

FREMONT, NEW HAMPSHIRE SCHOOL DISTRICT

2012 DELIBERATIVE SESSION
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2012
Ellis School, 9:00 a.m.

School District Moderator Michael Rydeen called the 2012 School District Deliberative Session to order at 9:00 a.m. He asked all in attendance to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance, which was led by Police Chief Neal Janvrin. Chief Janvrin then requested a moment of silence for the men and women who are serving and have served our Country.

Moderator Rydeen informed the audience that the Town of Fremont Deliberative Session will be held Monday, February 6, 2012, beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the Ellis School Gymnasium and that SB2 Town and School District voting will take place on March 13, 2012.

Moderator Rydeen explained the general rules of order and that a modified version of Roberts Rules of Order would be used as a guide to run the meeting. He stated that Articles can be amended at this meeting, but will not be voted on. Voting on the Articles will take place on Election Day, March 13, 2012. He also explained that only Fremont residents can speak, with the exception of School Board Members, School Council, or experts of School Council, and that Fremont voters must register with the Supervisors of the checklist and receive a yellow card to vote. The Articles will be read and will be followed by up to 10 minutes of Board presentation or discussion, after which time the public is welcome to speak by going to the microphone, stating your name and address. There will be a limit of four minutes per person to speak at the microphone. Only one motion will be allowed on the floor for discussion at a time, as only one amendment will be allowed for discussion at one time.

He then asked the members of the head table to introduce themselves to the audience. Seated at the table were Greta St. Germain, Selectwoman and Budget Committee Representative; Charles Kimball, Budget Committee Vice Chair; Greg Fraise, Budget Committee Representative; Jean Nygren, Budget Committee Representative; Gene Cordes, Budget Committee Chair; Sara Krebs, Ellis School Special Education Coordinator; Doug Totten, Ellis School Vice Principal; John Safina, Ellis School Principal; Jeff Rowell, School Board Member; Deb Genthner, School Board Member; Sharon Girardi, School Board Member and Budget Committee Representative; Andy Kohlhofer, School Board Member; Ida Keane, School Board Chair; Bonnie Sandstrom, Financial Administrator; Bill Lander, Superintendent of Schools; Alison Minutelli, School Board Counsel. There were 63 registered voters in attendance.

Moderator Rydeen invited Superintendent Lander to the podium for his presentation regarding Ellis School. Superintendent Lander gave compliment to the successful beginning of a new school year and wanted to thank the new and reorganized administration, including Mr. Safina, Mr. Totten, and Mrs. Krebs, for their positive changes in the School climate.

Superintendent Lander indicated that ratification of the Support Staff Collective Bargaining Agreement was smooth and there was a wonderful tone throughout the process. There will be no

tax impact, as the Paraprofessionals, Support Staff, and Secretaries will not be receiving raises over the next two years.

Implementation of Response to Intervention (RtI) has done very well with improving support and enrichment to student learning. The great success of this Program must lend credit to the very productive and forward thinking staff and administration of Ellis School.

The recently implemented reading program at Ellis School has helped students to reach grade-level accomplishments, often mastering grade-level requirements, and our results are wonderful. Ellis School has seen a 10% growth in reading proficiency, with eighth grade students showing a 21% increase in Reading proficiency between last year and this year, with a 36% growth over a three-year period. These great gains are the result of the accomplishments of an exceptionally dedicated staff.

Superintendent Lander indicated that Ellis School is presently looking at new Math Standards, and are seeing gains, as this is a work in progress with great results and we are continuing to work toward our goal. The NECAP Math scores school wide show a 5% proficiency growth rate in three years, with 8th grade students having a 16% increase in proficiency in Math from last year to this year.

Relationships with the Sanborn School District continue to strengthen, as open communication between Superintendents and School Boards is ongoing. School Administration and School Guidance Counselors within the Sanborn School District and Ellis School have allowed for smooth transitions for our students entering Sanborn Regional High School.

Through a positive working relationship established between the Fremont School District and the Fremont Budget Committee, this was a very smooth budget cycle. The recognized efforts of the Ellis School Administration and the Fremont School District were admired by the Fremont Budget Committee and have made this process noteworthy.

Superintendent Lander thanked the staff, administration, and parents of Ellis School for their continued and ongoing support for the success of the Fremont School District.

Moderator Rydeen read aloud ARTICLE 1 and explained that it does not require any action and cannot be amended at this time.

ARTICLE 1: Election of Officers (voting by official ballot March 13, 2012)

To the following school district offices:

- a. To choose two (2) School Board Members – two for three years;
- b. To choose a School District Treasurer – one for one year;
- c. To choose a School District Clerk – on for one year;
- d. To choose a School District Moderator – one for one year.

Moderator Rydeen read aloud ARTICLE 2.

ARTICLE 2: To see if the Fremont School District will vote to approve the cost items included in the Collective Bargaining Agreement reached between the Fremont School Board and the Ellis School Support Staff (AFT – Local #6223) which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing level:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Estimated Increase</u>
2012-2013	\$0
2013-2014	\$0

And further to raise and appropriate the sum of \$0 for the 2012-2013 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the net increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at the current staffing levels if no new agreement were approved.

Recommended by the Fremont Budget Committee 7-0; Recommended by the Fremont School Board 5-0)

Article 2 was moved by Deb Genthner and seconded by Andy Kohlhofer.

Moderator Rydeen welcomed School Board Chair Ida Keane. Mrs. Keane stated that the Support Staff Representatives were a pleasure to meet with during negotiations this year. They came to the table stating that they were aware of the economic hardships the people of Fremont are facing, were grateful to have jobs, and wanted to make the negotiation process as easy as possible. The Support Staff Contract is for two years and has no additional cost items for the District. Some minor verbiage has been changed to clean up any misunderstandings and old paragraphs that needed to be incorporated into the new contract.

There will be no pay-step increases during the duration of this contract. Clarification on sick leave, sick bank, personal leave, and discretionary leave has been made to better understand these Articles. A clause has been added to clean up the language regarding grandfathered positions in with the insurance. There is also new verbiage that allows the School District to reopen negotiations regarding health insurance in the event that the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act or Obama Care becomes effective prior to the end of this contract.

School Board Chair Keane wanted to thank Sara Dolan, Annmarie Cullen, and Pat Kelly in particular, and the entire Support Staff in general, for being very kind and very compassionate about the economic state of affairs in our community and agreeing to this contract. She would like to be sure that the community of Fremont understands that the Secretaries, Custodians, and Paraprofessionals under this new contract have agreed to work without any pay increases for the next two years. She also thanked the Staff for their dedicated service to our School District, stating that our students are much better off each day because of each and every one of our Paraprofessionals and Support Staff.

There being no discussion, Moderator Rydeen read ARTICLE 3:

ARTICLE 3: Shall the Fremont School District, if Article 2 is defeated, authorize the governing body to call one special meeting, as its option, to address Article 2 cost items only?

Recommended by the Fremont Budget Committee, 7-0; Recommended by the Fremont School Board 5-0.

Article 3 was moved by Deb Genthner and seconded by Sharon Girardi.

There being no discussion, Moderator Rydeen read ARTICLE 4:

ARTICLE 4: Shall the Fremont School District raise and appropriate as an operating budget not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purpose therein set forth, totaling \$11,049,721. Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$11,048,752, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Fremont School District or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only.

Recommended by the Fremont Budget Committee 7-0; recommended by the Fremont School Board, 5-0.

Article 4 was moved by Gene Cordes and seconded by Greg Fraise

Budget Committee Chair Gene Cordes indicated that the Budget Committee and the Fremont School Board had met between November and January having good working meetings. The School District zero-based their budget and built a program they were willing to offer by involving administration, department heads, and faculty with a good outcome. Cost increases are related to tuition at Sanborn Regional High School, and Ellis School has found a way to level fund numbers and even reduce numbers in several areas. This is a good accomplishment and is recommended by the Budget Committee.

School Board Member Andy Kohlhofer thanked School Board Chair Ida Keane and School Board Member Sharon Girardi for their work, and also thanked Superintendent Lander, Bonnie Sandstrom, Ellis School teachers, John Safina, and Sarah Krebs for their efforts in making difficult, but good decisions regarding the School Budget which is \$3,780 less than last year. Mr. Kohlhofer indicated that education continues to improve at Ellis School, and that tuition for our Sanborn Regional High School students is not controlled by the Fremont School Board, nor Ellis School. The Fremont School District Budget surplus over the last few years and an enrollment decline at Ellis School has allowed for savings in this year's Ellis School budget.

Moderator Rydeen asked for discussion, where upon Resident Angela O'Connell asked where did the amount of \$182,000 come from to cover the increased cost of tuition? If the school budget is flat, where did the \$182,000 come from?

School Board Chair Keane indicated that there were funds received from the New Hampshire Retirement System of \$97,555 that we were able to absorb into tuition. Also, due to a reduction in staff by one teacher, smaller class sizes, and reduced enrollment, the Board was able to move funds from one place to another to make it work.

Resident O'Connell asked the follow up question, if we will again expect to receive the \$97,555 next year?

School Board Chair Keane indicated that there is a change in the way the State is funding the NH Teacher's Retirement program and that the State reduced the amount we paid to Teacher Retirement from 35% to 25%, and that because of the reduction, we will not be receiving this funding again next year.

Resident Cheryl Rowell asked if there was anything that did get cut, that won't be funded.

School Board Chair Keane replied that the Principals and Board did talk and they did not have to remove or cut anything of importance. They were trying to keep the budget tight, but the Treasures Reading Program will be available this coming year, and there were no other programs cut. We did work together to give and take on certain things. She asked Principal John Safina to speak more to the question asked.

Principal Safina stated that there wasn't a cut in overall programs. Due to the enrollment decline, we were able to eliminate one teacher position, and also reduce supplies. As some teachers had left last year, we were able to hire new staff at lower costs, therefore reducing staffing funding.

Resident Rowell indicated that the school building is getting older and asked if they were prepared for possible repairs that go along with an older building and were they prepared should the cost of oil for heating increase?

School Board Member Kohlhofer said that this has been discussed at the School Board meetings and that it is part of the last Warrant Article which will be discussed. He indicated that the School Board is returning to the Town \$125,000, or \$115,000 if the last Warrant Article passes. We did a tighter budget with a lower projected surplus and return to the Town, so there is a high savings.

Resident Marion Guidoboni stated that Mr. Kohlhofer mentioned that there was a surplus in last year's budget, and she asked what the amount was and where it was applied.

School Board Member Kohlhofer said that the projected surplus for the year would be \$125,000, and if the last Warrant Article is passed, it would be \$115,000.

Resident Guidoboni asked for clarification from last year's budget surplus.

School Board Member Kohlhofer indicated that last year the Budget Committee received a return from the School District of about \$170,000. A clarification can be heard as an interjection

from School Board Chair Keane who then came to the podium. She indicated that last year's fund balance was \$125,000 and some change.

Resident Guidoboni asked if all of the fund balance was returned to the voters, and School Board Chair Keane answered yes, that it was applied to the tax impact. Resident Guidoboni then asked if every dime of that \$125,000 was returned to the voters and School Board Chair Keane stated yes. Resident Guidoboni asked if that was the fund balance from last year's budget, and School Board Chair Keane stated, right, that is correct.

Resident Guidoboni began to ask a question and Moderator Rydeen indicated that only one question could be asked at a time. Mrs. Guidoboni apologized.

Resident Tammy Bond asked why there was a significant decrease in the line item for the School Board of 64%.

School Board Chair Keane stated that she believe that Mrs. Bond was referring to the line that she previously spoke of regarding money received from the New Hampshire Retirement System. The surplus of \$97,555 was put into the School Board as Miscellaneous Expenses, and we did not have to spend it in Retirement lines, therefore it goes back in this year.

Resident Marion Guidoboni indicated that she was concerned about Ellis School and their technology. She was wondering what the School Board's thoughts were, as Ellis School was enjoying being ahead of the curve regarding technology several years ago, but seems to be falling behind. We have had cuts, as well as not much support with the recent purchase of computer equipment. All other schools are moving ahead with their technology and children are learning on i-Pads, where we are just moving ahead to PCs and laptops, which are quickly becoming obsolete. She asked where the students were heading and for the thoughts of the Board for providing that type of education for our students.

School Board Chair Keane indicated that there is a Technology Committee within the school to discuss what goes on and is needed within the school. They were able approach the Board to fund rewiring and computer upgrading of the Linux system to Windows servers, trying to catch up some of the equipment. The Computer Technology room and several classrooms were rewired and upgraded. We want to bring the school to one platform of Windows versus Linux, but there are issues with the server and software due to upgrade compatibility, and we want to continue to go forward when we have money to do so within the budget. The Board is very concerned for our kids that they be ready for the technology world and be able to use the proper technology in the classrooms. Mrs. Keane indicated that she was speaking for herself, but she believes that the Board has voiced the same during their meetings.

Resident Kathy Picone indicated that she had read that there was a surplus, but that that surplus was used to cover other things like updating the computer system, and asked for a specific breakdown of the other funds besides the \$125,000 that was returned to the Town.

School Board Chair Keane asked Mrs. Sandstrom if she had the list. School Board Member Kohlhofer indicated that there was a significant amount being returned to the Town, and we took

some of that projected surplus and applied it to expenses, but “it was a decent sum”. Upon acquiring the list, School Board Chair Keane indicated the following: \$67,911 for reorganization of the administration; \$19,882 for reorganization of administration for health insurance; \$18,000 for roof shoveling; \$17,000 on substitutes that wasn’t expected; \$18,901 for unexpected unemployment tax increases; \$11,933 for tutors for Special Education; \$14,000 for unanticipated Special Education Legal Expenses; \$19,401 fuel oil that was unexpected due to the oil company; \$16,341 Aide expenses for Elementary School. That adds up to \$203,498.

Resident Picone asked for an explanation of what the costs for reorganization meant.

School Board Chair Keane said that she needed to know what she could say, and asked for Council opinion from Attorney Minutelli. School Board Chair Keane then said that there was a personnel situation where there was restructuring, and that they had to pay an additional payment of \$67,911.

Resident Picone asked for clarification as to why there was an additional payment for personnel of \$67,911.

School Board Chair Keane stated that we had restructuring and personnel changes and that is all that I can really tell you.

Resident Marion Guidoboni indicated that she had a question regarding restructuring and had received a copy of the non-public School Board Meeting Minutes that were unsealed from the School District. Concerning last year’s total fund balance, it was indicated that a certain sum of money used was to “buy out the former administrator of Special Education”. She asked what was being indicated by these Minutes.

School Board Chair Keane indicated that those Minutes are correct.

Resident Guidoboni stated that the prior question she had was in regard to the amount of money that was left from last year’s fund balance, and when I asked you if all that money had gone back to the tax payers and the answer was “yes”, you are telling me that ... There was an interruption from School Board Chair Keane. She indicated that there was a total of \$125,000 that was returned to the Town after all that was spent, including the money that you are talking about in those minutes. She said that we had returned \$125,000 to the District.

Resident Guidoboni understood, but wanted to reiterate that she was asking what the total fund balance was from last year.

School Board Member Kohlhofer added to the question that it has been the practice of school boards across that State that if there is a projected fund balance to use the projected fund balance money for extra purposes. The boiler needed to be repaired, and was expensed from the projected fund balance; the sign out front was paid for by projected fund balances. The projected fund balances are used to save money for expenses down the road and so that we do not have to radically increase the budget next year. When we saw needs for the school, and had a fund balance of over \$300,000, we had some issues that we could address immediately. As you can

see from the performance of the school over the last year, these actions have had a positive impact on the school.

Resident Linda Zukas asked for clarification in the wording regarding the tuition amount for Sanborn Regional High School students, as it appears that the amount is due to the increasing population of Fremont students at Sanborn High School, and not to be blamed on the Sanborn High School.

School Board Member Kohlhofer indicated that there is an increase in the number of Fremont students at Sanborn Regional High School; however he feels the tuition calculation is the issue, and that the Sanborn School District is requesting a 5% increase. If the tuition amount does not pass, we will be saving on our tuition.

Resident Zukas again reiterated that it is anticipated that the Fremont student population is increasing at Sanborn, and therefore is a factor in the increase in tuition.

School Board Chair Keane stated that there are currently 217 Fremont students at Sanborn and that more will be attending than graduating, with a projected number of 227 students attending next year. The rate increase, should it occur, will be less than \$700 per student.

Resident Matthew Thomas asked if discussion have been made to combine the Fremont School District with the Sanborn School District, as it was his understanding that this was to be done within the first five years of our students going to Sanborn High School.

Keane stated that we did enter into a 20-year contract with Sanborn, and that there was no contingency plan for a Co-op. We do have a contract for tuition with Sanborn for 20 years from the date of signing.

Resident Thomas asked if there was any plan to enter into a co-operative school district with the Sanborn School District.

School Board Chair Keane stated that to her knowledge both towns would have to agree to enter into a Co-op and that a Warrant Article would be necessary for both towns on their ballots, and we could not go forward without Warrant Articles are on both ballots. When asked by Mr. Thomas if we want to do something, Mrs. Keane replied yes.

Resident Thomas stated that the contract will expire in 2026, and asked if we were going to do something before it is due? His understanding was that Sanborn would try to make us a member within 5 years. Are we at an impasse with Kingston/ Newton?

School Board Chair Keane indicated that we are tied to the contract, and we should have more negotiating power as we get closer to the end of the contract.

School Board Member Rowell was asked to speak and indicated that there was a clause that states that we had to form a committee, and that has happened, but it did not pass. Both parties have fulfilled their contractual obligation. We need the will of both towns to make this happen.

There being no further discussion, Moderator Rydeen stated that Article 4 will go as it stands.

Moderator Rydeen read aloud ARTICLE 5:

ARTICLE 5: To see if the Fremont School District will vote to raise and appropriate up to the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00) to be added to the previously established expendable trust fund, known as the Ellis School Building and Grounds Maintenance Fund. This sum to come from the June 30, 2012 unreserved fund balance available for transfer on July 1, 2012. No amount to be raised by taxation. Majority vote required.

Recommended by the Fremont Budget Committee, 5 to 1. Recommended by the Fremont School Board, 5 to 0.

Article 5 was moved by Sharon Girardi and seconded by Ida Keane.

School Board Member Andy Kohlhofer stated that this year we reviewed the school finances to address some school needs in the future. There is a trust fund designed as the Ellis School Building and Grounds Maintenance Fund to make improvements to the school. Funded by the Town by up to \$10,000 per year until the year 2002, the town then stopped funding the account, leaving a balance of \$65,891.72. Not wanting to come to the Town with big expenses, the Board can use the Fund and is asking to put \$10,000 a year in the fund. This amount comes out of Unreserved Fund Balance, and if the Article passes, this will mean that there will be \$10,000 less when taxes come due. These funds could be used to replace the gym floor, fix the boiler, or make other necessary repairs without coming to the Town with big expenses.

Budget Committee Chair Gene Cordes stated that these folks are elected to administer the school, and we need to trust their judgment to do preventative maintenances, so that we don't have to deplete the budget, go without, or do expensive repairs. When they try to reduce the budget and still try to make the necessary repairs, we are reducing the elasticity of decision making by not agreeing to their requests. The use of these funds for necessary repairs and maintenance to the building, needs to be considered.

Resident Cheryl Rowell asked for clarification that this Fund would be used for building and grounds maintenance. If we had an unanticipated expense, such as hiring of a teacher, the expense cannot be taken out of this Fund.

School Board Member Kohlhofer indicated that this was correct, and that the funds were only for the intent of the Fund, so that we won't have to make a choice between repairing the roof and hiring a good teacher.

Resident Rowell is concerned that the fund balance last year was used for a variety of items and that this Fund may be used for purposes other than intended. School Board Member Kohlhofer assured her that these funds would be used only for the purposes intended. Resident Rowell asked if there would have to be a special meeting held to spend the money from this fund, and

School Board Member Kohlhofer stated that no there would be no requirement for a special meeting to be held.

There being no further discuss, Moderator Rydeen indicated that Article 5 would stand as is.

Moderator Rydeen read aloud ARTICLE 6.

ARTICLE 6: To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate up to the sum of Sixty-Nine Thousand, Nine Hundred Ninety Dollars (\$69,990.00) for the employment of a foreign language teacher for the 2012-2013 school year. Majority Vote required.

Recommended by the Fremont Budget Committee, 6 to 1. Recommended by the Fremont School Board, 4 to 1.

Article 6 was moved by Deb Genthner and seconded by Ida Keane.

School Board Chair Keane stated that they chose to bring the Foreign Language Teacher Article to the ballot so that all tax payers can decide if they feel it is good or bad to have a Foreign Language Teacher and if the Town can afford it. Our students at Ellis School go to Sanborn High School with no Foreign Language experience. Students in Kingston and Newton are at an advantage, as they have Foreign Language programs. The cost for this teacher would be \$38 to \$76 per year depending on a house assessment of \$200,000 or \$400,000. This would give our students a fair playing ground when they enter Sanborn High School.

Resident Shawn Perrault asked if this program would be only for Middle School students or would it be a school-wide program.

Principal Safina indicated that this would be a school-wide program.

Resident Kathy Richard stated that given the current schedule, she was concerned if they were going to offer this to students, whether as a Unified Arts class, and if so who will be eligible, or would this be based on a gifted situation.

Vice Principal Totten stated that this would benefit all seventh and eighth grade students, as they would be split into six Unified Arts sections, therefore decreasing the size of the Unified Arts classes, and enabling the Unified Arts teachers to meet once a week as other grade-level teams meet. This would be a Kindergarten through eighth grade approach for all students. By adding this teacher, it will also allow for three Unified Arts teachers to assist with the Elementary School RtI program. This is more than just a positive impact by adding a foreign language teacher; it will also help with the structure of the school.

Resident Linda Zukas stated that at one point, Ellis School did offer a Foreign Language program and that it was a huge advantage when her son went into high school. At the time her daughters went to Sanborn, Ellis no longer offered the Foreign Language program, and they were at a huge disadvantage when entering high school compared to students from Kingston and Newton who had Foreign Language as part of their Middle School program.

Resident Mary Kaltenbach asked if there would be one language or a choice of languages.

Principal Safina stated that we haven't made that decision. Administration, the School Board, and members of the Parent Forum have indicated that they would like to see a world language, or an exposure to other languages and other cultures. This will be a collaborative decision as to one or several different languages.

School Board Member Kohlhofer indicated that he was against the vote. He said he was not against foreign language when started early, and that children learn more going forward when taught Latin. His concern is that he doesn't want to commit the school to "incrementalism" that could lead to the cost of step increases. Due to declining enrollment at Ellis School, he thought that we could convert a current teacher position to Foreign Language. Another option may be the Exeter Virtual Learning Center for all students at no cost.

Resident Donald Miller asked if Foreign Language is mandatory requirement for high school.

Superintendent Lander indicated that it is not, however it is a college prep elective. School Board Chair Keane further indicated that she believes that most colleges require two years of Foreign Language to be accepted, and was informed that the requirement is actually three years of Foreign Language for college acceptance.

Resident Cathy Herrmann indicated that our students are behind when entering high school and need Foreign Language. The small amount of Spanish that a student is taught during RtI has been a wonderful benefit to those entering high school. We need to help our kids so that they will not be behind, and this is the best thing we can do for them. Our kids are going into high school behind because we do not offer Foreign Language to our students. Let's be pro-active on a matter for a change.

Resident Kathy Richard directed a question to Mr. Kohlhofer regarding a zero cost to the District for virtual learning. Students must be attended while in school and while using virtual learning. What staff would be there to monitor them, and how would this effect schedule changes? She would like to caution people to think more about the true reality of this type of environment.

School Board Member Kohlhofer said that this was something that he is looking into. When he ran, he wanted to look in to innovative ways for our students. This may or may not be an option.

Resident Richard again reiterated that she is concerned should virtual learning be an option and the thought of "at no cost". If it has not thoroughly been looked into before the time of voting, she would again caution people that there may indeed be a cost associated with this type of program.

Budget Committee Member St. Germain indicated that she was in agreement with Mrs. Richard, and wanted to mention before closing the meeting that revenues were down. Moderator Rydeen interrupted and asked if this was in relation to Article 6. Mrs. St. Germain stated that it was not, and excused herself from the microphone.

Resident Matthew Thomas asked where the amount of \$69,990 came from, and if the teacher would be able to speak more than one language.

Financial Administrator Sandstrom stated that this was an estimated maximum cost. The salary would depend on experience, which could cost the District less, and would also include medical, retirement, and other benefits. School Board Chair Keane re-iterated that the cost would be \$38 per year for a home assessed at \$200,000 or \$78 for a home assessed at \$400,000. Ellis School enjoyed a Foreign Language program in the past, and it has taken us a long time to get it back. We owe it to our students to bring back Foreign Language. Mrs. Keane stated that the School Board does recommend and supports having a Foreign Language teacher.

Resident Thomas suggested that the tax payers know which languages would be offered, with the hopes of Spanish and perhaps Chinese, and that he would support the Article should these languages be offered.

Moderator Rydeen indicated that the base salary for this position would be \$37,240, and the cost of benefits would be added to that amount.

Resident Jodie Donahue stated that she hopes that the School Board is working on all aspects of education to benefit our students entering Sanborn. She feels that we need to offer our students all of the programs that Sanborn offers their students. Every year we need to add to what we do not have at Ellis School, that they do have in Kingston and Newton. Our kids are at a disadvantage - we need to be on board with all aspects of school including education and sports for our students going into Sanborn.

Principal Safina said that his vision for the Foreign Language Teacher is that the person may teach one language as a priority, but not necessarily one language, as this is for Elementary School students up through Middle School. There would be exposure to other languages and other cultures possibly through v-lac, and other interests could be offered. Once an additional language is learned, it is easier to learn other languages. Many languages can be taught, as many cultures can be learned. As an example, our Spanish RtI group made presentations of other countries and their cultures during Christmas time. The Foreign Language program won't be one language or culture, is my hope.

Resident Dawn DiBurro stated that we do have many supplies from our previous World Cultures program. Students are going to need several years of foreign language to be equivalent to Sanborn students; therefore, this will need to be an ongoing program. As Spanish and French are taught at Sanborn, as well as Japanese which is just being introduced, we do need to dovetail that into our program. For clarification, she asked Mr. Lander if we need to offer Foreign Language to be certified as a Middle School.

Superintendent Lander indicated that he did not have the regulations at his hand, but that we would also need to offer family and consumer sciences to be certified as a middle school. Mrs. DiBurro asked if offering Foreign Language would bring Ellis School one step forward, and Superintendent Lander agreed by saying yes.

School Board Member Kohlhofer stated that the School Board is in favor of this Article.

There being no further discussion, Moderator Rydeen stated Article 6 will move forward as is.

Moderator Rydeen indicated that there was an outstanding question from Greta St. Germain regarding the School Boards revenue loss.

School Board Chair Keane asked Mrs. Germain what sheets she was referring to, as the sheets that were produced were for revenues, not expenses. In order to estimate the tax impact, we did adjust the revenue sheet and the Budget Committee will receive a copy.

Moderator Rydeen reminded the audience that we are an SB2 town and that it is important to talk about the Articles presented to your neighbors and friends prior to voting.

School Board Chair Keane wanted to thank Jeff Rowell for six year of service to the Ellis School and the Fremont School Board. During his time, he worked diligently with the Board and the community to bring forward the goals of the District, our mission statement, and our strategic plan that we now have in place. Again, Mrs. Keane thanked Mr. Rowell for his six years of service to the Ellis School Community.

There being no further business, Gene Cordes motioned to adjourn the meeting. Deb Genthner seconded. The vote to adjourn was approved by voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherri C. Ficker
School District Clerk