

**TOWN OF WALPOLE
SELECTBOARD AND SAU 60 INFORMATIONAL MEETING
APRIL 1, 2020**

Selectboard Present: Peggy Pschirrer (Chair); Cheryl Mayberry; Steven Dalessio

FMRSD SAU 60: Lori Landry (Superintendent)
James Fenn (Business Manager)

CALL TO ORDER: Mrs. Pschirrer called this Informational Meeting to order at 2:00 PM. The Selectboard, Superintendent and Business Manager are at various locations. There were no members of the public in attendance. This meeting is being recorded by FACT-TV. It is online meeting via Zoom.

Mrs. Pschirrer advised this meeting is being held regarding the current situation at the district schools. Ms. Lori Landry requested this meeting to give us information on the FMRSD.

Ms. Landry reported they started their remote instruction about three weeks ago and will continue as the Governor has directed until May 1st. They meet three times a week with the team; all of their directors, principals and nurses to share information. They also meet online with the Emergency Management personnel to be sure that everybody is abreast to the health and wellbeing of their staff and students. She thinks our teachers and administration have done a great job in moving over to remote education learning as well as the parents who are so supportive. Next week they will be looking to expand their continuous learning opportunities and more information will go out to the parents in a newsletter tomorrow morning. All of the staff is working. Some were assigned different duties. She is proud of everything that people have been able to do in their efforts to support education.

Mr. Jim Fenn advised that the FMRSD is serving over 800 meals a day on a seven day a week meal plan that includes delivering breakfast and lunch meals. Some people are picking up meals at the North Walpole School. Busses are delivering meals as well. At this time they are serving more meals to students than when school was in session. Our schools have stepped up to the challenge.

Mrs. Pschirrer asked how they are going to handle grading students using remote learning for this term. Ms. Landry replied that they have been meeting with the administrators and they will be coming out with an informational sheet to parents that hopefully will be ready to go out by noon tomorrow. It outlines what they consider will be the grading element at the schools and what their expectations are as well. This letter will be sent by email and will be posted on the district website tomorrow.

Mr. Dalessio had a call from a parent with two special education students. How is one-on-one support supposed to be interfacing with the students at this time? Apparently the parent gets an email in the morning that says "I am here". Ms. Landry has talked to Sandra about this many times and they have sent out informational sheets to parents. They are here to support education for all students. Some students will get compensatory education and that will be summer school. Have the parents let Ms. Landry or Sandra know if they have specific questions and they will certainly discuss it with that parent. Mr. Dalessio asked if the emails will be sent to both the students and parents as sometimes the special ed student does not appreciate the messages in the email text and may delete them. Ms. Landry will pass that on.

Comments and Question List from the Public. These were submitted prior to this meeting. Mrs. Pschirrer read the following emails.

Cheri and Leroy Watson: Just wanted to let you know that we are very proud of this high school where faculty and staff have gone beyond the call of duty to make remote learning work.

While schools in more urban centers of the country are struggling or have simply cancelled school, our school remains a leader. Thanks to you and all the teachers and staff for supporting our youth through these challenging times.

James Gavin: Thank you for giving us this opportunity. I have a couple of questions for the School Board.

1. There have been no updates on the status of the search for our new Principal, is there trouble finding a candidate and if so, have you hired the help of a recruiting firm to assist in this process? The importance of finding a quality candidate to fill this position and hit the ground running is crucial in keeping the quality education we have in Walpole.

Ms. Landry replied that they have conducted a thorough search and have EVI working with them on the search. They offered the position, but unfortunately that person was unable to accept the offer. They are working with Mr. Jacobs to try to find a solution. Ms. Landry noted they have a proposal that she will be presenting to the FMRSD Board on April 13th. Their recommendations will fill the needs of the community, students and leadership team in the future.

2. What are the plans for April vacation? Do you feel it would be best to cancel and have the school year end early?

Ms. Landry said there has been a lot of discussion on this, not only within their school district but with the State Commissioner of Education. Right now they are going to post the information in the newsletter going out tomorrow.

3. If the rest of the school year is to be done with remote learning, what are your plans to bring the students up to speed for their grade level next year?
(Remote learning is going very well here in Walpole, but lets admit it, it's no replacement for what our teachers do in the classroom).

Mrs. Pschirrer noted they are hearing of a possible extension that the schools will be closed through May. Are they prepared for this? Ms. Landry replied that they talked about that this morning. Teachers are planning for the long-haul. The teachers have done very well and are also preparing educational packages for the students. They will be distributing books to the 3rd and 4th graders. They want to let parents know these are issues they have been discussing. Ms. Landry noted they are trying to do it day-by-day. She does not have all the answers. They are working together as a team. Right now they are trying to work on making sure they have quality education between now and May 4th. They believe in direct education.

4. With the success that remote learning has been, have you put in place a process to use it for snow days? Ms. Landry feels this will be a discussion into next year.

Mr. Gavin would like to thank Principal Jacobs and the rest of the teachers and staff for stepping up and doing an incredible job handling this never seen before situation. They have done a remarkable job. Thank you. James Gavin.

Mr. Dalessio mentioned that now that Income Tax has been delayed, people may have been counting on returns to pay their next property tax bills. Has the FMRSD considered what would happen if 10% of the property owners in Town cannot pay their taxes on time? Mr. Fenn replied they have thought about this but do not have a solution. At this time all but a handful of people are continuing to work. This handful includes some subs and part-time bus drivers who do not work a regular schedule. About 80% of their budget is wages and benefits. That is not changing because of this issue. There will be savings in heat because they will be shutting down some buildings and fuel costs for busses but the savings will not be significant. He told the principals no spending is allowed at this point unless it is critical to education. Mr. Dalessio's concern is mainly the revenue. If the revenue falls short, the Town will have difficulty around July 1st when the tax bills are due. Mr. Fenn is looking at cash flow carefully and does not have a solution at this time. He will work with the towns as they have issues.

Ms. Landry pointed out that some busses are delivering educational packets to students who may not have access to receiving them. It is equally difficult for the FMRSD as it is for the Town. So many people have been laid-off; it is so hard. We need to move slowly, be thrifty and work together as a team.

Mrs. Pschirrer thanked Ms. Landry and Mr. Fenn for meeting with the Selectboard today. This meeting is being filmed by FACT-TV and can be seen on Facebook. They hoped they covered a lot of ground so many people have heard the comments and they can be reassured that we will continue to provide a good education for our kids. Ms. Landry thanked the Selectboard for being able to share information with them.

Parking Area: Mr. Fenn reported the voters approved transferring the FMRSD parking area by the Walpole Recreation area to the Town. Mrs. Pschirrer advised that the Town will facilitate this transaction with the Planning Board. However, they will not meet in April. The Town will contact their attorney to move forward with the deed transfer and they will take care of all expenses

ADJOURNMENT: Mrs. Pschirrer stated that this was a good meeting. She adjourned this Informational Meeting at 2:21 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Regina Borden, Recording Secretary



Peggy L. Pschirrer



Cheryl Mayberry



Steven Dalessio

(**Note:** These are unapproved Minutes. Corrections will be found in the Minutes of the April 9, 2020, Selectboard meeting.)