



**BOE/CO
Friday Packet
February 18, 2022**

Upcoming Meeting Dates
WFC Open House Notice
WFC Brochure
2022-2027 DIP Steering Committee Member List
CIAC Reply to Fairfield BoE 2-14-2022



Upcoming Board of Education Meeting Dates **2022**

March 1	5:00 PM	Policy Committee Meeting Superintendent Conference Room 501 Kings Hwy East
March 8	7:30 PM	Regular Meeting CO Board Room and Virtual 501 Kings Hwy East
March 9	3:30 PM	Finance Committee Meeting Superintendent Conference Room 501 Kings Hwy East
March 15	5:00 PM	Policy Committee Meeting Superintendent Conference Room 501 Kings Hwy East
March 23	7:30 PM	Special Meeting – Town Hall CO Board Room and Virtual 501 Kings Hwy East

Town Budget Meetings:

BOS:

Thursday 2/24/22 – 10:00 AM, Virtual BoE Presentation

Monday 2/28/22 – 10:00 AM, Virtual Budget Vote

BOF:

Tuesday 3/15/22 – 7:30 PM, Virtual BoE Budget Presentation

Thursday 3/31/22 – 7:30 PM, Virtual Budget Vote

RTM: TBD

WALTER FITZGERALD CAMPUS

OPEN HOUSE

Come and see our new facility
Learn about our alternative high school
program

Two dates!

March 11 & 18 | 9 am - 12 pm |
309 Barberry Road Southport



RSVP to Amy with your choice of 3/11 or 3/18
aborruso@fairfieldschools.org

OVERVIEW OF THE WFC PROGRAM

The WFC offers a transformative high school experience: a quality education in a small community with highly skilled teachers and mental health professionals.

At WFC, students build

- Engagement through Project-Based Learning curriculum experiences
- Well-defined values (PACT: Presence, Accountability, Community, Trust)
- Key Executive Function, Social-Emotional, and life skills

The WFC is an inclusive environment focusing on emotional well-being and promoting equity while maintaining rigorous academic expectations. Our students strive to find meaning in their learning and make an impact in their community.



WALTER FITZGERALD CAMPUS of the FAIRFIELD HIGH SCHOOLS



Walter Fitzgerald Campus
309 Barberry Road
Southport, CT 06890
(203) 255-8384



Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)

provides students with new skills to manage difficult emotions and decrease conflict in relationships. DBT specifically focuses on providing therapeutic skills in four key areas. **Mindfulness** focuses on improving an individual's ability to accept and be present in the current moment.

Distress tolerance is geared toward increasing a person's tolerance of negative emotion, rather than trying to escape from it. **Emotion**

regulation covers strategies to manage and change intense emotions that are causing problems in a person's life.

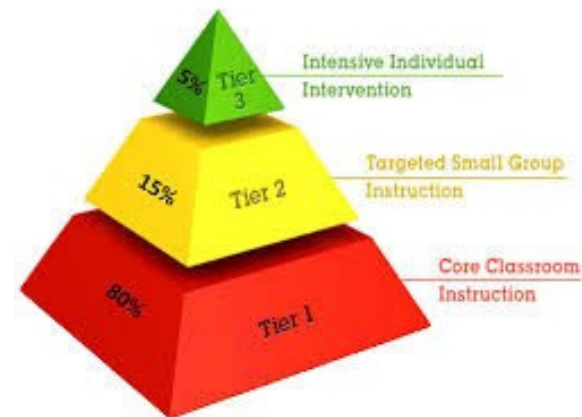
Interpersonal effectiveness consists of techniques that allow a person to communicate with others in a way that is assertive, maintains self-respect, and strengthens relationships.

WFC students in the IMPACT program receive DBT in group and individual counseling.

BEST PRACTICES AT THE WFC



Through Project Based Learning, WFC students gain knowledge, skills, and connection by investigating open-ended questions that culminate in meaningful cross-curricular products and presentations.



The WFC is a restorative program, which means that interactions are learning opportunities. Staff teach pro-social skills in a systematic structure of **Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports**.

Our core values of Presence, Accountability, Community, and Trust (PACT) provide a positive culture of choices with behavior supports, motivation for learning, and a supportive school community.



Executive Functions (EF) are cognitive processes that allow people to plan, organize, make decisions, pay attention, and regulate behavior. All of us use EF skills to solve problems and evaluate the decisions we make. At the WFC, students are explicitly taught EF skills in Academic Support lessons. Classroom teachers infuse EF practice into content-area learning.



FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

2022-2027 District Improvement Plan Steering Committee Members

First Name	Last Name	Role	Employee School
Audra	Allen	Teacher	Fairfield Woods
Siya	Bajaj	Student	Fairfield Ludlowe HS
Jason	Bluestein	Principal	Burr
Jim	Bowen	Parent	Sherman
Calla	Brown	Student	Fairfield Warde HS
Andrea	Clark	Director of Communications	Central Office
Connor	Cowan	Student	Fairfield Ludlowe HS
James	Cunningham	Student	Fairfield Warde HS
Jennifer	Ellwood	Parent	McKinley
Emma	Fekete	Student	Fairfield Warde HS
Sara	Goepfrich	Teacher	Fairfield Ludlowe
Carol	Guernsey	Board of Education/Parent	
Maya	Henry	Student	Fairfield Warde HS
Sara	Hoefer	Teacher	Roger Ludlowe
Lauren	Ji	Student	Fairfield Ludlowe HS
Rachel	Kelleher	Teacher	Fairfield Warde
Crissy	Kelly	Board of Education/Parent	
Kris	Kelso	Dean	Fairfield Woods
Megan	Laney	Teacher	Fairfield Ludlowe
Karin	Martel	Teacher	Fairfield Woods MS
Aniket	Martins	Student	Fairfield Ludlowe HS
Betsy	McNeil	Parent	RLMS, FLHS
Jaydon	Navarro	Student	Fairfield Warde HS
Ross	Novick	Teacher	Fairfield Warde
Yasmine	Osman	Parent	RLMS, FLHS
Sophia	Paul	Parent	North Stratfield
Paul	Rasmussen	Program Director Secondary Math and District Improvement	Central Office
Bob	Smoler	Teacher	Fairfield Warde
Clare	Stafstrom	Teacher	Holland Hill
Jennifer	Swingler	Program Director	Central Office



THE CONNECTICUT INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

February 14, 2022

OFFICERS:

Chair

Sheila Riffle, Principal
Old Saybrook High School

Vice Chair

Daniel Moleti, Principal
Bloomfield High School

Secretary

Matthew Ryan, Principal
East Hartford High School

Treasurer

Anna Mahon, Principal
Amity Regional High School,
Woodbridge

Fairfield Board of Education
501 Kings Hwy E
Fairfield, CT 06825

To Chairwoman Vitale, Vice Chair Aysseh, and Fairfield Board of Education Members,

The CIAC received your February 8th letter regarding the Fairfield Warde and Fairfield Ludlowe boys' ice hockey cooperative team. The CIAC has met with administrative leadership from both schools and the district. CIAC and Fairfield Schools' administration recognize the passion and emotion of student-athletes engaging in interscholastic athletics, as well as the pride in representing their school community.

In your letter, you request that the CIAC "reconsider the decision to exclude the Fairfield boys' co-op ice hockey team from potential participation in this year's state tournament." Your understanding that the CIAC decided to exclude the Fairfield co-op from this year's state tournament is an inaccurate narrative that has been portrayed to the Fairfield community and media. The CIAC did not decide to remove the Fairfield boys' ice hockey co-op from this year's state tournament. Rather, the Fairfield boys' ice hockey program decided to participate as a non-competitive CIAC co-op for the 2021-2022 season and knowingly chose to remove itself from this year's CIAC state tournament. The CIAC cannot grant the Fairfield boys' ice hockey co-op an exception to CIAC bylaws and rules which it entered the season knowing and to which every other CIAC tournament eligible program is held.

The CIAC and Fairfield administration mutually understand that school administrators met with parents and players to review all options for boys' ice hockey participation for the 2021-2022 season and beyond. After being informed of all possibilities, the majority of Fairfield boys' ice hockey parents and players chose to continue to co-op as a non-competitive program for the 2021-2022 season, understanding that taking this path removed them from CIAC post-season competition.

In your letter, you state, "We appreciate that agreements were made two years ago, but we hope we can agree that the world today is not the same as it was when the initial agreement was made." The actions and time frame described in that statement are inaccurate. First, in September of 2019, the CIAC informed Fairfield Ludlowe and Warde that its boys' ice hockey co-op would cease after the 2020-2021 boys ice hockey season. To be precise, the CIAC informed the schools that,

"The schools involved in the co-op must inform all players and their families that the cooperative team will cease to exist at the conclusion of the 2020-21 boys' ice hockey season. The schools involved may continue to add athletes during the phase-out and must continue the no-cut policy. The schools may reapply for cooperative team status if the numbers meet CIAC cooperative team requirements."

The CT Interscholastic Athletic Conference

30 Realty Drive
Cheshire, CT 06410
Phone: (203)250-1111
FAX: (203)250-1345
ciacsports.com

Affiliated with the
National Federation
of State High School
Associations

THE CONNECTICUT INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

To clarify, two years ago, the CIAC informed Fairfield schools that, per cooperative team rules, its co-op would cease after the 2020-2021 season. The CIAC's notification provided the Fairfield Board of Education two years to plan and prepare ice hockey offerings for its Fairfield Warde and Ludlowe student-athletes. The "agreements" made two years ago were between Fairfield Ludlowe and Warde High School, not between the Fairfield schools and the CIAC.

Secondly, the Fairfield Board of Education's suggestion that the choice to play as a co-op outside of CIAC rules made by the Fairfield ice hockey players and parents two years ago does not account for the COVID-19 pandemic does not reflect choices made this year. In September of this school year, the Fairfield schools chose to continue as a non-competitive CIAC co-op, knowing that path removed them from CIAC post-season competition. In September 2021, the Fairfield schools decided to explore two of the four options available to teams that have completed their phase-out period. The four options schools may consider after completing their phase-out period are:

1. The schools involved in the co-op can form separate teams.
2. If one or more schools involved in the co-op are below the number of allowable student-athletes and others are above, then the schools below the number may seek a different co-op partnership while the schools above the limit form stand-alone teams.
3. If the number of student-athletes from each phased-out co-op school falls below allowable limits, the schools may apply for the co-op to be approved again.
4. A cooperative program that has completed a phase-out may apply for continued existence as a "non-CIAC competitive" program for the season immediately following the completed phase-out. Schools knowingly taking this path remove themselves from CIAC post-season competition. Schools applying to opt-out must submit to the CIAC Co-op Committee a letter of approval from their league and each non-league opponent. The opt-out accommodation is for one (1) year at a time.

In September of 2021, the schools considered all possibilities and first chose to apply for the co-op to be approved again, based on numbers falling below the allowable limit. The CIAC co-op committee denied Fairfield's application due to (a) the number of athletes exceeding the allowable limit, and (b) the reason listed by the schools for applying was that "the district has said that they will not support two separate teams." CIAC bylaw 3.0 Article XI states that a cooperative team application will be considered only when two or more schools are experiencing difficulty obtaining enough competitors to form a stand-alone team. Schools cannot request forming cooperative teams for financial reasons.

Being denied its co-op application in September 2021, the majority of Fairfield boys' ice hockey parents and players chose to continue to co-op as a non-competitive program for the 2021-2022 season. The Fairfield schools, players, and parents made that choice with the full understanding that taking this path removed them from CIAC post-season competition. This school year, Fairfield boys' ice hockey co-op sought and obtained approval letters from the FCIAC and their non-league opponents to play them in the regular season and FCIAC championships, understanding that the Fairfield team was playing outside of CIAC rules. Each opponent granting this approval understood they would not face the Fairfield boys' ice hockey co-op in the CIAC tournament. Fairfield is playing outside of CIAC co-op rules and may have a competitive advantage over its opponents. The Fairfield boys' ice hockey co-op voluntarily opted out of the CIAC state tournament and scheduled its 2021-2022 hockey season with that understanding. They were not concerned with their choice until they were undefeated five games into the season.

On a statewide basis, several co-op teams (including Fairfield boys' ice hockey) were approaching the end of their phase-out period during pandemic impacted school years. All chose the option that best fit their programs. These teams include another boys' ice hockey co-op with schools similar to Fairfield Ludlowe and Warde. In that case, the schools' co-op team phase-out period ended after the 2020-2021 hockey season (the same as Fairfield). The school with enough players to form a stand-alone team did so and is competing this season. The school below the number of allowable student-athletes joined a different school to create a new cooperative team within CIAC co-op rules. All schools that ended their phase-out period during pandemic impacted seasons planned for and chose the option that best fits their school community for the 2021-2022 season and beyond.

THE CONNECTICUT INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

The Fairfield schools chose and planned to remain a boys ice hockey co-op, knowing that path removed them from CIAC tournament play.

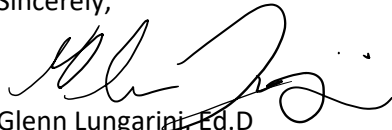
Historically, the Fairfield boys' ice hockey co-op is the fourth team that chose to participate as a non-competitive CIAC team and opt out of the CIAC state tournament. For the past two years, the Fairfield schools planned for its ice hockey co-op to continue as a non-competitive CIAC team and made no plans to do otherwise. In its September 2021 cooperative team application, the Fairfield schools state that the district will not support two separate teams, indicating no alternative to continuing as a co-op and opting out of the CIAC state tournament was considered. Additionally, the CIAC has been informed that the proposed Fairfield Public Schools budget does not include funding to establish stand-alone teams for Ludlowe and Warde High School in the 2022-2023 school year.

A historical review of Fairfield's boys' ice hockey co-op may help the Fairfield Board of Education understand why the CIAC issued the phase-out period in 2019 and denied its application in 2021. To be eligible to co-op in boys ice hockey, no school may have more than 15 student-athletes rostered, and no combined total among all schools may exceed 30 student-athletes. Regarding a cooperative's team roster not exceeding a total of 30 student-athletes, Fairfield boys' ice hockey exceeded that limit in each of the past five seasons: 2018 (32), 2019 (39), 2020 (34), 2021 (38), and 2022 (33). Consistently playing as a cooperative team beyond the allowable limit provides a competitive advantage. Also, it does not align with the purpose of co-ops, which is to allow two or more schools experiencing difficulty obtaining enough competitors to form a stand-alone team to compete together.

In conclusion, the Fairfield boys' ice hockey team chose to compete in the 2021-2022 CIAC hockey season as a non-competitive co-op, understanding that taking that path removed them from CIAC post-season competition. The decision was made in September of 2021 after its application to reform its co-op was denied. The CIAC denied Fairfield's ice hockey co-op application because (a) the number of athletes exceeded the allowable limit, and (b) the reason listed by the schools for applying was that "the district said that they will not support two separate teams." Schools cannot request forming cooperative teams for financial reasons. Additionally, during the pandemic impacted school years, several co-opt teams (including Fairfield boys' ice hockey) were approaching the end of their phase-out period. All chose the best option for their programs for the 2021-2022 season. Finally, a review of the Fairfield boys' ice hockey cooperative team history shows that the number of rostered athletes consistently exceeds the 30 player limit.

The CIAC reminds the Fairfield Board of Education that the accommodation of applying for continued existence as a "non-CIAC competitive" program, understanding that taking this path removes the team from CIAC post-season competition, is granted one (1) year at a time. As of this letter, the CIAC is not aware of any plans the Fairfield Board of Education, or its schools, have considered beyond the 2021-2022 school year for its boys' ice hockey program.

Sincerely,



Glenn Lungarini, Ed.D
Executive Director

Cc: Superintendent of Fairfield Public Schools, Mike Cummings