

CFF Ferndale School Board Candidates Forum
Sunday, April 25, 2010 from 1:00 – 2:30 pm
at the Kulick Center
Election: Tuesday, May 4, 2010

1. Basic Information

Name William Charles Moeser (Chuck)
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2. Introductory Information

- a. Did your children attend Ferndale schools? Why or why not?
All three of my children attended and graduated from Ferndale Schools. We felt public schools provided the diversity needed to deal with the real world outside of school and that they had a much broader curriculum and extra curricula activities to fit the needs of our children compared to what was available in private schools (even though my wife taught in a local private High School). Post High School, they were accepted and graduated from some of the elite colleges and universities in the country: Swarthmore College, University of Chicago, University of Michigan, University of Rhode Island, and University of Michigan Law School. My brother, sisters and I attended and graduated from Ferndale High School. My father also attended the Ferndale Schools until his family moved north during the depression. He moved back after marriage to bring his family up in the best district in the State – Ferndale.
- b. Why are you running for the School Board?
I have been serving the community on the School Board for 19 years, President the last 10. The Board, with the help of the Administration and teachers, are now moving the district in a very positive direction. With the State's bleak financial outlook, I believe the experience I bring to the Board can be used to allow me to make well rounded decisions based upon my prior background experiences. I still wish to give back to the community that has given so much to me.
- c. What specific experiences have you had that would prepare you for this position?
I have served on elementary PTA's for seven years; Pleasant Ridge Pool Board for many years; served on all School Board committees and have held all Board officer positions. I serve as ex-officio on the Ferndale Education Foundation and volunteer as Co-Construction head for the High School plays over the last 15 years. I have worked with three different Superintendents and am well versed in contract language. I hold a BS degree in Chemistry and Physics from Oakland University as well as an MBA from Wayne State University. I worked for 34 years in the automotive arena and now work for a small non-profit, NextEnergy, pursuing alternative energy technologies.

3. Issues that Face the Ferndale Schools

- a. Give your assessment of how the middle school/high school/one building arrangement is working out.
With the reduction of High School students, there was enough room to accommodate the Middle School students at the High School and allow them to receive science education using recently updated labs as well as the theater, pool and other excellent athletic facilities. Having a single complex for HS/MS has allowed the district the opportunity to install a new Gym for the middle school and allow students to take a wider range of courses. There is enough separation of students for those that need it while allowing others to experience a broader range of opportunities.
- b. What changes/challenges will the Ferndale Schools face due to changes in state funding?
The State is expected to reduce funding again next year. While this has put many districts in financial crisis, Ferndale has been able to weather the storm thru prudent, courageous decisions made by the Board. With the experience I bring to the Board, I don't believe Ferndale Schools will have to reduce educational opportunities as we have initiated programs to increase revenues that we as a district can control.
- c. Is the university/high school program living up to expectations? Absolutely.
This program began with the help of a two third party Institutions: Lawrence Technological University and the Michigan Futures group. Michigan Futures saw the need for technical high schools in the area to improve student achievement. The Ferndale plan for UHS was well conceived and received by all concerned parties. It is now a sustainable program that has very high graduation rates (95 %+). The students have filed for and received a patent and the overall program has received the 2010 Magna Award from the national School Board Association. The district was honored for its forethought in the creation of such a program and received this national award in Chicago recently. Ferndale was the only k-12 district in the State to win such an honor. The students also participate in a County wide electric car competition. There are so many opportunities that these students receive here at UHS that would never receive at their home district. It is a program of pride of Ferndale Schools.
- d. What effect has the "Schools of Choice" program had on Ferndale schools?
Schools of Choice for some districts has been used as a savior to bring in as many students and as many dollars as possible at all levels. Ferndale did not do this as it is a very divisive program with other districts and does not serve the educational needs of students very effectively. The current Board felt it more appropriate to fill a few openings at the K-8 level so that the students who do come into the district have an opportunity to move thru our district programs and receive the best educational opportunities available. That way they are better prepared to succeed in High School and beyond. We have Schools of choice open for Oakland County and are currently limiting ourselves to a 15% overall enrollment cap. The other issue with Schools of

Choice is that the parents of School of Choice students have no vote on district elections including the election of School Board Members.

- e. How should the success of a school district be measured? And how do you see Ferndale ranking, based on that criteria?
Measurement comes in many forms and numbers: Educational achievement or MEAP scores, financial sustainability, excellence in curriculum offerings, excellence in extra-curricular programs, low cost to the residents, graduation rates, safe learning atmosphere and parent involvement. I think the Ferndale Schools have shown that they can compete on many levels with any school district in the state, public or private. Alumni come back to raise their families here and send them to Ferndale Schools as well as come back to teach and work in the district. That is great vote of confidence for the district and for the Board guiding its educational opportunities.
- f. Should the curriculum be the same for all students? Why or why not?
There is a mandated State curriculum that cannot be changed. Our curriculum is broad enough to offer many educational opportunities for all our students while still meeting State mandates.
- g. Please list the three (3) most positive things you can say about our school district.
- 1) This district is financially sound in a climate of financial unrest at the State level. The Administration has been challenged to bring forth programs and initiatives that the Board has approved to raise revenues during declining State funding.
 - 2) The students at Ferndale have an abundance of opportunities with a diversity of students that cannot be matched at other districts. Students graduate ready to move successfully into the next phase of their life.
 - 3) With a grade center educational approach, all students receive equal educational opportunities. The district can better balance the precious resource need of equipment and qualified teachers.
- h. Please list the three (3) issues that you see as problematic or that definitely will be addressed by the Board in the next two years.
- 1) With state and federal mandated programs, funding has not always followed the programs. This severely limits our financial resources and we must be continually vigilant on working with our legislators to insist that proper funding follow all mandated programs to maintain a full service district.
 - 2) The district needs to continue to attract excellent staff so our students are taught by the finest teachers available. Lack of funding severely impacts our ability to maintain competitive salaries so that we can retain qualified teachers at all levels: K-12, Alt. Ed., Adult Ed. This will continue to be problematic while funding is limited.
 - 3) Dealing with outside groups such as Bamn takes our focus off some of the important issue (1,2 above).. With the continuing problems present in the Detroit School District, I believe these types problems may increase. The Board must be prepared to act effectively when these groups present themselves.

4. THE BIG ONE

Why should I send my child to Ferndale Schools?

This district offers academic challenge, excellence in sports, a multi-year award winning Fine Arts program, superb theater programs, active, caring and listening Administrators that continue to move this district forward in a multitude of areas and a Board of Education that encourages community involvement at all levels. It is the goal of the Board to maintain a full service district at no additional cost to the residents. We offer college guidance counselors from High School thru the first year at college to insure the success of our students. The skills learned at Ferndale will serve the student well whether they go on to college or choose to pursue other interests. I as a School Board member am committed to make sure we have the best district possible in the State.