

Parent Liaison Committee

February 27, 2019

Parent Representatives Present:

FMHS Meera Cirian, Barbara Little
NFHS
BTMS Kelly Wilson, Kim Robbins, Marie Demartino
FMMS Debbie Grudice
GHMS
PKMS Michelle Angeldorf, Chris McGann
SFMS Melissa Hampton
DBES Jenna Petri
FMES Sue Wakefield
GHES Laura Green, Torri Jackson
OPES Erinn Connelly
PKES Darla Cheski, Tyler Jaeger
RVES Kendra King
SCES Greg Rickenburgh, Erin Bergen
SFES Dani Froom, Tracy Thomas
TCES Liz Duda, Tammy Marks, Carrie Shearin, Jill Blocher

School Board Representatives:

Kristy Spears

Administration:

Dr. Chuck Epps, Leanne Lordo, Dr. Mike Waiksnis, Brian Spittle, Amy Maziarz, Joe Burke, Rich Todd, Tammie Welch, Tom Buckley, Antwon Sutton

Dr. Chuck Epps

- Greeted everyone and welcomed to the meeting
- Gave an abbreviated presentation on education legislation being put up in the SC House & Senate as what we currently know. Updated committee on Educational Opportunity Act. SC Governor supports this act to improve education opportunities in order to improve work force readiness, or in other words, a better educated work force. The Educational Opportunity Act is an 84 page document that is very fluid at the moment. Currently, the bill is in the House Ways & Means committee. The House Ways & Means committee approved a 4% raise for next year. Full House to vote sometime this week or next. A couple of items the district is keeping a close eye on is the piece that states that if a continued failing school could choose to send students to high performing schools across school district lines. Fort Mill will definitely fight this. Some items you might have read about that were in the original proposal but have been since changed: 1.) Teacher pay steps were to be moved to pay bands. It will remain as pay steps; 2.) No longer a Czar position to be created. It has been renamed to Executive Director & will add an additional layer of governance along with the EOC & State Board. The good news is that there is a national movement to pay teachers more. State of SC pays less than southeast average pay. Fort Mill School District trying to do the best it can for its teachers with the little funds it receives. We have always paid 15% above minimum salary schedule already compared to other districts. Also, there is a movement in many states to divert monies from public education system to charter schools. FMSD is opposed to diversion of monies from public schools. Charter schools create small school environments that are expensive and not proven to meet education standards many times at the expense of public schools.
- Dr. Epps updated committee on the current transition for CRHS. The three high schools are currently having transition meetings for students and families. CRHS will have all the programs available- band, athletics, clubs, boosters, etc. All rising 9th grade students in the district will visit their respective new school. Targeting late April completion date for CRHS. IGP process is currently in the early stages. We will see a finalization of the student schedules in March & April 2019 for the upcoming 2019-2020 school year. Dr. Waiksnis also commented that some programs are only available at one high school but students are allowing to shuttle to that school in order to participate. Community can get involved now with the booster clubs at CRHS. Please contact President Katie Robbins or VP Kelly Wilson if you have any questions.
- We are considering opening up the school fields, grounds, parking lots, etc for public use outside of school hours. This is part of the wellness movement.

Leanne Lordo

- Addressed the committee on several items on Education Opportunity Act during Dr. Epps' comments. Additionally Ms. Lordo added that teachers would receive another step for additional year of service. She encouraged parents to understand that any increase in pay for the teachers, FMSD also will implement for staff. She mentioned that some other items to note in the Education Opportunity Act: it deletes SOME required testing, adds reading coaches at each school, and includes an added focus on workforce development.
- Ms. Lordo updated committee on new teacher and staff positions for the upcoming school year. Not only are we trying to refill vacated positions due to retirement or other personal reasons, FMSD also hiring growth positions to fill Catawba Ridge High School and expand workforce at current schools due to growing population requires more teachers & staff. Thanks to the Board of Trustees, FMSD has approved 44 growth teachers. Marty McGinn met with each of the school's principals, assessed the need, and allocated positions as schools needs them. FMSD is actively recruiting teachers for growth and retirement. New CRHS employees: 31 teachers and 14 staff. Overall we will be hiring almost 90+ new positions for upcoming year.
- Good news: Ms. Lordo stated that we refinanced our bond issue for a saving of \$5 million dollars!
- Turf installation update: We hope to have every school completed over the balance of the school year. Principals will be contacted the week before their school is supposed to have installation begin.

Kristy Spears:

- Chairwoman Spears updated the committee on the Impact Fee process & current litigation. As a recap she explained that last summer, the impact fee was implemented for any new residential construction. The impact fee is in litigation as we speak. Soni Homes, Shea Homes, and Home Builders Association of York County are plaintiffs. We have currently collected \$7.5 million dollars which sits in an escrow account. The board was advised by 2 separate professional entities NOT to spend the monies collected until the litigation is settled. FMSD feels confident in our case, but in case we don't win, the district would have to repay all of the collected funds out of our operational budget. We are committed to seeing the lawsuit through. In the lawsuit, the plaintiffs stated the act of implementing an impact fee is unconstitutional in general in the state of SC. The State of SC was named in the lawsuit; they in turn filed a motion to dismiss case based on the fact that impact fees have been in place and active since 1998. FMSD added a motion to State of SC stating the same. We should hear back from court on dismissal case sometime end of March. We tried initially to have the case heard in the State Supreme Court, but were denied citing this is a local issue. Now official filed in York County court.
- Due to the lawsuit, we will likely have to set debt service millage without impact fees next fall. This decision will be made in late August.

Tammie Welch:

- The nutrition department is currently updating the Wellness Policy. Everyone is invited to join them at the March 8th meeting for input.

Dr. Michael Waiksnis

- Computer Science standards are being changed for high school. It will change what courses will satisfy the computer science requirement. IBA will no longer satisfy after 2020 school year.

Brian Spittle

- It should take 4-5 weeks for technology to be installed in CRHS after district can take occupation.
- On Friday, March 1, BTMS went 1:1 device ratio to students. Students received their new devices that day. The devices will stay at school and not travel home. BTMS is a testing site for this program; FMSD anticipates 1:1 technology for each middle school in 2019-2020 school year. We are preparing teachers for curriculum change to integrate 1:1 technology.
- We block access to YouTube for students. Any YouTube video shown in class has to be approved by the teacher and viewed via the teacher's YouTube account. We also stress good and common sense digital citizenship because not all defense tactics against hacks can be foolproof.

Joe Burke

- Mr. Burke provided an update on the District Events calendar to be placed on FMSD website. The new calendar will be implemented so the community can see district wide calendar of events. It will replace the current calendar on the website. This calendar will tie into the community rentals program so it will show all district events.
- The Pulse Newsletter launched last month. This publication will be distributed via email. It will have current events from the school district. The goal is to publish The Pulse every Friday following the first board meeting of the month. If you are interested in receiving this newsletter, please sign up at the FMSD website.

- In response to the community banter on elementary start times, all that changed was the elementary schools will start 5 minutes earlier and end 5 minutes earlier. This allows the district to get the PM buses to the high school on time for dismissal. This should NOT impact many bus routes in the morning due to the fact the buses are already arriving to the elementary schools well ahead of the start bell.
- The administration will be sending recommendations from the school naming committee to the Board of Trustees at the March 5th board meeting.
- About the 2019-2020 Academic Calendar and Staggered Kindergarten Start Times :
 - At the school board work session held February 19, the board approved the 2019–2020 Academic Calendar. This calendar features a 91/89 day split semester due to the state mandated start date of no earlier than August 19. Under this mandate, the district would be forced to reduce instruction time in the first semester to 85 days in order to complete the semester before winter break .To prevent shortened instruction time the district elected to continue the semester after winter break to create a more balanced instructional calendar.

Based on information the district received from the South Carolina Department of Education we will no longer be able to offer staggered start for kindergarten students. The Department of Education has stated that the staggered start option is not in line with the 180 days of instruction mandated by law and there is no option for a waiver available.

Antwon Sutton

- Our freeze policy will have to stay in place for another year for the most part. We will be able to move back all current TCES students from PKES for next year..
- The district is implementing a new crisis reporting system via an app calling CrisisGo. It's a web-based alert system that will allow community to notify administration of students in harm's way. You can report anonymously.
- The rezoning process for the new elementary and middle schools will begin in the fall of 2019. These changes will impact all elementary students for the 2020-2021 school year in order to populate the 2 new elementary schools.

Tom Buckley

- Mr. Buckley met with the state department recently. We are adding propane fueled buses to our fleet. These will replace some of our older buses and be better for the environment. Hoping we will have 3 new special needs buses as well. Why propane? Its cleaner energy. Hoping to get 16 new propane, air-conditioned buses.