

**Franklin School Committee**  
**March 5, 2024**  
**Municipal Building – Council Chambers**  
**7:00 P.M.**

*Meetings are recorded by Franklin TV and shown on Comcast channel 11 and Verizon channel 29  
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/84584191670?pwd=K3lWWgyPlwJSMfzATwFi\\_WB6RwtSjg.FcKvygsqno43bDIh](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84584191670?pwd=K3lWWgyPlwJSMfzATwFi_WB6RwtSjg.FcKvygsqno43bDIh)

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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.”

**At 7:00pm, Mr. Callaghan called the meeting to order.**

In attendance was: Mr. David Callaghan-Yes; Mr. Al Charles-Yes; Ms. Erin Gallagher-Yes; Dr. Paul Griffith-Yes; Mr. David McNeill-Yes; Ms. Ruthann O’Sullivan-Yes; Mr. KP Sompally-Yes

Also in attendance was: Mr. Lucas Giguere; Dr. Robert Dutch; Dr. Tina Rogers; Mrs. Paula Marano

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

Anna Powers, an 8th grader at Remington Middle School

Anna is a student who consistently lives our REMDAWG core values and is a model citizen. During her time at Remington Middle School, Anna has been a driven and dedicated student and active member of our community. She has participated in RMS Cares (the community service club), Little Buddies (a club that fosters relationships between middle schoolers and kindergarteners and first graders), and Intramurals. Anna is an avid reader, who plays tennis and volunteers at the Franklin Food Pantry.

To close, her teachers describe her as: A student who consistently shows care and empathy for others. She is willing to work with and socialize with all students while valuing what they bring to her life. Remington is proud to have Anna Powers represent us as our pledge student.

## **Moment of Silence**

### **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** - Mr. Ahan Shetty

Mr. Shetty spoke about the DECA SCDC Conference happening this weekend in Boston.

He offered his congratulations to the FHS Theater Company for advancing to the Semi-Final round in the METG Festival for their production of Flowers for Algernon.

He said the FHS Mock Trial team has advanced to the Elite 8 in the state tournament.

He said that registration for spring sports are open until 3/13/24 with tryouts and practices beginning on 3/18/24.

He said the Chorus and Orchestra MICCA Festival is 3/12/24 and the band MICCA Festival is on 3/13/24.

He said the FHS Jazz Band is participating in the MAJE Festival on 3/6/24.

He said both the boy's basketball and boy's hockey teams have advanced in the playoffs.

He said the Class of 2024 is having their Senior Banquet on 4/5/24.

He also added that the Class of 2025 All Night Party tickets are on sale until 3/15/24. He noted the Class of 2025 Prom is 5/3/24.

**Mr. Callaghan asked the committee for any questions/comments from the committee?**

Mr. Charles said congratulations to those students who are advancing.  
Ms. O'Sullivan said that there is a joint budget subcommittee at the same time as the boy's basketball playoff game.

#### **E. Superintendent's Report**

Mr. Giguere said congratulations to all the students from FHS. He noted the accomplishments of the students at FHS and how these students have gone through the Franklin school system.  
He noted half days for elementary and middle schools on 3/5/24 and 3/6/24 for parent teacher conferences.  
He said the Comprehensive Master Facilities Planning committee has engaged stakeholder groups in two workshops. The first workshop on 2/12/24 focused on Franklin's Portrait of a Graduate and the second workshop was on 3/4/24 and was on visioning. He said the next Monday is on 3/11/24. He said that Kate Jessup from Kaestle Boos recently walked through all the buildings and she will be sharing her preliminary information during the next subcommittee meeting.

#### **Mr. Callaghan asked the committee for any questions/comments from the committee?**

Ms. Gallagher said she is looking forward to hearing the feedback about the building tours.  
Mr. Charles applauded the middle schools for their student-led conferences.  
Mr. McNeill said he appreciated the comprehensive facilities process update.  
Ms. O'Sullivan said she was a member of the Portrait of a Graduate workshop and spoke on the importance of that in terms of the budget.  
Mr. Callaghan echoed the sentiment about student-led conferences.

### **II. Guests/Presentations**

#### **A. Superintendent's Recommended FY25 Budget**

***\*See presentation slides for more detailed information***

Mr. Giguere said that the FY25 Budget is developed in support of Franklin's Portrait of a Graduate. He also noted the FPS Strategic Objectives. He shared the budget timeline thus far and the district priorities. He spoke about the ways the FY25 budget impacts the students of Franklin.

Mr. Dutch spoke about budget actions thus far and the factors that are considered. He noted the obligations within the budget.

Dr. Rogers spoke about general education expenses and what they encompass.

Mrs. Marano spoke about special education expenses. She noted the cost savings to Franklin by being able to offer specialized programs like REACH, GOALS, STRIVE, and NECC.

Mr. Giguere said this proposed budget is based on a level service plus budget.

Dr. Dutch spoke about the level service plus budget. He noted the FY24 budget was \$71,989,431, and the proposed FY25 budget is 81,319,261.

Mr. Giguere shared the level service budget, including partially restoring staffing and programming to stabilize and get stronger footing as a district. He also spoke about investing in the future by expanding, innovating, and restoring. He shared the budget realities with examples of different percent increases and any possible reductions. From that, he shared the impact of any funding under below level service such as reduction in staff, increased fees, and cuts to programs.

Dr. Dutch shared information about Chapter 70 aid for FY25. He said it is important for the district to address the financial challenges they are having right now. He also noted that 75% of districts in the state spend more on education than Franklin. He said Franklin is in the top 15% in combined wealth but is in the bottom third in net school spending.

Mr. Giguere spoke about next steps occurring between March and May.

**Mr. Callaghan asked the committee for any questions/comments from the committee?**

Mr. Callaghan thanked them for their work and noted the importance of getting this information out to the community.

Mr. Sompally thanked them for their thorough presentation.

Ms. O'Sullivan noted the importance of the community attending the joint budget subcommittee meeting.

She noted that they are spending \$13 million more than what is required and asked Dr. Dutch if that includes the hold harmless money?

Dr. Dutch replied yes.

Ms. O'Sullivan noted that if that money was lost they would be one of the lowest in the state.

Mr. McNeill referred to slide 13 and noted the FY24 budget with budget increase obligations. He noted the out-of-district Special Education Costs and Services at \$2.2M is more than the district's average budget increase. He noted that budget increase obligations are out of the district's control.

Mr. McNeill asked about the thought process behind stabilizing and why certain positions were chosen to be requested in the budget.

Mr. Giguere replied that they consider class sizes, enrollment and projections, and looking at support for all students.

Dr. Dutch replied that they always look for return on investment.

Mr. McNeill thanked them for their hard work.

Mr. Charles said this is the first budget he has seen where they are asking for more and not reducing services.

Mr. Giguere replied that they are still feeling the effects of middle school clubs and activities being cut last year. He spoke about being in a position of volatility and how difficult it is to hire after July 1st.

Mr. Charles and Mr. Giguere spoke about investing in the schools so in turn others will want to invest in the district.

Mr. Charles asked how he would respond to anyone that says that there is not any budget difficulties.

Mr. Giguere replied that those who have felt the impact are middle school parents with clubs being cut or those impacted by large classroom sizes. He noted that the district would have probably felt the impact sooner if not for COVID relief funds.

Mr. Griffith noted that there is a lot riding on this budget. He noted the funding the schools and the town needs.

Mr. Griffith asked if ESSER funds, in the stabilized scenario, were still present or going away?

Mr. Giguere replied that they were absorbed in the stabilized.

Mr. Griffith asked how many students they are able to support if they bring in 2 FTE STRIVE teachers?

Mrs. Marano replied it'll be another four students.

Mr. Griffith said it is important to note the positive outcomes and return on investment of bringing in the two FTE's.

Ms. Gallagher said they need a healthy budget for long term planning and it'll save the district money in the long run.

Mr. Callaghan asked Dr. Dutch to elaborate on what hold harmless is.

Dr. Dutch replied that Chapter 70 aid is based on enrollment but also municipal revenue growth factor. He said the district gets a certain amount based on their enrollment, adding that when enrollment has gone down the district's Chapter 70 aid should have also gone down. He said the state holds the district harmless and does not reduce the Chapter 70 aid.

Mr. Callaghan asked how Franklin ranks in hold harmless compared to the rest of the state.

Dr. Dutch replied that Franklin is only second to Boston.

Mr. Callaghan asked if the hold harmless is secured by a law in place?

Dr. Dutch replied that is correct but it is something the legislature can revisit at any point.

Mr. Callaghan referred to page 12, In-District Programming, and noted the cost savings of keeping the students in-district.

Mr. Callaghan referred to the FY24 budget and said the FY25 has a realistic tone.

**Citizen Budget Comments:**

Denise Spencer, 59 Milliken Avenue

Ms. Spencer thanked the administration and committee for their hard work. She noted the Superintendent's recommended budget is less than the district needs but it is limited. She said it is not only Franklin who faces a budget crisis. She said she appreciates Mr. Griffith's comment about spending money to save money.

Mr. Giguere said they will be posting the budget book for the community to review.

**III. Discussion/Action Items**

**A. Policy - First Reading**

**I recommend moving policy CA - Administrative Goals to a second reading as detailed.**

Mr. Callaghan explained to the committee how the policy process works.

Mr. Charles asked for elaboration on what chief administrative officer is?

Mr. Giguere replied that depending on what the goal is, it is channels established by the Superintendent, like a chain of command.

**Motion: Mr. McNeill; Second: Mr. Charles**

**Approve: 7 Oppose: 0**

**Motion Carries 7-0**

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

**V. Information Matters**

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

- 1. Superintendent Evaluation** - N/A
- 2. Budget** - Joint Budget Subcommittee upcoming on 3/6/24; Next Budget meeting 3/19/24.
- 3. Policy** - N/A
- 4. Community Relations** - Met on 3/4/24, reviewing newsletter draft that will be getting sent out.

**B. School Committee Liaison Reports**

- 1. Joint PCC** - next meeting 4/8/24
- 2. School Wellness Advisory Council** - met 3/4/24
- 3. SEPAC** - N/A
- 4. Mental Health and Well-Being Task Force** - next meeting 3/12/24
- 5. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion** - next meeting 3/7/24
- 6. Comprehensive School Facilities Planning Committee** - next meeting 3/13/24

**VI. Consent Agenda**

**A. Approval of Minutes**

I recommend approval of the minutes from your February 13, 2024 meeting as detailed.

**B. JF Kennedy Gifts**

I recommend acceptance of two check totaling \$1471.50 from the JFK PCC as follows:

\$125.00	for Field Trips
\$1346.50	for Supplemental Supplies

**C. Parmenter Gifts**

I recommend acceptance of two checks totaling \$1970.00 from the Parmenter PCC for field trips as detailed.

**D. FHS Scholarship**

I recommend acceptance of a check for \$5,000.00 from Thomas A. Wagner for a FHS Scholarship as detailed.

**E. FHS Gift**

I recommend acceptance of a check for \$93.01 from Ohiopyle Prints, Inc. for supplemental supplies as detailed.

**Motion: Mr. McNeill; Second: Mr. Charles**

**Approve: 7 Oppose: 0**

**Motion Carries 7-0**

**VII. Good of the Order**

Mr. Charles said the community needs to be aware of the budget and process, regardless of perspective.

Ms. O'Sullivan spoke about the budget and noted the comprehensive analysis that is also taking place.

Mr. Sompally said that Franklin home prices are a result of the great schools.

Mr. Callaghan spoke about the EF field trips being accessible to more student's price points. He mentioned that they could have a conversation with EF about other possible destinations.

**VIII. Citizen's Comments - there was none**

**IX. New Business**

**To discuss any future agenda items**

Mr. Giguere shared the anticipated items for the 3/19/24 meeting:

- Budget Hearing

**X. Mr. Callaghan asked for an adjournment to end the meeting.**

**Motion: Mr. McNeill; Second: Mr. Charles**

**Approve: 7 Oppose: 0**

**Motion Carries 7-0**

**XI. Adjournment at 9:31pm**

Respectfully submitted,  
Christina Tocci, Secretary



SCAgenda 3-5-24  
Payroll Warrant #2417 Final.pdf  
Payroll Warrant #2417 Summary (FINAL).pdf  
Payroll Warrant #2418 FINAL.pdf  
Payroll Warrant #2418 Summary FINAL.pdf  
FPS Summary & Sign Off 030524.pdf  
SC Warrant 020124.pdf  
SC Warrant 020824.pdf  
SC Warrant 021524.pdf  
SC Warrant 022224.pdf  
superintendnets\_recommended\_fy25\_budget\_presentation.pdf  
Discussion Action A - Policy.pdf  
Consent Action A - Minutes.pdf  
Consent Action B - JFK Gifts.pdf  
Consent Action C - Parmenter Gifts.pdf  
Consent Action D - FHS Scholarship.pdf  
Consent Action E - FHS Gift.pdf  
Budget to Actual.pdf  
Pledge Student.pdf