

August 9, 2021
Franklin, Tennessee

The Franklin Special School District Board of Education met at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, August 9, 2021, at Freedom Middle School, 750 New Highway 96 West, Franklin. A link to the recording may be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nIPIHXmAUnw> .

The following members were present: Chair Robert Blair, Alicia Barker, Allena Bell, Robin Newman, Tim Stillings and Kevin Townsel.

Others present were: Dr. David Snowden, Dr. David Esslinger, Dr. Mary Decker, Susannah Gentry, Amy Fisher, Celby Glass, Lisa Chatman, Mark Anderson, Carol Riordan, Dr. Pax Wiemers, Dr. Cheryl Robey, Chip Sternenberg, Bo Alexander, Amanda Parks, Summer Carlton, principals and other district leadership team members, community and media.

I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Freedom Middle Principal Dr. Charles Farmer welcomed those in attendance and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Chair Robert Blair called for a moment of silence.

III. PUBLIC INPUT

1. Bryn Sierra, 628 Bonnie Place – Mother of LES student, spoke for temporary mask mandate.
2. Angel Stansberry, 123 Daniels Drive, Apt. A – Mother of LES students, spoke for mask mandate.
3. David Madeira, 624 Watson Branch Drive – Father of MES students, spoke for mask mandate until those younger than 12 can be vaccinated, or cases decline in area.
4. Brandi McCutchan, 503 Braylon Circle – Mother of FES and FIS students, spoke against mask mandate and would like parent choice.
5. Lance Shelby, 1220 Carnton Lane – Father of FES and FIS students, family of two working parents, thanked the Board for having children back in schools last year, spoke for having the responsibility of keeping yourself/family safe.
6. Jenni Rodgers, 500 Stefan Court – Mother of PGMS student, spoke for parents to shoulder the burden of keeping their child from sickness.
7. Aria Witherow, 117 Gist Street – Mother of FES student, spoke for consideration of social and emotional health of children.
8. Katy Dodson, 1216 Carnton Lane – Mother of FES students, spoke in favor of parents being those in charge of keeping their children safe, masks or no masks, and for consideration of the emotional and mental stability of the child.
9. Betsy Bagsby, LES teacher stood for Kayla Gibson, 4011 Monte Bella Place (on speaker phone) – Mother of LES student, spoke for mask requirement to keep students safe until

they are able to be vaccinated.

10. Evelyn Rodgers, address not specified – Grandmother of PGMS student, mother of Jenni Rodgers, previous speaker, spoke regarding children used as political pawns, need to be around virus for herd immunity and believes that masks are unscientific and do not work.
11. An unidentified member of the audience thanked the Board for allowing their children to go back to school.

IV. REPORTS / PRESENTATIONS / DISCUSSIONS

1. **City of Franklin Parks & Rec/FSSD Ball Field Construction Presentation** – This presentation was moved to the September meeting.
2. **Teaching and Learning Spotlight** – The presentation was moved to the September meeting. The Summary of T&L Activity for August (on file) was provided for the Board in their documents.
3. **Construction Report** – presented by Dr. Esslinger (on file). There was a time designated for questions and discussion from the report provided to the Board. Mr. Stillings reported that on a visit to LES the renovation being done was exciting to see.

4. **Director of Schools Report following COVID-19 Public Input** – Dr. Snowden presented the following report to the Board:

“It is important to acknowledge the anxiety many parents feel as we return to school. We know the CDC has recommended a universal mask use of everyone in a school building. The CDC also in their guidance states that localities should monitor community transmission, vaccination coverage and occurrence of outbreaks to guide decisions on the level of layered prevention strategies. Last school year, we found school data to be extremely important when analyzing COVID to determine if there was school transmission or if the virus was being contracted outside the school. For the most part, there was minimal transmission of the virus in schools. Could the low transmission have been due to masks? It certainly could, but there are many other mitigation protocols being used at the same time. At this point in time, we only have a day and a half of data to determine how COVID looks in our schools. If we begin to see a spike in cases and transmission, we can ask the Board to vote on requiring masks. When it comes to a mask requirement, we know from last year there will be parents who are opposed and seek exemptions. We were informed last year by legal counsel and again this year that the school district has to accept, on a case by case basis, all health and/or religious exemptions from any mask requirement. A mask requirement will not mean 100% coverage.

Mitigation strategies we are currently employing: asking parents to not send students to school if they are sick; social distancing strategies throughout building; respiratory etiquette; proper hand washing; hand sanitizer available all over the buildings and in classrooms; optional masking by families and staff; custodial, transportation and school staff diligent in routine cleaning and disinfecting/sanitizing practices; monitor students for signs of illness and refer to school nurse; some protocols for increased ventilation in schools and on buses; buses are assigned seating; school nurses are monitoring for illness; advising parents and staff to self-monitor and not to report to campus if they have been in

close contact with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19 in the past 10 days or experiencing symptoms of infectious illness. We will continue to review these strategies to determine if and how they can be more effective.

An extremely important mitigation protocol is the vaccination process, of which the school district has no control. We continue to ask the community to consider receiving the vaccine.

We will: continue working with the Health Department to assist in contact tracing to identify close contacts in our schools; have weekly meetings with county and city officials to discuss trends in the community; give weekly reporting to families on spread of virus for staff and students at the end of each week; hold weekly COVID Team meetings to review county, city, school and district data. As we continue to monitor all the data available, the district can change direction related to any or all of the protocols.”

VI. APPROVAL OF BOARD AGENDA

Dr. Snowden presented the agenda with Item 12. under Business Before the Board - Policy Revision: Physical Examinations and Immunizations (6.402) being pulled for presentation at the September meeting, as there was a question before the meeting regarding wording.

Allena Bell made a **motion** to approve the board agenda with Business Before the Board, Item 12. pulled. Robin Newman **seconded** the motion, which **carried 6-0**.

VII. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Robin Newman made a **motion** to approve the consent agenda as presented. Alicia Barker **seconded** the motion, which **carried 6-0**.

Approved under Consent Agenda (on file) were:

1. **Minutes of Board Meeting dated July 19, 2021**
2. **Annual Board Agenda FY 2021-22**
3. **Extended Contract Proposals**
4. **Bids: Food and Culinary Services**

VIII. BUSINESS BEFORE THE BOARD

1. **New Policy: Instructional Standards (4.1011) – 2nd Reading** - Per TSBA Policy Department recommendations: “Several recent changes to state law impact the materials and content that can be included in classroom instruction. (TSBA has) created this new model policy to align with these updated state laws. Adopting this policy is not required by state law, however, doing so would allow the Board to show compliance with the new standards.” There were no changes requested by the Board upon 1st Reading. The administration recommended approval.

Tim Stillings made a **motion** to approve the new policy **Instructional Standards (4.1011) – 2nd Reading** as presented. Allena Bell **seconded** the motion, which **carried 6-0**.

- 2. New Policy: Summer Instructional Programs (4.2041) – 2nd Reading** - During the past legislative session, laws were also passed that impact summer programming. TSBA has provided a model policy to be adopted to include the additional summer programs that will be offered to students in addition to the traditional summer school. Certain factors, as outlined in this new state law, determine student eligibility for these programs. Boards have the discretion when determining whether to require the attendance of priority students in summer instructional programming. If the Board chooses to require the attendance of priority students, this information must be included in policy. There were no changes requested by the Board upon 1st Reading. The administration recommended approval.

Robin Newman made a **motion** to approve the new policy **Summer Instructional Programs (4.2041) – 2nd Reading** as presented. Alicia Barker **seconded** the motion, which **carried 6-0**.

- 3. New Policy: Enrollment in Advanced Courses (4.205) – 2nd Reading** - Boards are now required to adopt a policy detailing how students can enroll in advanced courses. This policy must list objective enrollment criteria including TCAP scores and grades. TSBA has updated their policy 4.205, up for our adoption, to align with this change to state law. TSBA recommends that Boards include the criteria of those courses offered by the district. There were no changes requested by the Board upon 1st Reading. The administration recommended approval.

Allena Bell made a **motion** to approve the new policy **Enrollment in Advanced Courses (4.205) – 2nd Reading** as presented. Alicia Barker **seconded** the motion, which **carried 6-0**.

- 4. Policy Revision: Application and Employment (5.106) – 2nd Reading** - Recently passed, Public Chapter 211 allows the Director of Schools to hire individuals with a teaching permit if a teacher with a valid license is not available. TSBA has provided language in their updated model policy to clarify that this is an option. There were no changes requested by the Board upon 1st Reading. The administration recommended approval.

Robin Newman made a **motion** to approve the policy revisions for **Application and Employment (5.106) – 2nd Reading** as presented. Alicia Barker **seconded** the motion, which **carried 6-0**.

- 5. Policy Revision: Qualifications and Duties of the Director of Schools (5.802) – 2nd Reading** - Also part of Public Chapter 211, which allows the Director to hire individuals with a teaching permit if a teacher with a valid license is not available, Policy 5.802 is impacted, as the Director of Schools would be required to report potential misconduct by these individuals to the State Board of Education in the same manner that is done for licensed teachers. There were no changes requested by the Board upon 1st Reading. The administration recommended approval.

Kevin Townsel made a **motion** to approve the policy revisions for **Qualifications and Duties of the Director of Schools (5.802) – 2nd Reading** as presented. Allena Bell **seconded** the motion, which **carried 6-0**.

6. **Policy Revision: Testing Programs (4.700) – 1st Reading** - Per TSBA Director of Policy & Staff Attorney, districts must now provide students with information on available career and technical education opportunities after aptitude assessment are administered. TSBA has provided language for our use reflecting this requirement. The administration recommended approval.

Allena Bell made a **motion** to approve the policy revisions for **Testing Programs (4.700) – 1st Reading** as presented **and to waive the 2nd Reading**. Kevin Townsel **seconded** the motion, which **carried 6-0**.

7. **Policy Revision: Teacher Tenure (5.117) – 1st Reading** - TSBA Director of Policy & Staff Attorney has given updates to this policy based on recently passed legislation. “Due to the cancellation of TNReady tests during the pandemic, there are no teacher evaluation scores from the 2019-2020 school year. Public Chapter 2 from the Special Legislative Session clarifies that the two most recent evaluation scores can be used when determining tenure. Additionally, Public Chapter 378 changes the requirements for providing notice of nonrenewal to teachers. This notice must now be sent to teachers by certified mail, overnight carrier, or email so that it will be received within five business days following the last instructional day. The model policy has been updated to align with both of these legal changes.” The title changes from “Procedures for Granting Tenure”; references are also updated. The administration recommended approval.

Robin Newman made a **motion** to approve the policy revisions for **Teacher Tenure (5.117) – 1st Reading** as presented. Kevin Townsel **seconded** the motion, which **carried 6-0**.

8. **Policy Revision: Separation Practices for Tenured Teachers (5.200) – 1st Reading** - Previously, state law gave the Commissioner of Education the authority to suspend a teacher's license if he/she broke a contract with a local board of education. Under this new change to state law, this authority now rests with the State Board of Education. We have updated this policy to reflect that change. TSBA has provided their model policy for guidance in updating the policy and references. The administration recommended approval.

Robin Newman made a **motion** to approve the policy revisions for **Separation Practices for Tenured Teachers (5.200) – 1st Reading** as presented **and to waive the 2nd Reading**. Allena Bell **seconded** the motion, which **carried 6-0**.

9. **Policy Revision: Separation Practices for Non-Tenured Teachers (5.201) – 1st Reading** - As in the update for Policy 5.200, state law previously gave the Commissioner of Education the authority to suspend a teacher's license if he/she broke a contract with a local board of education, whereas this authority now rests with the State Board of Education. In addition, there is a change in the way that notice of non-renewal is provided to non-tenured

teachers. We have updated this policy to reflect that change. TSBA has provided their model policy for guidance in updating the policy and references. The administration recommended approval.

Allena Bell made a **motion** to approve the policy revisions for **Separation Practices for Non-Tenured Teachers (5.201) – 1st Reading** as presented **and to waive the 2nd Reading**. Robin Newman **seconded** the motion, which **carried 6-0**.

- 10. Policy Revision: Home Schools (6.202) – 1st Reading** - The TSBA Policy Department has provided this update based on Public Chapter 493. In order to conduct a home school, parents must meet certain criteria. Previously, this included having a high school diploma or a GED. A change to state law, however, now includes parents with High School Equivalency Test (HiSET) in this category. This updated model policy includes this additional qualification option. The administration recommended approval.

Allena Bell made a **motion** to approve the policy revisions for **Home Schools (6.202) – 1st Reading** as presented **and to waive the 2nd Reading**. Kevin Townsel **seconded** the motion, which **carried 6-0**.

- 11. Policy Revision: Alternative Education (6.319) – 1st Reading** - Per TSBA Director of Policy & Staff Attorney, “Public Chapter 229 creates another exception regarding assignment to an alternative school or program. Now, a Director of Schools is not required to assign a student to the alternative school or program if: (1) the student committed an offense of violence or threatened violence or an offense that threatened the safety of other students in the school; and (2) the location of the alternative school or program is on the same grounds from which the student was disciplined.” TSBA has provided model language to update our policy to include this exception. The administration recommended approval.

Kevin Townsel made a **motion** to approve the policy revisions for **Alternative Education (6.319) – 1st Reading** as presented. Alicia Barker **seconded** the motion. During discussion, it was questioned whether both requirements need to be met, or if either requirement needed to be met. Upon 2nd Reading, clarification of the description of the policy will be made. The motion **carried 6-0**.

- 12. Policy Revision: Physical Examinations and Immunizations (6.402) – 1st Reading** – This policy was pulled from the agenda for clarification on the updates, and will be presented for 1st Reading at the September meeting.

VIII. DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS REPORT

- **Transition of Programs/Personnel Related to Eddy Lane Property and Movement of Programs/Personnel from CO Annex** – WeeMAC has now fully transitioned from the Central Office Annex to Freedom Middle School. The move went well and the WeeMAC staff did a great job in preparing their new space and creating a positive and caring environment. Thanks to the staff for all their efforts! A playground is still needed for

WeeMAC and the space will be investigated after the construction for the PAC is completed. The Board was invited to visit the new location of our WeeMAC program if they have not had the opportunity.

- **Opening Day and Professional Learning Days** - On August 2nd our *Opening of Schools Program* went well, with personnel beginning the day in their own schools for the most part this year, due to limited parking at PGS because of the construction. Although we were apart this year, plans are to have the Opening of Schools for the 2022-2023 year at the FSSD's new Performing Arts Center.

The "Partnership Fair" sponsors were split up between the schools, followed by our personnel attending the opening virtually as a live-stream from the Teacher Center. Professional learning sessions followed, for the most part, contained in their home schools. Our keynote speaker, Dr. John Hodge, carried an excellent message that we hope was inspirational to all as we begin the year. As we had introduced to you before, Dr. Hodge is president and co-founder of Urban Learning and Leadership Center, an organization focused on student achievement and reduction of the achievement gap.

Thanks to the Board members who could attend our Opening this year.

As we finish the week, we will have district-wide (grade or subject specific) and school-based professional learning, with an administrative day in the week as well. Meet-and-Greet evening was held on Wednesday, August 4th – with teachers and school administration ready to welcome students and families!

- **First Student Day** – We will be having the students back ½ day on Friday, April 6, with the return to full days on Monday. Kindergartners will come one day this coming week and begin full time on the following Monday, August 16.
- **Labor Day Holiday** – Following an early dismissal day on September 3, the district and offices will be closed September 6th.
- **Conferences and meetings update:** Updates were provided separately.

X. UPDATES

Teaching & Learning – Dr. Mary Decker, Associate Director for Teaching & Learning, provided the following (on file):

- Demographics Report for August 2021

Finance & Administration – David Esslinger, Associate Director for Finance & Administration, provided the following (on file):


- Personnel Change Report July/August 2021
- Investment Report
- Revenue and Expenditure Reports
- Sales Tax Revenue Comparison Report for August

XI. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Sales tax collections are up 22% from what they were last year at this time.
- Mr. Townsel thanked the speakers from this evening, as well as those that have sent emails. He noted that they have heard what everyone has said and that the COVID Team will continue to monitor closely to provide information to the Board.
- Mrs. Bell notes the upcoming TSBA Mid-Cumberland Fall District Meeting where she hopes TSBA will also provide guidance.
- Mrs. Bell asked if another immunization clinic can be arranged for the new employees and those that did not previously receive the immunization; District Nurse Fisher will investigate. Mrs. Fisher also noted that many received immunizations from other areas and if personnel were not able to attend the previous clinic and she had made arrangements for them to get an immunization if they wanted it.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Blair adjourned the meeting at 7:44 p.m.

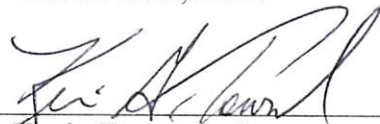


Robert Blair, Chair

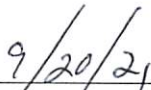


Date

ATTEST:



Kevin Townsel, Secretary



Date