

**Franklin School Committee**  
**March 28, 2023**  
**Municipal Building – Council Chambers**  
**7:00 P.M.**

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Any individual who also wishes to record this meeting must notify the Chair*

☐ Vision Statement ☐

The Franklin Public Schools will foster within its students the knowledge and skills to find and achieve satisfaction in life as productive global citizens.

*Members of the public are now welcome to attend committee meetings in person. Additionally, in an effort to ensure citizen engagement, citizens will be able to continue to view the public meeting using Zoom. We will use the Zoom Webinar feature. You may view the meeting with the link or phone numbers below. Participants wishing to speak during the Citizen's Comments portion of the agenda will be able to raise their hand to be recognized by the Chair. The webinar host will invite the attendee to unmute for comment.*

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85738096264?pwd=RytqWjV4Wlpta3V0SnZCY08xcExKUT09>

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Or Telephone:

Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

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## **MINUTES**

“The listing of matters are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.”

**Ms. Spencer called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. She said that at the end of the meeting they would be adjourning to executive session and returning to open meeting.**

In attendance was: Ms. Camille Bernstein-Yes; Mr. David Callaghan-Yes; Mr. Al Charles-Yes; Mr. David McNeill-Yes; Ms. Denise Spencer-Yes; Ms. Elise Stokes-Yes; Ms. Meghan Whitmore-Yes

Also in attendance were: Mr. Lucas Giguere; Mrs. Paula Marano; Mrs. Miriam Goodman; Dr. Tina Rogers

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

Franklin High School

## Franklin Varsity Cheerleading Team

The Franklin Varsity Cheerleading team had another successful season. This team has won their 10th consecutive Hockomock League Championship, D1 South Regional Championship and went on to win the 2023 Division 1 State Championship with the highest score in history. The 3 seniors will graduate winning 3 State Championships. This team also attended the New England Championship for the first time. Franklin High School beat Pinkerton Academy who has not lost D1 New England's in 10 years. These girls are true athletes and their hard work and dedication has paid off. Congratulations Franklin Varsity Cheerleaders and Coach Doni Gill.

The committee members offered their congratulations to the cheerleaders.

**Moment of Silence** - to honor the Nashville, TN community where there was a school shooting on 3/27/23.

### **FY24 Budget Open Hearing**

**At 7:05pm, Ms. Spencer asked for a motion to open the FY24 Budget Open Hearing.**

**Motion: Ms. Stokes; Second: Mr. McNeill**

**Approve: 7      Oppose: 0**

**Motion Carries 7-0**

Mr. Giguere asked Ms. Spencer if she could make some remarks from the Superintendent's Report before the hearings and she said yes.

Mr. Giguere spoke of the swatting incident at FHS earlier in the day. Mr. Giguere pointed out the responsiveness of the Franklin Police Department, the Franklin Fire Department and staff. He added that Principal Hanna sent out a message to all students and staff and also offered an optional staff meeting after school.

Mr. Giguere also honored and recognized Lisa Trainer who will be retiring from the Franklin Public Schools after 25 years of service.

Mr. Giguere and Mrs. Goodman gave a recap of the FY24 Superintendent's Recommended Budget that was presented to the committee at the 3/21/23 school committee meeting.

Ms. Spencer read the line items and asked the committee to say where they would like an item to be held.

**1230 - Ms Stokes asked for a hold.**

Ms. Stokes asked what the .5 FTE is for here?

Ms. Goodman replied that it is for the Communications Specialist and that it is shared with the town. Both the town and the FPS pay .5 towards this position.

**1420 - Mr. Charles asked for a hold.**

Mr. Charles asked what are contracts in service?

Mrs. Goodman replied that the pricing with SchoolSpring has gone up and there is a new software program they have implemented called ARCS Ed for mandated training.

Mr. Charles asked if the new software will save money down the road?

Mrs. Goodman replied that it makes them more efficient and hopefully fill more positions using SchoolSpring. She added that ARC Ed has a data platform for finance.

**1430 - Ms. Spencer asked for a hold. Ms. Spencer skipped the hold on 1430.**

**1450 - Mr. Callaghan and Mr. McNeill asked for a hold.**

Mr. Callaghan asked for elaboration on the increase?

Mrs. Goodman replied that this line covers all data software.

Mr. Giguere replied that the ransomware was part of the recommendation from the insurance company.

Mr. Callaghan asked if the municipal side is also looking to invest in ransomware software?

Mrs. Goodman replied yes and this is for the district's portion of that.

Mr. Callaghan asked if this will protect the town from being hacked and shut down?

Mr. Giguere replied yes and it also focuses on the recovery side of a hack as well.

Mr. McNeill said he had the same question as Mr. Callaghan.

**2110 - Mr. McNeill and Ms. Stokes asked for a hold.**

Mr. McNeill asked if the change in this line item is because of the added STEM position?

Mrs. Goodman replied that it is for the added cost of the STEM Director.

Mr. McNeill asked for clarification that a position like this will help to ensure the students are receiving cutting edge education to help them succeed in their current and future workload?

Mr. Giguere replied that that is correct and that is the direction they want to move in.

Ms. Stokes asked what the 7.5 FTE are?

Mrs. Goodman replied they are additional positions within Student Services.

**2120 - Mr. Callaghan asked for a hold.**

Mr. Callaghan asked for elaboration for the 10% increase for that line item?

Mrs. Goodman said it is for a part time teacher at Franklin High School. She said it is also a function of wage increases due to contractual obligations to department heads and teachers.

**2130 - Mr. Charles and Ms. Stokes asked for a hold.**

Mr. Charles asked if they could speak to this role.

Mrs. Goodman replied that there is a typo in there and these are for the Digital Learning Integrationists and Technology Director.

Ms. Stokes asked why there is a big jump from FY21 to FY22?

Mrs. Goodman said the DLI's were absorbed into the budget then after being funded with Coronavirus relief money.

**2305 - Ms. Stokes and Mr. Charles asked for a hold.**

Ms. Charles asked them to speak to the increase in the degree advancement?

Mrs. Goodman replied that contractually they provide main changes for teachers who submit by the contractual deadline. They submit a request for a lane change and then calculate the requests for the teachers.

Mr. Charles asked if they anticipate more lane changes in the coming year?

Mrs. Goodman replied yes, a significant amount.

Ms. Stokes asked about the 282.1 FTE and asked how many FTE there are currently?

Mrs. Goodman replied in total the teaching pool is roughly 501 and that includes all FEA Unit A members.

Ms. Stokes asked how many general education classrooms there are?

Mrs. Goodman replied that there are 93 classrooms at the elementary level, she can't give a middle level amount at the moment, and the high school has a rotating schedule so it is a little harder to qualify.

Ms. Stokes asked if this number accounts for projected attrition?

Mrs. Goodman replied that it accounts for those on leave but not for retirement at this time because not all staff who are retiring have made their plans known. She said they generally do not budget for attrition.

**2320 - Ms. Stokes and Mr. McNeill asked for a hold.**

Mr. McNeill asked about therapeutic services that are offered to students and ways they support their educational experience?

Mrs. Goodman replied that they include speech and language pathologists, occupational and physical therapists, vision specialists, also therapy services to students who are placed in out of district.

Ms. Stokes asked how many FTE are there currently for therapeutic services?

Mrs. Goodman replied there are 26.2 with a .7 increase based on investment initiatives.

Ms. Stokes asked why there was a decrease in the contracted services?

Mrs. Goodman replied that it is a function of the special education department and where they felt they could do some of the contract services.

Mrs. Marano said they took a look to see where they could decrease based on need.

**2324 - Ms Stokes asked for a hold.**

Ms. Stokes asked why there are no long term subs?

Mrs. Goodman said they do have long term subs but are on line item 2325. She said they can not project but when they do have long term subs will charge them specifically to 2324.

**2330 - Mr. Callaghan asked for a hold.**

Mr. Callaghan asked if this includes 3 ESPs from the Pre-K initiative at the ECDC level?

Mrs Goodman said this is correct.

Mr. Callaghan asked how many ESP's are currently over at ECDC?

Mrs. Marano replied there are 26.8 FTE's.

Mr. Callaghan asked what would happen without the addition of the 3 ESPs?

Mrs. Marano replied there would be larger class sizes and a difficulty meeting legal minutes.

Mr. Callaghan asked how many ESPs per classroom?

Mrs. Marano replied about 3 ESP's and 1 teacher per classroom.

Mr. Callaghan said this could be an opportunity to make some decreases by not adding on the positions.

**2340 - Mr. Charles asked for a hold.**

Mr. Charles asked if they could speak to the reduction and the role of the 5.7 ESPs in the district?

Mrs. Goodman replied that the 5.7 ESP's are at the elementary level and she said the reduction is a placeholder and nothing is finalized.

**2352 - Ms. Stokes asked for a hold.**

Ms. Stokes asked if this is where the Interventionists are located?

Mrs. Goodman said this line is for Math and Literacy Specialists. She said since Interventionists are funded with grants they are not on this budget but are charged to line item 2310 on a grant.

**2356 - Mr. McNeill asked for a hold.**

Mr. McNeill asked for clarification about professional development for summer curriculum having a decrease in FY24 and is wondering if that means that the curriculum resources are providing students with better instruction and therefore bringing costs down?

Mrs. Goodman replied yes and added that their high quality research based standards are aligned with Tier 1 curriculum resources which allows the district to reduce the amount of teacher created materials. She added it will reduce summer curriculum needs.

**2410 - Mr. Callaghan asked for a hold.**

Mr. Callaghan asked what the increase is going towards?

Mrs. Goodman replied textbooks and any printed materials and the needs are at the principal's discretion.

**2430 - Mr. Callaghan asked for a hold.**

Mr. Callaghan asked what the increase is going towards?

Mrs. Goodman replied this is also the same answer as 2410 and the principal's allocation this year was based on enrollment and categorical as well.

**2451 - Ms. Bernstein asked for a hold.**

Ms. Bernstein asked about the decrease?

Mrs. Goodman replied it is for chromebook insurance and the majority of this line item comes out of the technology department's budget.

**2710 - Mr. McNeill asked for a hold.**

Mr. McNeill asked what is driving this increase?

Mr. Giguere said it is guidance/counseling to clarify.

Mrs. Goodman said part of it is a contractual increase. She also added that they filled the psychologist role with a school adjustment counselor.

**2800 - Ms. Bernstein asked for a hold.**

Ms. Bernstein said she is surprised it was only raised by 1.24% and asked for some elaboration about the category.

Mrs. Goodman said they were reduced by one psychologist due to filling the role with a school adjustment counselor.

**3300; 3510; 3520. Mr. McNeill asked for a hold for each.**

Mr. McNeill asked how sustainable revolving funds are and what they mean for future budgets?

Mrs. Goodman replied that it is not sustainable if they use \$7.1 million in revolving funds that has been budgeted for FY24.

**9000 - Mr. Callaghan asked for a hold.**

Mr. Callaghan asked about the \$700,000 increase?

Mrs. Goodman replied that it is the 14.1% increase from the operational services division for private school placement.

Mr. Callaghan asked for confirmation that the 14.1% is an obligation?

Mrs. Goodman said this is a requirement passed down from the division. She said in years past it has been 1%-3%.

Mr. Giguere also replied that he and Ms. Spencer recently attended a legislative breakfast and spoke with legislators about the increase being unprecedented. He added that he and Mrs. Marano sent a letter to advocate for the district.

**Ms. Spencer asked if any committee members wanted to hold additional line items.**

**1410 - Ms. Stokes asked for a hold.**

Ms. Stokes asked what are the contracted services in the business and finance section?

Mrs. Goodman replied this is for audit services.

**2210 - Ms. Stokes asked for a hold.**

Ms. Stokes asked how many FTE principals/assistant principals?

Mrs. Goodman replied there are 27 currently.

**2305 - Ms. Bernstein asked for a hold.**

Ms. Bernstein questioned the wording of *the increase is due to enrollment driven reductions*.

Mrs. Goodman replied the majority of the increase is related to contractual obligations and the number would be larger if enrollment driven reductions were not built into it.

**2310 - Ms. Stokes asked for a hold.**

Ms. Stokes asked how many FTE they have for Interventionists?

Mrs. Goodman said she believes 14.

Ms. Stokes asked what they are budgeted for?

Mrs. Goodman replied 14 and they are 100% grant funded currently. She said 3 Interventionists are funded through the Title I grant.

Ms. Stokes said the ESY salary looks to be \$0 and asked why.

Mrs. Goodman replied this is being funded through the grant for FY24.

**3510 and 3520 - Mr. Charles asked for a hold for each.**

Mr. Charles asked about the FTEs being 0?

Mrs. Goodman said there are 1.6 FTEs in 3510, which are the Athletic Director and the Administrative role. In 3520 the FTEs are for student activity stipends.

**3520 - Mr. Callaghan asked for a hold.**

Mr. Callaghan noted the increased amount in this line and said he is happy to see that activities have picked up to how they were pre-Covid.

Ms. Spencer asked Ms. Donna Grady, FEA President and Kindergarten Teacher to speak on the budget. Ms. Grady said that children and families make up a school which is part of a larger community. She said they are going to lose educators if the budget is cut.

Ms. Stokes read a position statement from SEPAC regarding the budget. SEPAC said they support increased funding for increased mental health personnel and increased funding towards targeted social emotional initiatives to meet the rising needs of the students.

**Ms. Spencer asked if there are any citizens in the audience who would like to make a statement on the FY24 budget.**

Ms. Ashley Papadopoulos, 4 Georgia Drive

Ms. Papadopoulos said she is a First Grade Teacher in Franklin. She said she has a very large class size this year and will struggle if she loses any of the support staff in her classroom due to budget cuts.

Gretchen Donahue, 7 Padden Road

Ms. Donahue said the FPS teachers are doing so much with so little. She said the town needs to reconsider the town tax structure to fully fund the schools.

Mr. Robert Vacca, 17 Russell Street

Mr. Vacca said this is his 27th year as a teacher and teaches at HMMS. He said over his years of teaching he has seen substantial cuts to the services provided to the children. He noted many of the positions the middle level once had that they no longer do such as varied foreign languages and Librarians. He said the schools need additional staff to help the students.

Ms. Grace Chang, Ms. Morgan Sprig, and Ms. Olivia Ross, FPS students

The three students advocated for more counselors in the district.

Mr. Minnichelli, Longfellow Drive

Mr. Minnichelli said that he and his wife were educated in the district and his grandchildren are also being educated here as well. He said the public school system needs to be adequately funded. He said he supports this budget and increasing funding levels consistent with high-performing school systems.



Ms. Naomi Hickey, 4 Independence Way

Ms. Hickey stated that she moved to Franklin for the schools and that the teachers, students, and parents need to be supported.

Ms. Ruthann O'Sullivan, 175 Oak St.

Ms. O'Sullivan said that she and the majority support the FPS and its staff and it will take money and resources. She said she and many others will be contacting Franklin Town Council Members and Franklin's Town Administrator to propose an override for Franklin.

Ms. Maura Minnichelli, 98 Brook Street

Ms. Minnichelli said students and teachers shouldn't have to be at a school committee meeting asking for funding. She said that funding needs to be increased for the schools.

Ms. Spencer gave a statement regarding the FY24 Budget. She said they have no control over things like unfunded mandates and the cost of tuition for out of district placements. She said not every student costs the same amount of money to educate. She said reports of serious mental health problems increased sharply during the last Franklin Public School Survey.

**Ms. Spencer asked for a motion to close the FY24 open Budget Open Hearing.**

**Motion: Ms. Stokes; Second: Mr. McNeill**

**Approve: 7      Oppose: 0**

**Motion Carries 7-0**

**I. Routine Business**

- A. Review of Agenda** - reviewed and in order
- B. Payment of Bills** - reviewed and in order
- C. Payroll** - reviewed and in order
- D. FHS Student Representative Comments** - there were none
- E. Superintendent's Report** - Mr. Gigeure shared his report at the beginning of the meeting.

**II. Guests/Presentations** - there were none

**III. Discussion/Action Items**

**A. Policy - First Readings**

I recommend moving the following policies to a second reading as discussed:

- JEB - Entrance Age (formerly JEA)
- JCAC - Assignment of Students from other Districts or Homeschooling

Mr. Charles referred to JCAC - Assignment of Students from other Districts or Homeschooling and said there is wording that sounds redundant.

Ms. Spencer asked Mr. Callaghan if he understands the request as the chair of the Policy sub-committee?

Mr. Callaghan replies yes and said the next Policy sub-committee won't be until after the 4/11/23 School Committee meeting. There was a discussion between Mr. Callaghan and Mr. Giguere with how to proceed with this vote and the decision was made to bring it for a second read with the proposed changes and if it could not be agreed upon, discussing the next day at the Policy meeting.

**Motion: Ms. Stokes; Second: Mr. McNeill**

**Approve: 7      Oppose: 0**

**Motion Carries 7-0**

**IV. Discussion Only Items** - there were none

**V. Information Matters**

**A. School Committee Sub-Committee Reports**

1. **Superintendent Evaluation** - no updates
2. **Budget** - met last Friday 3/24/23; next meeting 4/4/23
3. **Policy** - next meeting 4/12/23
4. **Community Relations** - next meeting 3/29/23; Legislative Forum is 4/10/23.
5. **Space, Needs, and Facilities Assessment** - met 3/27/23. Presentation will go to the School Committee on 4/25/23.

**B. School Committee Liaison Reports**

1. **Joint PCC** - next meeting 4/10/23
2. **School Wellness Advisory Council** - 4/4/23
3. **SEPA** - workshop on 3/29/23 and upcoming workshops in April
4. **Mental Health and Well-Being Task Force** - next meeting 4/11/23
5. **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion** - met on 3/22/23; next meeting 4/12/23

**VI. Consent Agenda**

**A. Approval of Minutes**

I recommend approval of the minutes from your March 21, 2023 School Committee Meeting as detailed.

B. Transfers

I recommend approval of the Budget Transfers as detailed.

C. Parmenter Gifts

I recommend acceptance of 3 checks totaling \$1,972.00 from the Parmenter PCC for field trips as detailed.

D. FHS Gift

I recommend acceptance of a check for \$64.64 from Ohiopyle for supplemental supplies at FHS as detailed.

E. FHS Scholarships

I recommend acceptance of a check for \$7,500.00 from Digital Federal Credit Union for FHS scholarships as detailed.

F. RMS Gift

I recommend acceptance of a check for \$2,386.69 from the RMS PCC for in-house enrichment as detailed.

G. Districtwide Donation

I recommend acceptance of a check for \$30,000.00 from the United Way of Central MA for a Solutions Behavior Technician floater position within Lifelong Learning as detailed.

**Motion: Ms. Stokes; Second: Mr. McNeill**

**Approve: 7      Oppose: 0**

**Motion Carries 7-0**

**VII. Citizen's Comments**

Ms. Gretchen Donahue, 7 Padden Road

Ms. Donahue is asking for a Facilities Master Plan and asked for caution in redistricting especially former DT students. She urged the School Committee to not chose another short term solution that does not have data to support its cost savings.

**VIII. New Business**

**To discuss any future agenda items**

Mr. Giguere shared the anticipated items for the April meetings:

- Students achievements
- DIP updates
- Superintendent Evaluation work
- Redistricting analysis outcomes

Mr. Callaghan asked if there are budget hearings on 4/4/23 according to the budget flyer.

Ms. Spencer replied that is a misprint on a flyer for 4/4/23 and that it should say budget subcommittee.

**IX. At 9:07pm, Ms. Spencer asked for a motion to adjourn and enter into Executive Session. She said they would be returning to open meeting.**

a. Collective Bargaining: (Cafeteria, Secretaries) - Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, §21(a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares.

**Motion: Ms. Stokes; Second: Mr. McNeill**

**Roll call vote: Ms. Bernstein-Yes; Mr. Callaghan-Yes; Mr. Charles-Yes; Mr. McNeill-Yes; Ms. Stokes-Yes; Ms. Whitmore-Yes; Ms. Spencer-Yes**

**Motion Carries 7-0**

**At 9:20pm, the School Committee returned from Executive Session and Ms. Spencer called the meeting back to order.**

a. Ratification of the Memorandum of Agreement Between the Cafeteria Unions and the Franklin Public Schools (Majority Vote)

**Motion: Ms. Stokes; Second: Mr. McNeill**

**Roll call vote: Ms. Bernstein-Yes; Mr. Callaghan-Yes; Mr. Charles-Yes; Mr. McNeill-Yes; Ms. Stokes-Yes; Ms. Whitmore-Yes; Ms. Spencer-Yes**

**Motion Carries 7-0**

b. Ratification of the Memorandum of Agreement Between the Secretaries Union and the Franklin Public Schools (Majority Vote)

**Motion: Ms. Stokes; Second: Mr. McNeill**

**Roll call vote: Ms. Bernstein-Yes; Mr. Callaghan-Yes; Mr. Charles-Yes; Mr. McNeill-Yes; Ms. Stokes-Yes; Ms. Whitmore-Yes; Ms. Spencer-Yes**

**Motion Carries 7-0**

**X. Ms. Spencer asked for a motion to adjourn.**

**Motion: Ms. Stokes; Second: Mr. McNeill**

**Approve: 7      Oppose: 0**

**Motion Carries 7-0**

**XI. Adjournment at 9:21pm.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Christina Tocci, Secretary

SCAgenda 3-28-23.docx  
Payroll Warrant #2319 Summary.pdf  
Payroll Warrant #2319.pdf  
FPS Summary & Sign Off 032823.pdf  
SC Warrant 030923.pdf  
SC Warrant 031623.pdf  
Discussion Action A - Policy.pdf  
Consent Action A - Minutes.pdf  
Consent Action B - Transfers.pdf  
Consent Action C - Parmenter Gifts.pdf  
Consent Action D - FHS Gift.pdf  
Consent Action E - FHS Scholarship.pdf  
Consent Action F - RMS Gift.pdf  
Consent Action G - Districtwide Gift.pdf  
Executive Session Minutes-3-21-23-DRAFT.pdf  
Pledge Student.pdf