using the savings from the FCHS Classroom Project to fund this project. Mr. Walker motioned to approve the bid and Mrs. Gowan seconded. There being no questions or comments, President Howard called for the vote which passed 5-0. (Exhibit No. 23-25)

APPROVE YMCA CONTRACT

Dr. Toni Stevenson referred the Board Members to their copies of the YMCA Contract that was included in the meeting documentation and recommended approval. She explained that it is a three-year contract and each elementary and intermediate school will serve their own students with the Junior High student participants being transported to Kitley Intermediate. Mrs. Gowan made a motion to approve the contract and Mr. Walker seconded. President Howard inquired as to how many Junior High students use the program. Dr. Stevenson replied that we have about 12 Junior High students participating in the program. There being no additional questions, President Howard called for the vote which carried 5-0. (Exhibit No. 23-26)

APPROVE PROCARE THERAPY CONTRACT ADDENDUM

Dr. Sharon Kight recommended approval of the ProCare Therapy Contract Addendum that was included in the Board Meeting packet. She stated that the contract is for a Speech Language Pathologist to serve at Kitley Intermediate and South Creek Elementary through the end of the school year. Mrs. Gowan motioned to approve and Ms. Downer seconded. Mr. Walker asked if we are still struggling with getting applicants for that position. Dr. Kight replied 'yes' we are and it is not only a statewide issue, but also a national issue. She added that there are just fewer people going into that profession. There being no additional questions, President Howard called for the vote. The motion to approve the ProCare Therapy Contract Addendum carried 5-0. (Exhibit No. 23-27)

APPROVE IEP THERAPY CONTRACT

Dr. Sharon Kight shared that the IEP Therapy Contract that is included in the meeting documentation is for a Special Ed teacher at Kitley Intermediate through the end of the school year. She recommended approval. Mr. Walker motioned to approve and Mrs. Gowan seconded. President Howard asked if IEP Therapy is a new company. Dr. Kight replied that we have used them for other positions, but this is the first time for a licensed Special Education teacher. There being no further questions, President Howard called for the vote which passed 5-0. (Exhibit No. 23-28)

APPROVE ASL COURSE PROPOSAL FOR 2023-24 SY

Dr. Chase Huotari recommended approval of the ASL (American Sign Language) Course Proposal for the 2023-24 school year that was included in the Board Meeting packet. He explained that the grant has not been approved, but we wanted to get the course approved to be

able to include it on the list of options for our students without delay. Mrs. Gowan made a motion to approve and Mr. Walker seconded. Ms. Downer stated that while she is very supportive of the course, she asked how it would differ from the Indiana On-Line Academy version. Dr. Huotari replied that we currently offer it only during Summer School and now it would be available during the school year. There being no additional questions, President Howard called for the vote. The motion to approve the ASL Course Proposal for the 2023-24 school year passed 5-0. (Exhibit No. 23-29)

APPROVE FCHS & FCJH FIELD TRIPS

Dr. Chase Huotari recommended approval for the Franklin Central Dance Team to travel to Ball State University on July 10-13, 2023 for the National Dance Association Overnight Camp and the Franklin Central Junior High 8th Grade Music Students to travel to Kings Island in Mason, Ohio on May 20, 2023 for their annual trip. Mr. Walker made a motion to approve and Ms. Downer seconded. There being no questions or comments, President Howard called for the vote which carried 5-0. (Exhibit No. 23-30)

APPROVE E-RATE FY2023 CAT 2 INFRASTRUCTURE BID

Mr. Tyler Knight stated that the good news regarding the increase in the percentage of Free and Reduced students we currently serve is that our E-Rate reimbursement increases to 80%. He referred the Board Members to their copies of the E-Rate FY2023 Cat 2 Infrastructure Bid that was included in the meeting packet and recommended approval. Mr. Knight explained that they organized the bids into four contracts, Wireless, Switching, Cabling and Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) with contracts one and two being awarded to Electronic Strategies, Inc., contract three to Brand Tech and contract four to People Driven Technology Inc. He added that the total for the project is \$434,569.85 with an expected reimbursement amount of \$347,655.88. Mrs. Gowan motioned to approve the bid. Ms. Downer seconded the motion and it passed 5-0. (Exhibit No. 23-31)

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS

Dr. Hibbard stated that 6 years ago we visited a preschool in Clark Pleasant Schools that was directed by Mrs. Meli Drier and from that visit we knew if we could hire her to oversee the creation of the Wanamaker Early Learning Center it would be successful. He conveyed that she has done a terrific job and the Early Learning Center is a wonderful place for our youngest Flashes. He added that when we talked of building a new elementary school, we wanted to promote from within and knew that Meli would be a great fit as its Principal. Dr. Hibbard stated that Mrs. Nichole Webb is very qualified to be promoted to Director of the Early Learning Center and he thanked both of them for their leadership and dedication to FTCSC and the community. He extended his congratulations to both Mrs. Drier and Mrs. Webb.

Dr. Hibbard thanked the representatives from the YMCA for coming to the meeting and for positively impacting our students and schools.

BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. Larry Walker commented that two weeks ago the Board and Administrators held a Board Work Session to receive information regarding the need and financial implications of building a Field House on the eastside of Franklin Central High School. He encouraged the Board Members to consider moving forward with the project due to the fact that our enrollment continues to increase and there is currently not enough space for our Physical Education students to have class. President Howard replied that the Board Work Session was good and we continue

to hear from our constituents regarding the project. He noted that Ms. Downer is sending her questions regarding the project to him.

Mrs. Kelly Foulk stated that she is cheering for both Mrs. Drier and Mrs. Webb for their new roles in educating our students.

Mr. Walker, President Howard, Mrs. Gowan and Ms. Downer also congratulated both ladies for their promotions and continuing dedication to our students.

Mrs. Dee Dee Gowan thanked the parents that spoke this evening for their feedback. Ms. Downer also thanked the audience members for sharing and assured them that the Administration will address their concerns.

Ms. Dawn Downer stated that she is looking forward to receiving updates and community input regarding the construction and naming of the New Elementary School as well as the redistricting of students once it is ready.

ADJOURNMENT

President Howard adjourned the meeting at 6:54 p.m.

APPROVED




Zachary Smith Howard, President

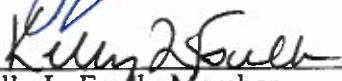
Doris L. Gowan, Vice President



Larry J. Walker, Secretary



Dawn A. Downer, Member



Kelly L. Foulk, Member

