

**Regular Meeting Minutes
Fairfield BoE, October 23, 2018**

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.

Voting Summary:

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

Chairman Philip Dwyer called the Regular meeting to order at 7:32PM. Present were members Trisha Pytko, Jennifer Leeper, Christine Vitale, Jessica Gerber, Philip Dwyer, Jennifer Jacobsen, Nick Aysseh, Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly, Jeff Peterson and student representatives Mr. Holtz, Ms. Phillips, Mr. Rivera and Ms. Solari. Others present were Superintendent Dr. Toni Jones, members of the central office leadership team, and approximately 50 members of the public.

Old Business

Adoption of Policy 6146: Requirements for Graduation

Mrs. Jacobsen asked the Board for unanimous consent to withdraw the amendment to the policy; the Board agreed. Mr. Dwyer asked the Board for unanimous consent to withdraw the prior motion to approve the policy; the Board agreed. Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved/Mrs. Jacobsen seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education adopt Policy 6146: Requirements for Graduation” Motion passed 9-0.

New Business

Approval of CSDE ED-099 Agreement for Child Nutrition Programs

Mrs. Gerber moved/Mrs. Vitale seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve the authorized signers listed in ED-099, the Agreement for Child Nutrition Programs.” Motion passed 9-0

Approval of Minutes

Mrs. Gerber moved/Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve the *Special Minutes* of September 11, 2018, October 9, 2018 (5:45) and October 9, 2018 (6:45); and the *Regular Minutes* of September 11, 2018” Motion passed 9-0.

Adjournment

Mrs. Gerber moved/Ms. Leeper seconded the recommended motion “that this Regular Meeting of the Board of Education adjourn.” Motion passed 8-0. Meeting adjourned at 10:52PM.

Detailed Minutes:

Chairman Dwyer introduced the student representatives and thanked them for participating and sharing comments.

Student Reports

Mr. Holtz and Ms. Phillips reported for FLHS: The football team is experiencing success, the boys soccer team will be in the playoffs that start next week; the annual Ludlowe/Warde soccer game helped to raise Breast Cancer awareness by encouraging fans to wear pink; girls volleyball currently is 6th in FCIAC and recently celebrated their seniors; the annual activity fair was held last week; the PSAT test was taken a few weeks ago; a week-long anti bullying event produced a noticeable change in attitude; students are working on the original drama production *A Wilder Time*.

Mr. Rivera and Ms. Solari reported for FWHS: Fall sports have had a strong start; the NEASC team recently toured Warde and after meeting with staff and parents, will produce a report with accommodations and recommendations; the Warde Physics Team placed first for public schools in the Physics Olympiad; many students participated in the Summer Symposium; the concert series starts this week; Homecoming is this week; the Freshman Forum will be held on November 7.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly commended Mr. Rivera for being part of the winning Physics Team, and asked the student representatives to comment on the use of Chromebooks. The students said Chromebooks allow efficiency and increase productivity; they are fast, easy to use, help classes run more smoothly; and they have heard positive comments from other students.

Presentations

PTA Recognition

Mrs. Gerber recognized PTA representatives as extremely helpful and noted their important responsibility as a conduit between PTA and the Board. She acknowledged the PTA reps present at the meeting: Dale Resnick/Jennings, Joy Ross/PTAC, Katie Flynn/NSS and Carolyn Trabuco/PTAC. Mr. Dwyer added that the Board appreciates all that the PTA does to improve the school system.

Student Data Report

Mr. Cummings said student data serves to raise questions rather than provide answers. He introduced the presenters: Ms. Renzulli/Kdg Teacher, Ms. Miller/2nd Grade Teacher, Ms. Morello/LA Specialist, Ms. Rountos/LA Specialist, Ms. Galgano/Elementary Program Facilitator, Mr. Hudspeth/OHS Principal, Ms. Martel/MS World Language, Mr. Kelso/MS World Language and Dr. Rasmussen/Director Secondary Math and Student Achievement. The success in 2017-2018 includes an increase in the percentage of students achieving Goal or Above Goal on SBA in Grades 3-8, the implementation of consistent and meaningful SRBI process in all 11 elementary schools, and an increase in the number of students taking AP Courses. Challenges to the Principles of Instructional Improvement include variability, budget priorities and state and national expectations.

The Elementary SRBI process is instruction based on individual student needs. It is a team approach and aligns curriculum, coaching/feedback, professional development and assessment. Examples were given showing how universal screenings led to SRBI meetings, which then led to classifications of (a) no concern, (b) coach/consult, or (c) EIP meeting. This process is very helpful in developing strategies to assist students. It allows teachers to use multiple data points to make student-centered decisions, reducing the number of students needing higher levels of intervention.

A World Language example was used to demonstrate the use of data at the middle school level. The philosophy centered on competency-learning and focusing on what students can do. Teachers used data to personalize instruction and collaborate with colleagues. The students are part of the process and analyze their own work.

Dr. Rasmussen explained the importance of student growth data as it relates to assessments and how it affects district/school and state accountability. The state has developed growth targets for each student relative to where s/he is currently. Achievement and growth combined over time is a better metric, and much of the state's data is readily available on the EdSight website. The district is working with growth metrics to improve assessment literacy, link instructional practices around high-growth levels, and focus on effective instructional practices.

Mr. Cummings summed up the challenges and work that remains going forward. He emphasized that the district is growing a culture of continuous improvement for all students, being mindful that it takes time to do this work well.

Board members thanked staff for the informative presentation and felt it was very helpful. The presenters responded to Board questions:

- The percentage of students that have completed 4 years of high school World Language will be provided.
- Secondary-level tier interventions include DBT and WFC.
- STAMP is the name of the World Language assessment.
- It is a bit too early to know the value of growth metrics and how it affects SRBI. Dr. Jones said it is important to ensure that growth data focuses on helping students, rather than emphasizing the scores. Collaboration is ongoing during the school day and during Professional Development.
- There was some information in the SPED audit that highlights the effectiveness of the SRBI process. Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked if there was a budget number that could be tied to this.
- Growth data is not tied to staff goals. The state determines growth targets on an individual basis. Growth data follows true matched cohorts.
- Professional Development uses work protocol – identifying groups of students in student work samples – in order to target all students, including those who meet or exceed benchmarks.
- When looking at AP benchmark data, it is important to note that open enrollment in AP courses has encouraged students to challenge themselves. It should also be recognized that AP courses have varying degrees of difficulty.

Old Business

Adoption of Policy 6146: Requirements for Graduation

Mr. Dwyer said two motions were continued from the previous meeting and needed to be addressed before moving on with a new motion. Mrs. Jacobsen noted the Board supports community service, but it needs more thought as a graduation requirement.

Mrs. Jacobsen asked the Board for unanimous consent to withdraw the amendment to the policy; the Board agreed.

Mr. Dwyer asked Dr. Jones to further explore ways to embed community service into the curriculum.

Mr. Dwyer asked the Board for unanimous consent to withdraw the prior motion to approve the policy; the Board agreed.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Mrs. Jacobsen seconded that the Board of Education adopt Policy 6146: Requirements for Graduation.

Ms. Phillips felt the Civics requirement was fully met by taking APUSH and perhaps even the sophomore required Global Studies. Mr. Cummings said the conversation on this piece is not yet complete; he will advise Dr. Pugliese and invite Ms. Phillips to be a part of discussion.

Ms. Leeper noticed there was no progress on the flexibility of the PE requirement, and asked about the Wellness portion. Mr. Cummings said Wellness course options are being explored. Mr. Dwyer felt life experience outside of classroom experience should be counted. Ms. Leeper agreed, and added that internships are valuable. She thanked Mr. Cummings for discussing financial literacy, as she felt it is one of the biggest components to having a successful adult life.

Mr. Peterson and Mrs. Jacobsen thanked Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly for her leadership with this policy, and mentioned that there was public participation at some of the policy meetings.

Public Comment:

Bob Smoler, FEA President: Disagrees with using the SAT as a content mastery option.

Ms. Phillips added that the SAT requirement is inconvenient; many students opt for the ACT instead.

Motion Passed: 9-0

[New Business](#)

First Reading of Policies

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked the Board to review the two policies and submit questions to her as soon as possible. Policy 5144.1 - Use of Physical Force, includes statute language changes. Policy 5125 - Student Education Records and Confidentiality, includes language changes generated by staff.

First Reading of 2019-2020 Calendar

Dr. Jones said the 2019-2020 calendar mirrors the current calendar and has been reviewed by staff and FEA President Mr. Smoler. It follows with the CES calendar for spring break, noting that many teachers would be affected if a different week were chosen. The calendar includes 5 days, as required, for Professional Development (PD), 182 instructional days, and 187 staff work days. PD gives teachers time to collaborate, leading to improved instruction and better preparation. Dr. Jones mentioned what is done differently in other districts, including having school on Veteran's Day, having 188 staff work days, and having 181 instructional days.

A majority of the Board was not in favor of the May 22 early dismissal and several members expressed reservations on the large number of early dismissals in October. It is inconvenient for families and disruptive for instruction. When asked about starting the school year earlier, Mr. Smoler said while not contractually prohibited, the schools are too hot to start any earlier; Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly added that she would not support an earlier start date as that would force teachers to give up that last weekend. Mrs. Gerber added that it was decided by prior Boards that an earlier start date would not be fair to teachers.

Several Board members questioned the late PD day in May, and some preferred that it occurs earlier in the year for maximum benefit. Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked if the SAT results would be known by that time and Mr. Cummings wasn't sure, but results are expected around the June timeframe. Dr. Jones said she expects the May PD to be very beneficial; testing is over and teachers can focus on new learning.

Mr. Peterson asked that the calendar correctly reflect Washington's Birthday (not Presidents Day).

Mr. Arnone said the elementary schools plan ahead for early dismissals to meet the special education needs of students. Principals shuffle teacher planning time and specials; it is a bit of work to get this done, but well worth it.

Mr. Aysseh asked about the after school Tuesday PD sessions and asked the Board to consider addressing the large number of early dismissals, perhaps by adding a full day of PD instead. Mr. Cummings said late Tuesdays are contractually required, but added that it is difficult to get much done in the short one-hour time frame, given that teachers have already worked a full day. A longer PD as provided by an early dismissal, or a full day, is more productive and meaningful. Dr. Jones added that the previous calendars were not meeting the PD needs of the district. Full-day PDs are not instructional days. The option to have a full PD/Conference day instead of 2 half-day PD/Conference days may be possible if an instructional day is added or if there is agreement to have 181 instructional days.

Mrs. Vitale requested the absentee rate on days before a holiday.

Mr. Dwyer asked Board members to submit all calendar proposal ideas to the Superintendent before the next Board meeting. It is too hard to make calendar changes and identify the ripple effects at the table.

Gen-Ed PK Enrollment Process

Dr. Jones requested the Board's thoughts and comments on placing the Stratfield and Burr general PK classrooms under the enrollment umbrella of the ECC. The gen-ed PKs exist as a means to solve Racial Imbalance, but the numbers show that this is not working. The transportation costs, over time, have overtaken the value. The revenue that is generated from tuition is not enough to cover the program. This new arrangement would lower the caseload for ECC teachers and provide an economic savings. At this time, the district is researching facilities to house the program. There is no anticipated drop in the number of students. Board members agreed that gen-ed PK is a valuable program worth keeping, and agreed to house it all under ECC as one program.

BOE Goal Discussion

Mr. Dwyer said the Board had approved one all-encompassing goal that will require much work, but several other goals remain. He assured the Board that the remaining goals are not forgotten and are listed as enclosed. Goals 4 and 8 are actually bylaw changes and can be submitted officially for a vote at the December meeting.

Approval of CSDE ED-099 Agreement for Child Nutrition Programs

Mrs. Gerber moved, Mrs. Vitale seconded that the Board of Education approve the authorized signers listed in ED-099, the Agreement for Child Nutrition Programs.

Mr. Dwyer said this is a time sensitive form that requires immediate action.

Motion Passed: 9-0

Approval of Minutes

Mrs. Gerber moved, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded that the Board of Education approve the *Special* Minutes of September 11, 2018, October 9, 2018 (5:45) and October 9, 2018 (6:45); and the *Regular* Minutes of September 11, 2018.

Motion Passed: 9-0

Superintendent Report

Dr. Jones reported:

- Thanked Mr. Cullen for all the work on the turf field at Warde. The first football game took place on the turf.
- Warde's Equity Task Force presented at NEASC and is being recognized around the state.
- Congratulated OHS for their fantastic Diversity Day.
- The Budget Prep manual shows elementary is down 4 sections as well as showing a trend that more 8th graders are remaining in district for 9th grade. Allocations are done per student and are too difficult to reconfigure once the year has begun.
- Woodard and Curran will be at Dwight School to respond to questions from the community on the environmental assessment. Even though not recommended, an additional layer of testing is scheduled. FPS relies on the Board of Health to guide the choice of contractors and next-level environmental work. If the building is deemed unhealthy, there will be no hesitation to relocate students.

Mr. Cullen said the additional air sample testing is taking place in 8 classrooms and several spots outdoors. If surface mold exists, it will be picked up by the air sample testing. No building prep is required and there is no need to close the building. Like Dwight, several schools also experienced surface water on corridor floors due to excessive dampness and humidity.

[Committee/Liaison Reports](#)

Ms. Pytko reported for SEPTA: The Medicaid Coordinator will be at the next SEPTA meeting to answer questions; Wilton Cinemas will hold the premier of 'Changing the Perception of Intellectual Disability'; after school Chill and TGIS are programs offered through Parks and Rec; register online for the Best Buddies program.

Ms. Leeper reported that the November 6 Finance Committee meeting will be rescheduled.

Mrs. Vitale reported for the Sherman BC: Silver Petrucelli is the chosen architect doing initial work on the bus loop and air conditioning.

Mrs. Gerber reported that the FLHS BC Chairman plans to request that the BoE, after 6 years, accept the project as complete at the December BOE meeting. The FLHSBC will then request the BOS dissolve the committee.

Mrs. Gerber reported that the Mill Hill BC has chosen Silver Petrucelli as the architect; the next meeting is November 14th.

[Open Board Comment:](#)

Ms. Leeper thanked the firefighters that teach fire safety and education to PK and other students. She thanked Mr. Mancusi for the ECC roundtable discussion and enjoyed the OHS Diversity Day.

Ms. Pytko said she will chair Burr's Diversity Day.

Mr. Dwyer reported that at the bottom of the 6th, it's Dodgers-3, Red Sox-5.

[Public Comment:](#)

Mr. Smoler, FEA President: PD time is needed for proper implementation of the many district initiatives.

[Adjournment:](#)

Mrs. Gerber moved, Ms. Leeper seconded that this Regular Meeting of the Board of Education adjourn.

Motion Passed: 9-0

Meeting adjourned at 10:52PM.

*Respectfully submitted by
Jessica Gerber
Fairfield Board of Education
Secretary*