

**Fairfax Board of School Directors**  
**Monday, February 9, 2009**  
**Regular Meeting at 6:30pm**  
**Fairfax Community Library**

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**AGENDA**

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Consent Agenda**
  - Minutes
    - Regular Meeting: January 12, 2009
    - Special Meeting (Budget): January 28, 2009
  - Correspondence
- 3. Public Comment**
- 4. Reports**
  - a. Principals
  - b. Financial
  - c. School Board Members
- 5. Business**
  - a. Review FY2010 Budget Presentation
  - b. School Calendar 2009-2010 – **Action**
  - c. BFA-MVU School Choice Agreement – **Action**
- 6. Other**
- 7. Policies**
  - a. Unlicensed Motored Vehicles Policy – *1<sup>st</sup> Reading*
  - b. Staffing & Job Descriptions Policy – *1<sup>st</sup> Reading*
  - c. Personnel Files Policy – *1<sup>st</sup> Reading*
- 8. Executive Session** (High School Principal Search Update)
- 9. Adjourn**

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**Upcoming Meetings**

- February 16<sup>th</sup>** :: **Special Meeting - Budget Presentation** at 7:00pm in the BFA Fairfax Elementary Gym
- February 17<sup>th</sup>** :: **Board HS Principal Interviews**
- February 28<sup>th</sup>** :: **Annual School Meeting** at 1:00pm at the Fairfax Elementary Gymnasium
- March 9<sup>th</sup>** :: **Regular School Board Meeting** at 6:30pm at the Fairfax Community Library

School Board Vision 2008-2009

*To support and provide resources for continuous improvement in teaching and learning.*

Fairfax Board of School Directors  
Monday, January 12, 2009  
Regular Meeting at 6:30pm ~ Community Library

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Present: Chairperson Peg Stewart, Jeff Loller, Elaine Carpenter, Robin Freeman, Ben Langelier, Armando Vilaseca, Scott Lang, Lisa Delorme, Thomas Walsh, Chris Sumner, Bruce Chattman, Adrienne Fisher

Public: Barbara Murphy, Chris Santee, Susie Jones, Christel Michaud, Carolyn Branagan, Gary Gilbert

1. **Executive Session** – The Board entered Executive Session at 6:05PM and exited at 6:45PM.

2. **Call to Order** - Peg Stewart called the meeting to order at 6:45PM.

3. **Consent Agenda**

Minutes - Regular Meeting: December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008

Correspondence – none

**Action: Robin Freeman motioned to approve the Consent Agenda and Elaine Carpenter seconded. Passed unanimously.**

4. **Public Comment** – Chris Santee expressed his gratefulness to Armando for his service to the community in his role as Superintendent. Peg Stewart introduced Bruce Chattman as the interim superintendent to fill in until a replacement is found.

Carolyn Branagan, Fairfax/Georgia representative, commented on the financial situation at the Statehouse and expressed her opinion on the governor's proposal on freezing the education spending. A discussion on the education tax rate took place.

Gary Gilbert, Fairfax/Georgia representative, also discussed the hard financial times at the State level.

5. **Reports**

a. Principals

Elementary

Happy New Year! One of primary goals this year has been to use individual student data to inform instruction and to measure achievement. We have been engaged in this process with the assistance of the Literacy Leadership Initiative (LLI). The majority of our work has been focused on grades two and three as we find this is a difficult transition for students. A consultant from LLI has led this process. We will be meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 13th to continue our work.

We have also used a similar process as we measure the effectiveness of our mathematics and kindergarten interventions. Before the holiday break we looked at midyear kindergarten and mathematics data. Based on this information five of our twelve full day kindergarten students met current standards. These students were replaced by six students who were identified as needing extra support in literacy development. There are now thirteen students in the full day program. At the end of last year about twenty percent of students were identified as needing extra support in mathematics. When looking at mathematics unit tests it was determined that five percent of those students no longer needed these services.

Thank you for choosing to include full day kindergarten in our 09-10 budget. Since our last board meeting the administrative team has met to determine a starting date for a full day program. The kindergarten committee recommended that we begin after the first six weeks of school. Since then parents and day care providers have voiced concerns about this model. Armando has requested that we begin full day kindergarten after Labor Day. The administrative team supports this decision.

*Lisa Delorme*

Middle School

The second quarter is ending on Friday, Jan. 16. Students will transition to a new Unified Arts classes (PE, Music, Art, Computer Applications, and Spanish or French for grade eight.)

We will hold the second dance for students in grades 7+8 on Friday, Jan. 23.

We are conducting Student Led Conferences throughout the middle school during the weeks of Jan. 12-22. Students present to their parents a piece of student work from each of the core classes. Students discuss significant learning and areas they need to focus on. We have received tremendous feedback from parents about this process and maintain approximately 100% participation.

We are starting an Odyssey of the Mind team. The PTSA has generously provided funding to help provide this outstanding activity to middle school students. We will begin practicing in late January.

I am in the process of completing my next parent letter that will detail educational activities occurring in the middle school.

Respectfully,  
*Thomas Walsh*

### High School

Because of the new law which requires 5.5 hours with the preponderance of students in all grades in attendance to qualify as a school day, the high school exam days will be full student days. Those assessments will take place on January 15 and 16. There will be some adjustments within the regular schedule to accommodate two ninety minute assessment blocks each day. You should know, and I have shared this with high school teachers, that very few of the schools in our part of Vermont are honoring that law. However since you invested in adding student days in the last contract negotiation, I felt strongly that we should follow the new law and support your intent of providing more instructional time for teachers and students. The new semester begins on January 20.

The high school had an in-school holiday concert featuring the BFA High School Chorus, a faculty chorus, some individuals and small groups and everyone together on the day before our break. This program as well as a similar program for our K – 8 children was coordinated and orchestrated by Chelsie Henderson, our high school choral director. Choral music is alive and well at BFA and we are extremely fortunate to have some one of Ms. Henderson's talent and energy as one of our faculty.

On Saturday, December 20, the BFA gym was packed for the Boys' Varsity Basketball Team's game with Winooski as Seth Rebeor achieved the 1000 point mark for his career at BFA. The celebration was both classy and heart warming, including the Winooski players and fans who were wonderfully respectful of Seth and this achievement. Seth is the sixth player in BFA history to achieve this milestone and the third in the last ten years. The last player to achieve this milestone was John Paul Marriott, BFA '04. Coach Glen Button has coached all three thousand point scorers in my ten years at BFA.

Work on the 2009 – 2010 high school course offerings and schedule has begun. I am meeting with each department to map out course offerings and possibilities for our students. Students will be choosing courses in March and the Annual BFA Course Fair will be held on Thursday, March 5, 2009.

The high school faculty is discussing a plan that would add an enrichment block once per week in two six – eight week sessions possibly to be piloted this spring.

*Scott Lang*

- b. Financial – Chris Sumner distributed and explained an up-to-date financial status report for this fiscal year.
- c. School Board Members  
Ben Langelier reported that the semester is coming to a close and exams are happening at the end of this week.  
Elaine Carpenter reported on the VSBA meeting.  
Jeff Loller reported on JV and Varsity basketball.  
Peg Stewart reported on the Safe Routes to School committee meeting.  
Peg also announced the School Board's decisions to appoint Barbara Murphy to fill the vacated Board position until the Town Meeting Elections.

## **6. Business**

- a. Act 62 Early Ed and Out-of-District Placement – Adrienne Fisher presented the highlights on the newest law governing early education, Act 62, which allows parents to request tuition to enroll their preschool students in a qualified preschool elsewhere if the preschool meets certain criteria. The law allows a certain number of preschool children to be counted in school census. It also encourages schools to partner with private providers. The Board engaged in discussion around this law and how it will affect Fairfax.

She also reported on out-of-district placements for students that cannot be properly served in our district because of a disability. She explained the process involved to determine if an out-of-district placement is needed. She also explained the school's responsibilities while the student is placed elsewhere as well as the financial costs.

- b. Approve FY08 Audit – The Board members received copies of the FY08 Audit. The school has once again been found deficient in the GSBA 34, but it has received a waiver from the State until next year. Complying with GSBA 34, which involves creating an inventory in order to account for depreciation, will be a focus this year.

**Action: Jeff Loller motioned to approve the FY08 Audit Report. Robin Freeman seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**

- c. Set FY10 Announced Tuition Rate – The FY10 school tuition rates will be set at \$9200 for elementary students, \$9870 for students in grades 7-12, and \$8200 for students in Strive.

**Action: Elaine Carpenter motioned to set the above tuition rates for FY10. Jeff Loller seconded. Motion passed unanimously.**

- d. Accept School Board Resignation

**Action: Jeff Loller motioned to accept the resignation from Angela Baker from her position on the Board. Elaine Carpenter seconded. Motion passed unanimously.**

- e. Appoint to Fill School Board Vacancy

**Action: Jeff Loller motioned to appoint Barbara Murphy to the Board until the Town Meeting elections. Robin Freeman seconded. Passed unanimously.**

- f. Other Financial Business - Chris Sumner distributed the financial worksheet and explained the process involved in coming up with the tax rate. She also provided a copy of the past format for the Town Report for the Board to review. The Board decided to keep the format the same for this year's report.

Chris questioned if the approval of the bid for the security cameras in December included the \$8000 for the electrical work because it wasn't reflected in the minutes. The Board believed that the approval did include that money however decided to reapprove.

**Action: Robin Freeman motioned to approve \$8000 from the capital fund to be used for the electrical work in conjunction with the installation of the security cameras. Elaine Carpenter seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**

Chris advised the Board that the plow on the truck needed to be replaced. The \$5500 cost will be covered by a savings in fuel costs over what was budgeted.

Chris reviewed the revised FY10 budget and the changes that were made and answered question from the Board.

- g. Approve Legal Warning

The Legal Warning for Town Meeting was reviewed:

Legal Public Warning 2009 – Fairfax Town School District Annual Meeting

The inhabitants of the Town of Fairfax who are legal voters in the Annual Town School District Meeting are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Elementary Gymnasium at Bellows Free Academy in Fairfax, Vermont on Saturday, February 28, 2009 at 10:00am for the purpose of voting upon or transacting such business not involving voting by Australian Ballot. The polls will be open Tuesday, March 3, 2009 at 7:00am and to close at 7:00pm.

Article 1 – Shall the legal voters of said school district elect the following officers by Australian Ballot?

- School Moderator for one-year term
- School Director for three-year term
- School Director for two-year term
- School Director for one year to complete a three-year term

- BFA Fairfax School Trustee for five-year term
- Article 2 – Shall the voters of said school district appropriate \$11,589,883 necessary for the support of its schools for the year beginning July 1, 2009 by Australian Ballot?
- Article 3 – Shall the voters of said school district authorize the board to extend the existing lease of the White House building to the Town of Fairfax, for a period of not more than seventeen (17) years on terms that the board considers fair and appropriate for the district by Australian Ballot?
- Article 4 – Shall the voters of said school district authorize the school directors to borrow money for school expenses in anticipation of revenue for the ensuing year by Australian Ballot?
- Article 5 – To approve the School Directors' report from the previous year.
- Article 6 – To conduct any other legal business to come before said meeting.
- Article 7 – To adjourn.

**Action: Elaine Carpenter motioned to approve the Legal Warning and Jeff Loller seconded. Motion passed unanimously.**

- h. FY2010 Budget Communication Plan – The Board discussed the format of the budget presentation to the Town. Robin suggested that a financial cost of full-day kindergarten be included in the presentation. A flyer will be mailed to residents prior to the budget presentation. Elaine suggested that the Board find a venue to inform the community on the benefits and successes of their previous financial investments. Armando stated that a school report is being put together and that it may begin to address some of these investments. The Board discussed who would present the information at the budget information forum as well as Town Meeting and it was decided that Robin, Peg and Elaine will present the information.
- i. High School Principal Search – Bruce Chattman announced that a committee has been formed and he outlined what the selection process will be and the Board's role at the end of the process.

7. **Other** – Peg brought up the frequent problem of snowmobilers traversing on school property and they could not find the policy on the books that prohibits unauthorized motor vehicles on school grounds. The policy will be located brought back on the books so that it can be enforced. Signs need to be posted on the property that state no unauthorized motorized vehicles.

Jeff brought up that the parking lot is being used for doughnuts. Discussion took place on this issue.

Robin questioned the decision of the 6 week transitional start to the full-time kindergarten program being eliminated. Armando explained his reasoning for the decision to start at the beginning of the school year. Lisa Delorme suggested that they would poll the parents when they register to get firm numbers whether the parents support a transitional start or not. Bruce suggested polling the parents part way through or at the end of the year as to the positives and negatives of the immediate start and adjust accordingly for the future. Much discussion revolved around the issue and it was decided that the decision to begin the full-day kindergarten program at the beginning of school will be put on the agenda for next month to be voted on by the Board.

## 8. Policies

- a. Hazing Policy  
**Action: Robin Freeman motioned to approve the Hazing Policy and Elaine Carpenter seconded. Passed unanimously.**
- b. Idling of Vehicles Policy  
**Action: Robin Freeman motioned to approve the Idling of Vehicles Policy and Jeff Loller seconded. Motion passed unanimously.**
- c. Limited English Proficiency Policy  
**Action: Robin Freeman motioned to approve the Hazing Policy and Elaine Carpenter seconded. Passed unanimously.**

**9. Executive Session (Personnel Request)** – The Board entered Executive Session at 9:30PM. No action was taken.

**10. Adjourned**

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Filiberti

# Fairfax Board of School Directors

Wednesday, January 28, 2009  
Special Budget Meeting ~ 6:00pm  
Fairfax Community Library

## MINUTES

Present: Peg Stewart, Jeff Loller, Elaine Carpenter, Robin Freeman, Barbara Murphy, Bruce Chattman, Interim Superintendent

Public: Lisa Boucher, Clarice Sheets, Kim Johnson-Lesny, Chris Santee

The meeting was called to order at 6:01pm by Peg Stewart.

The purpose of this meeting was to re-visit the previously approved school budget. Proposed changes to the budget were divided into four groups (A, B, C, D). The first group (section A) outlined changes to the budget now that we have actual amounts for figures projected at the beginning of the budget process. We now know that there is a reduction in health insurance premiums (0% increase over last year). The Franklin West SU restructure has been confirmed and there is a decrease in Technical Education costs based on actual counts and the new announced tuition rate received from Essex.

**ACTION:** Barbara Murphy motioned to approve these reductions outlined in section "A". Robin Freeman seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

The second section (B) discussed was elimination of planned program expenses and instituting a hiring freeze. These areas included the not hiring a Technical Ed teacher, keeping the current kindergarten structure, and elimination of high school stipends which support curricular leadership.

**ACTION:** Elaine Carpenter motioned to approve reductions described in section "B". Barbara Murphy seconded. Motioned approved 3-1 (Board Chair did not vote).

The third section (C) was reduction in non-instructional programs and staff. There was much discussion.

**ACTION:** Barbara Murphy motioned to approve the following items (parts of section C which did not represent any reduction of services or support staff positions): freezing the new high school principal salary, reducing administrator's raises to 2.5% (the administrators had already reduced this earlier by 1%), eliminating food for inservices, cutting training for computer support staff and principal conference monies, as well as deferring painting and a tractor from the Building & Grounds budget. Robin Freeman seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

The Board reviewed section D of the proposal which would reduce a staff member as well as existing instructional support, affecting the education of our students. In this proposal, Technology Equipment/Software is reduced by \$25,000. The board did not adopt any of the reductions in section D.

***ACTION:*** *Barbara Murphy motioned to approve a revised budget of \$11,317,945 (an estimated 1.49% increase in the current budget). Robin Freeman seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

The board discussed that to “level fund” the budget further would mean cuts in staff and programs which would directly affect the students of BFA. Unfortunately the schools have to approve budgets before the Governor and legislature come to a final decision on their proposal.

The budget will be presented to the community on February 16, 2009 in the Elementary Gym at 7:00 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Peg Stewart  
Board Chair