



**BOE/CO
Friday Packet
April 1, 2021**

Upcoming Meeting Dates

4-7-2021 Finance & Budget Committee Agenda

3-3-2021 Finance & Budget Committee Draft Minutes

Open House Schedule Fall 2021



Upcoming Board of Education Meeting Dates **2021**

April 6	5:00 PM	Policy Committee CO Board Room 501 Kings Hwy East
April 6	7:30 PM	Special Meeting CO Board Room and Virtual 501 Kings Hwy East
April 7	3:30 PM	Finance & Budget Committee CO Board Room 501 Kings Hwy East
April 20	7:30 PM	Regular Meeting CO Board Room and Virtual 501 Kings Hwy East
April 27	7:30 PM	Special Meeting/Self-Evaluation CO Board Room/Executive Session 501 Kings Hwy East

Town Meetings:

- [4/8/2021, 7:00 PM BoE Budget Presentation to RTM](#)
- [5/3/2021, 7:00 PM RTM Budget Vote](#)



FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Board of Education Finance Committee Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, April 7, 2021

501 Kings Highway East, 2nd floor Board Conference Room

3:30 PM

1. Call to Order of the Meeting of the Finance Committee and Roll Call
2. Vote to Approve Minutes from March 3, 2021
3. Business Items
 - a. Discussion of ESSER II and American Rescue Plan grants
 - b. Discussion of 2021-22 Open Choice enrollment
 - c. Structural change: Timelines/strategies for presenting to full Board
4. Superintendent's Report
5. Open Committee and Public Comment
6. Adjournment

DRAFT Board of Education Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, March 3, 2021 (Virtual)
3:30pm

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call:** Meeting called to order at 3:32 pm by Jeff Peterson
Committee Members Present: Jeff Peterson, Nick Aysseh, Christine Vitale
FPS Staff Present: Mike Cummings, Angelus Papageorge, Doreen Munsell
2. **Approval of Minutes:** Mrs. Vitale asked that the draft minutes be amended to change “ESSR” to “ESSERII”. Committee gave unanimous consent to amend the minutes. Minutes approved as amended, 3-0

3. Business Items

- A. **Discussion of Current Budget and Mitigation Efforts.** Ms. Munsell reported that the projected current budget deficit has decreased from approximately \$1.3M to \$500,000 as of February 28, 2021. The district has instituted a hiring freeze on 20 non-certified positions to help further close the gap. There is also projected savings in the snow removal account; however, that could change if we get another significant storm. Paving projects across the district have been put on hold, as have a number maintenance projects. CO and school accounts have also been frozen; fund needed for instruction will be released on a case- by-case basis.

Mr. Peterson asked if the replacement of the Warde Dust Collector could be delayed. Mr. Papageorge explained that they are “limping it along”. Maintenance staff is manually shaking the equipment. Ms. Munsell advised that it was too soon tell what impact the full return to school would have on the bottom line. Mr. Cummings shared that we could expect increases in custodial and tech overtime, sub costs and lunch aides.

- B. **Structural Change Brainstorming: Concepts, Process, Timeline.** Mr. Peterson asked the committee to identify areas of structural change that might be worthy of future exploration. Mrs. Vitale shared that she thought the Board should continue to explore future options for the ECC; questioning if one model was more cost efficient than another. Mr. Aysseh suggested that as part of that discussion, the committee should consider offering a full day PreK option, and that a re-examination of the tuition rate may be warranted.

Mr. Aysseh stated that knowing salary is the biggest driver he would like the administration to look for areas of possible FTE consolidation or elimination and use attrition where possible. This needs to be a district wide top to bottom evaluation not just certified positions. While the English Teacher motion was not supported, he wants to know if there are other similar areas throughout the district that may make sense to the board. He also suggested taking a closer look at the house system,

junior high school model, and asked that the Superintendent conduct an internal audit to identify other potential savings in staffing that might occur due to attrition.

Mr. Peterson suggested that it might be time to re-evaluate the State 2.0 Insurance Plan to make sure it is still providing a savings. The Superintendent agreed that this should be done as part of preparation for the 2021-2022 budget. The committee agreed that we should do our due diligence to make sure that the plan is still providing a savings. Any new plan would need to provide comparable benefits.

Mr. Peterson shared that Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly had previously questioned if the district might offer an independent study for PE. Mrs. Vitale asked what would qualify as an independent study, and who would oversee student progress. There would still need to be staff oversight. Mr. Cummings shared that it might also be worth looking at how the high schools schedule PE/Health.

Staff has also been discussing how blended learning might be used in the future to combine classes with low enrollment at the two high schools. It wouldn't work for every class, but might be a mechanism for certain electives.

Mr. Aysseh stressed that the district continue to work with the town to possibly share services where possible. Mr. Papageorge shared that there have been discussions on how the town might be able to assist with some mechanical maintenance. Mr. Cummings said we would need to be very cautious about shifting something like IT to the town as FPS has very specific needs. FPS might be able to provide support to town IT.

Mr. Cummings said that an immediate focus of the district is to market the new WFC location to other districts as that might bring in additional revenue.

The committee also recognized that increasing class size is a change that could provide a cost savings. Based on past discussions, Mrs. Vitale did not think the majority of the Board would support increasing elementary class sizes due to the potential negative impact to instruction; however, she was not against revisiting the topic at a future Board meeting if that was the committee's recommendation. Mrs. Vitale and Mr. Cummings shared that based on conversations with other district leadership, Fairfield already has higher elementary class sizes than some neighboring districts, but would work to get some more specific comparative data for the committee to review. Mr. Peterson also pointed out the Board will need to resume redistricting in the coming year which could also provide some costs savings.

Mr. Peterson thanked the committee for their suggestions; he will be following up with the Superintendent to help prioritize the list of recommendations. The committee appreciated that some of this work will be done as part of formulating the next District Improvement Plan.

4. **Superintendent's Report:** Mr. Cummings provided a budget update. Since the time the BoE adopted its 2021-2022 Proposed Budget, the state has released new insurance rates. Ms. Munsell calculated a new blended rate and is now projecting an estimated savings of \$500,000 in health insurance. The district is currently working on a needs assessment that will be required to apply for ESSERII funding.
5. **Open Committee and Public Comment:** No open or public comment
6. **Adjournment:** Mr. Aysseh made the motion to adjourn, Mrs. Vitale seconded. Motion carries, 3-0.

OPEN HOUSES 2021

