

**Regular Meeting Minutes
Fairfield BoE, September 29, 2022, 7:30 PM**

NOTICE: A full meeting recording can be obtained from Fairfield Public Schools. Please call 203-255-8371 for more information and/or see the FPS website (under Board Meeting Minutes) for a link to FAIRTV and FPS YouTube.

Voting Summary

Call to order of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education and Roll Call

Chairman Christine Vitale called the Regular meeting to order at 7:31PM. Present were members Jennifer Jacobsen, Carol Guernsey, Jessica Gerber, Christine Vitale, Nick Aysseh, Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly (call-in), Jeff Peterson and Crissy Kelly. Mrs. Rotelli was not present. Others present were Acting Superintendent Steve Tracy, members of the central office leadership team and six members of the public.

Old Business

Adoption of Policy 6148, Instruction: FAFSA Completion Rates

Mrs. Gerber moved/Mrs. Jacobsen seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education adopt Policy 6148, Instruction: FAFSA Completion Rates.”

Motion passed 7-0 (Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly was not on the line for this vote).

New Business

Discussion and possible action on Successor Collective Bargaining Agreement with Secretaries’ Union

Mrs. Gerber moved/Mr. Peterson seconded the recommended motion “the Board of Education hereby moves to provide funding for and to otherwise accept and approve the Tentative Agreement for a successor collective bargaining agreement with the Secretaries’ Union for the period of July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2023”

Motion passed 7-0 (Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly was not on the line for this vote).

Riverfield and Sherman Partial Roof Replacement

Mr. Aysseh moved/Mrs. Gerber seconded a motion of add a vote on the Riverfield and Sherman partial roof replacement to the agenda.

Motion passed 7-0 (Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly was not on the line for this vote).

Mr. Aysseh moved/Mrs. Kelly seconded to approve the Riverfield and Sherman partial roof replacement.

Motion passed 8-0.

Approval of Minutes

Mrs. Jacobsen moved/Mrs. Gerber seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve the 8-24-2022 BoE Special meeting minutes and the 8-30-2022 Regular meeting minutes.”

Motion passed 8-0

Adjournment

Mrs. Jacobsen moved/Mrs. Guernsey seconded the recommended motion “that this Regular Meeting of the Board of Education adjourn.”

Motion passed 8-0. Meeting adjourned at 9:30PM.

Detailed Minutes

Mrs. Vitale requested and received approval to move agenda item 4A before item 3 to introduce and welcome new Director of Communications, Rachel Chappa. Ms. Chappa thanked the Board and said she is honored to be part of the FPS team; her goal is to keep staff, parents and the community well-informed. Dr. Tracy welcomed Ms. Chappa and thanked previous Director Ms. Clark for her valuable support during a difficult time.

Presentations

First Reading of Course: Yoga/Mindfulness II

Ms. Mayeran presented the course proposal for Yoga, Mindfulness and Personal Fitness II; a semester long course for students who wish to continue their yoga practice and explore a more individual approach to health and wellness. No textbook or new teacher hires are expected; the number of student requests will dictate the number of sections. Supplies used are mats, blocks and straps. Some teacher training may be required.

Ms. Guernsey said she is thrilled about the new course and has heard lots of positive feedback. Mrs. Vitale agreed and said it is a nice complement to SEL.

Ms. Kelly said the high school population is expected to decrease over the next few years and she is concerned that adding classes will result in others being dropped. Dr. Zavodjancik said he will provide PE elective enrollment information.

First Reading of Course: Advanced Pottery

Ms. Hermsen presented the course proposal for Advanced Pottery. Students will be asked to build upon their knowledge of materials and the techniques learned from the Intro to Pottery course. There will be no personnel or material supply expenditures beyond current expectations with the addition of this course. Upon completion, students will have the pieces for beginning a 3D portfolio and can apply for the AP-3D Design Portfolio Course. Dr. Zavodjancik said the current Program of Studies lists Advanced Pottery and Sculpture as one course and the plan is to split the course; he will provide updated enrollment numbers including student requests.

Ms. Hermsen and Dr. Zavodjancik responded to Board questions:

- The course will help students prepare for the AP exam.
- Advanced Pottery could be collapsed into Pottery if not enough students sign up.
- The prerequisite for AP 3D Art includes either Advanced Pottery or Advanced Sculpture, both are not required. Mrs. Jacobsen asked that the Program of Studies be updated to reflect correct prerequisites.
- Students may take the AP 3D exam even if not enrolled in the class.
- Mrs. Jacobsen said she would like to see fewer steps in the course trajectory.
- Ms. Guernsey said she welcomes the change and wants to ensure students can access needed courses to build portfolios.

First Reading of Course: Advanced Sculpture

Ms. Hermesen presented the course proposal for Advanced Sculpture. Students will use and experiment with forms, structures, materials, 3D concepts and art making approaches. There will be no personnel or material supply expenditures beyond current expectations with the addition of this course.

Old Business

Adoption of Policy 6148, Instruction: FAFSA Completion Rates

Mrs. Gerber moved, Mrs. Jacobsen seconded that the Board of Education adopt Policy 6148, Instruction: FAFSA Completion Rates.

Motion Passed: 7-0

(Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly was not on the line for this vote)

New Business

Discussion and possible action on Successor Collective Bargaining Agreement with Secretaries' Union

Mrs. Gerber moved, Mr. Peterson seconded that the Board of Education hereby moves to provide funding for and to otherwise accept and approve the Tentative Agreement for a successor collective bargaining agreement with the Secretaries' Union for the period of July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2023.

Motion Passed: 7-0

(Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly was not on the line for this vote)

DIP Update

Dr. Tracy thanked executive leadership and program directors for their contributions and reported the following updates:

- Social Studies guides have been produced for all levels.
- The ELA Steering Committee will address the state's newly released list of acceptable reading programs.
- In math, K-5 common assessments have been reviewed; Bridges PK program was purchased; multi-tiered support work has begun between elementary and middle schools; secondary implementation guides are being developed; and the K-12 assessment review committee has been established.
- In science, revision to elementary guides were completed over the summer and teacher training in assessments will take place this fall; and middle school unit guides have been developed.
- Principals are identifying teacher leaders for SEL; the SEL universal screener will be launched on October 8; a multi-tiered SEL support structure has been drafted.
- The DEI Director has been working with principals to incorporate DEI into School Improvement Plans.
- 2021-2022 data has been uploaded into the DIP; SIPs are linked to the DIP on the district website. The student achievement data presentation will take place on October 25th.

First Reading of Policy 3542.43: Business/Non-Instructional Operations, Food Service Charging

Ms. LeBoriosis reported that a CT Senate Bill prohibits shaming or disciplining students for non-payment. There is a proactive approach for meal assistance throughout the year.

First Reading of North Stratfield, Osborn Hill and Fairfield Woods Ed Specs

Mr. Papageorge reported that the A/C projects include fresh air and the addition of a secured vestibule. This is Phase I of adding A/C to all buildings and grants and OSCG&R reimbursement will be pursued. The Phase I A/C project was approved by all town bodies; the vestibules were moved up but still fall within the \$12.5M cap.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly suggested adding that one of the schools is used as a polling location.

Mrs. Vitale said the town held its first Capital Working Group.

Mrs. Jacobsen requested clarification on the use of ARP funds.

First Reading of Capital Non-Recurring and Capital Projects

Mr. Papageorge reported that the Warde boiler replacement and Knapps Hwy tennis courts are design projects to obtain more accurate estimates. The projects will again be presented to the Board when the full project dollar amounts are requested.

Mr. Papageorge requested approval of the Riverfield and Sherman roof projects to move them forward for Monday's BOS meeting as well as to meet the November OSCG&R timeline. Mrs. Vitale thanked Ms. Kupchick for adding the item to the BOS meeting agenda.

Mr. Aysseh moved, Mrs. Gerber seconded a motion of add a vote on the Riverfield and Sherman partial roof replacement to the agenda.

Mr. Papageorge said the cost estimate was developed last year and the ed specs have already been approved.

Motion Passed: 7-0

(Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly was not on the line for this vote)

Mr. Aysseh moved, Mrs. Kelly seconded to approve the Riverfield and Sherman partial roof replacement.

Motion Passed: 8-0

Dr. Tracy thanked Mr. Papageorge for his care and precision to keep complicated projects moving along.

Approval of Minutes

Mrs. Jacobsen moved, Mrs. Gerber seconded that the Board of Education approve the 8-24-2022 BoE Special meeting minutes and the 8-30-2022 Regular meeting minutes.

Motion Passed: 8-0

Superintendent Report

Elementary Enrollment

Dr. Parrish reported 199 elementary sections based on current enrollment, matching the number of sections in the budget. An additional September registration at McKinley resulted in one new section. No additional staff is needed at this time and enrollment will continue to be monitored.

Mr. Aysseh said enrollment numbers at NSS signaled that sections should have been collapsed prior to the start of school instead of days into the school year; the policy surrounding this last-minute change needs to be reviewed moving forward. Mrs. Vitale said 11th hour changes are not ideal.

Mr. Mancusi will provide Warde and Stratfield ECC program enrollment numbers.

International Field Trips

Dr. Parrish reviewed the secondary student international trips as approved by the administration. In consultation with Pullman & Comley, the travel waiver was revised. Four separate trips are planned to Italy, France and Spain.

Mrs. Vitale said she is excited that students will once again experience school-based international travel.

Staffing Update

Ms. Ingram reported three certified teacher vacancies: World Language (currently filled by a long-term substitute in certification process through Durational Shortage Area Permit), tech-ed and music. 23.9 paraeducator positions are open. Ms. Ingram thanked Mr. Mancusi for orchestrating partnerships with Fairfield University and Housatonic Community College to recruit substitutes and paraeducators. HR is also working closely with the Director of Communications on a marketing plan for recruitment that will include visits to schools and billboards. Contracted paraeducators will be working in FPS to help with the shortage. Dr. Tracy thanked Ms. Ingram for leading the charge through a tough recruitment market.

Transfer Report

Ms. LeBoriorous reported that she is bringing transfer items before the Board as they occur, rather than waiting until June as has been done in past practice. There was an emergency need to transfer funds from the contract line to the personnel line to fund the crossing guards. FPS attempted to go to bid in an expedited timeframe but that was determined to be more expensive. Ms. LeBoriorous reported that there is also a paraeducator contract obligation of approximately \$400K. The transfer items will be on the next agenda for a Board vote.

Ms. LeBoriorous and Mr. Mancusi responded to Board questions:

- More detail will be provided for the vote at the next meeting, but it is not new money.
- Eight paraeducators are currently contracted through three different agencies, mostly to cover CLCs. Four paraeducators are pending placement by the agencies. The cost varies among agencies. Contracted positions are generally paid for the school year.
- The town has approved the purchase orders.
- The previously reported paraeducator staffing shortage of 23.9 paras is exclusive of contracted paras.
- Contracted amounts are being carefully tracked to remain within budget as much as possible. The goal is to fill the paraeducator positions. Mrs. Jacobsen requested the variance between the amount paid for contracted paraeducators and the amount available for FPS employed paraeducators.

Mrs. Vitale noted that the budget can be adjusted for special circumstances if necessary and she thanked Ms. LeBoriorous for bringing the items to the attention of the Board.

Dr. Tracy thanked Mr. Mancusi and Ms. Leboriorous for working through the vacancies, and noted that incoming Superintendent Mr. Testani is aware of the issue.

Ms. Kelly requested an update on attrition numbers and said she was optimistic that the district could use available funds to cover the extra expense of contracted employees.

Ms. Kelly requested clarification on a recent email regarding math. Dr. Tracy and Mrs. Vitale said more information will be provided at a later date.

Committee Reports

Mr. Peterson reported for Board of Finance: The Q4 report was received well. There were multiple questions about transportation.

Mr. Aysseh reported for the Facilities Committee: Priority projects were discussed. The redistricting charge and guiding principles were reviewed.

Mr. Aysseh read a report from Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly for Parks and Rec: The RLMS field renovation appears to have room for a baseball field.

Mrs. Gerber reported for MHBC: Mr. Li has requested Board leadership attend a final walk-through as the project nears completion. Drought has affected some landscaping.

Mrs. Vitale reported for SEPTA: Mr. Testani, Mr. Mancusi, and Ms. Marte attended the recent SEPTA meeting. Trick or trunk will take place at NSS. Pies will be sold for a Thanksgiving fundraiser.

Mrs. Vitale reported for the town capital working group: Future meetings will be open to the public; the ultimate goal is to prepare a 5-year capital plan for the town. Mrs. Vitale said she met with Dwight parents regarding redistricting concerns and shared that there are no current redistricting plans. The Racial Imbalance Plan is approved and will be presented to the state Board of Education on October 12. The Board will work with staff to get a redistricting dedicated web page to provide current information. The public was encouraged to stay informed through public meetings.

Public Comment

David Krosnoff, Dwight Parent: SLAM missed the boat with elementary projections; a 1% change in one year that continues to happen over ten years equals 400 students.

Katie Flynn, PTAC President: Reducing a section at NSS on the 2nd day of school is not a worthwhile change. The principal and teachers handled the change perfectly; a final drop date should be explored to avoid this last-minute change.

Adjournment

Mrs. Jacobsen moved, Mrs. Guernsey seconded the recommended motion “that this Regular Meeting of the Board of Education adjourn.”

Motion Passed: 8-0

Meeting adjourned at 9:30PM.

Respectfully Submitted by Jessica Gerber, Fairfield Board of Education Secretary