

Board minutes from Feb. 15, 2024

Approved March 21, 2024

Fiddlehead School Board meeting Feb. 15, 2024

Fiddlehead School and via Zoom

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:03 pm by Bill Doughty who noted that the meeting is being recorded.
2. Attendees:
 - a. Board members present: Ben Kramer, Susan Doughty, Marie Reimensnyder, Roger Preston (via Zoom), Bill Doughty
 - b. Staff present: [Jacinda Cotton-Castro](#), ED; Jason Manjourides, principal; Mandy Medrano, grade 8 teacher
 - c. Public or other staff present: Student and parent representatives from grade 8. Others were present via Zoom
3. Susan Doughty read the Fiddlehead mission statement, eloquently.
4. Public Comment:
 - a. Bus driver Tracy Morton expressed her concern that the stopped school bus with lights flashing was being passed by parent and staff vehicles in the Fiddlehead parking lot. She said she planned to contact the Sheriff's office with the plate number of any vehicles that do this in the future.
 - b. The Board thanked Tracy for her watchfulness and service. She was asked to work with Jacinda and Jason on a plan to solve this problem.
5. Approval of Minutes from Jan. 18, 2024 meeting
 - a. **Marie moved and Roger seconded approval of the minutes**
 - b. **It was noted that Joanne D'Arcangelo's name should be added to the attendees.**
 - c. **With that change, the motion carried 5 to 0.**
6. Education Committee extended update
 - a. Jason introduced Jenn Merrill to update the Board on winter NWEA testing results.
 - i. Jenn notes that NWEA was normed before COVID, so that must be considered.
 - ii. These are the results of winter testing with one more

round of testing in the spring.

- iii.** We are seeing more math growth than ever.
 - iv.** She presented grade by grade data from Grades 2 through 8, with highlights and concerns.
 - v.** Comparing the same groups of students from their previous grade to their current one, 5 of the 6 cohorts showed improvement in % meeting their growth goals and the remainder only lost 1% point.
 - vi.** Making the same comparison, 3 cohorts showed improvement and 3 (currently in gds, 4,5,6) showed decreases, some significant.
 - vii.** Overall Fiddlehead moved from 27% to 53% meeting growth goals in math.
 - viii.** Overall Fiddlehead moved from 34% to 38% meeting growth goals in reading.
 - ix.** She noted that the 71% of students meeting math goals in grade 6 is a great performance.
 - x.** Summary: Our work in math is showing good progress; we need to improve reading performance for students currently in grades 4,5, and 6.
- b.** Jason reported on the curriculum work of the Education Committee
- i.** Overview of progress
 - ii.** Some gaps due to staff turnover
 - iii.** Goal is a comprehensive curriculum handbook in all content areas for all grades
 - 1.** What we want students to know and do
 - 2.** How we assess that
 - 3.** How we do it at Fiddlehead.
 - iv.** First, compile the existing information we have.
 - v.** Begin organizing systemically in Google Drive
 - vi.** Use curriculum lenses of climate studies and social justice. Everything does or will tie to these.
 - vii.** There are core skills/knowledge documents including standards, skills, and curriculum.

- viii. He used grade 2 as a model.
 - ix. What “it” looks like at Fiddlehead is being worked on now.
 - 1. What do we do differently?
 - x. Next conversation is how to integrate with social studies or the outdoors, for example.
 - xi. Grade $\frac{5}{6}$ pod and grade $\frac{7}{8}$ pod have merged
 - 1. Units are divided into seasons.
 - xii. Classroom environment is another focus. Hoping to get new furniture for one model classroom.
 - xiii. Putting materials in folders where staff can find them.
 - xiv. Questions?
 - 1. Very exciting. Great work.
 - 2. Jenn Merrill is working to organize the folders
 - 3. Great job organizing the disorganized organic knowledge.
 - 4. Setup for excellent implementation. Curriculum grows from the wisdom of our teachers.
 - xv. Update again in the spring.
- c. Grade 8 trip proposal:
- 1. Ms. Mandy introduced the proposal for Grade 8 to take an extended trip to Washington, DC in May.
 - 2. Trip idea grew from units on WWII and the civil rights movement.
 - 3. Trip is important because:
 - a. Another layer of understanding and personal experience.
 - b. Another way to remember facts through connection to reality.
 - c. Last year at Fiddlehead to make memories and bond with friends.
 - 4. Trip will cost between \$14,000 and \$17,000, depending on the train connections.
 - 5. A detailed itinerary has been worked out.
 - 6. Several fundraising possibilities were discussed.
 - 7. Students are experienced fundraisers having raised

\$1125 for a friend impacted by the Lewiston shootings.

8. They also plan to go to Boston in March.
9. The Board asked for a “B” plan for what happens if something goes wrong, for example, someone getting lost or separated from the group.
10. Board questions or comments:
 - a. Dates: May 21 to 24 or 25.
 - b. Consider relation to capstone projects and social justice lens.
 - c. Fundraising is hard work and takes time.
 - d. What happens if you don’t raise the money?
 - i. Could try Boston or give to school projects.
 - e. Mandy has secret weapons (contacts) she can tap into.
 - f. Marie volunteers to help.
 - g. The Gd 8 class is fundraising for a DC trip and to help the needy student.
 - h. Roger has a background in the DC area and travels there.
 - i. Chaperones?—will have five.
11. Bill: A great deal of passion and we need to do due diligence. For example: parental release form, background checks. All to make the trip as safe as possible. We also must consider the impact on grade 8 for next year. You will hear back from Jacinda and Jason.

d. Re-visioning progress:

- i. Survey draft is completed and ready thanks to Jason’s help
- ii. Staff worked on it Feb. 8th; Board is asked to complete by today (or over the weekend)
- iii. Joanne D’Arcangelo, our consultant, will compile the data and analyze it for themes. The Board will look at the

themes in March and apply lenses of sustainability and impact to determine next steps.

e. Budget workshops:

- i. Likely dates are March 16 and March 30 from 8:30 until 10:30. Both dates are Saturdays.

f. Executive Director report:

- i. Two TA positions currently open
- ii. Fundraising event next year is Oct. 19th. Save it.
- iii. Fiddlehead received \$5,000 as a gift today.
- iv. She feels that we have our feet under us again.
- v. Trying to create the ideal physical space in one classroom.
- vi. Two open houses for students/families for next year.
 1. Lottery in March. Have about 106 applications so far.
- vii. Summer camps about 25% registered.
- viii. She met with Roger in person yesterday.
 1. Questions:
 - a. We are inquiring about another section of preK with the MCSC. Looks like we don't need permission because we are still within our enrollment limits.
 - b. Watching grades 4 and 5 to see how many we might take. Will go slowly on this.

g. Principal's Report:

- i. The school requests Monday April 8 as an Anytime Anywhere Learning Day to study the solar eclipse in Maine. The Education Committee has discussed this extensively.
- ii. The school requests that on Friday April 5th dismissal be at 11:30 AM to allow staff more time for professional development and wellness workshop that afternoon.
 1. It was noted that early dismissal can make parents' arrangements more difficult. Alternatives were discussed.

2. Aftercare may see more attendees.
 3. **It was moved by Ben to change April 8th to Anytime Anywhere Learning that comes with support for families' learning. Seconded by Marie. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
 4. **Marie moved to approve early dismissal at 11:30 and Susan seconded. Motion carried 4 to 1.**
- h. Financial Report: Ben reported that we will get \$18,000 more from the state than expected. He seeks to move the cost on one TA for the balance of this year from Special Ed. Reserve account to the General Reserve account in the amount of \$16,702.
- i. **Susan moved and Roger seconded to approve the Treasurer's Report. Motion carried 5 to 0.**
 - ii. **Ben moved to transfer \$16,702 from Special Ed. Reserve to the General Reserve. Roger seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.**
- i. Budget Workshop Dates: We plan to do two budget workshops on Saturday March 16 and March 30 from 8:30 AM to 10:30 AM via Zoom.
- j. Brief Facilities Report: Overall HVAC project would be about \$500,000 with about \$100,000 support from Efficiency Maine. Advice from the Finance Committee is to slow this down and look more carefully at which units need to be replaced when. The Finance Committee does not recommend folding other projects into the financing for the HVAC project.
- k. Wellness Committee Report
- i. Wellness retreat was already discussed
 - ii. Muffins for staff were collected and volunteers set up for next meeting
 - iii. CDC is moving toward removing the five day isolation period for cases of COVID. Susan suggested not changing our policy yet.
- l. An Executive Session to discuss personnel matters was asked for. **Susan moved and Marie seconded to go into executive**

session. Motion carried 5-0.

m. The Board came out of executive session at 8:45.

**n. Ben moved and Roger seconded to adjourn the meeting.
Motion carried 5 to 0.**

o. Next meeting is Thursday, Mar 21, 2024 at 6 PM.