

**Regular Meeting Minutes
Fairfield BoE, March 15, 2016**

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Call to Order of the Special Meeting of the Board of Education and Roll Call

Chairman Philip Dwyer called the Regular meeting to order at 7:37PM. Present were members Eileen Liu-McCormack, Marc Patten, Donna Karnal, Jessica Gerber, Philip Dwyer, Anthony Calabrese, Trisha Pytko, Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly and John Llewellyn. Others present were Superintendent Dr. David Title, Ludlowe student representative Mihir Nene; Warde student representative Ashley Agrello; members of the central office leadership team, and approximately 20 members of the public.

Student Reports

Mr. Nene reported for Fairfield Ludlowe High School: A Capella night, which included middle school students, took place recently, the community college fair was held; the sophomore dance is coming up; juniors took the new SAT; the winter concerts took place on March 8 and 9; Student Council sponsored "Hanging out with Mr. Hatzis"; the Battle of the Houses will take place soon; International Day was held; the boys Hockey Team is in the state finals, and boys basketball made it to the quarter-finals.

Mr. Dwyer noted that many students, in addition to teachers, participated in International Day.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly mentioned that the Coop Bowling Team also won the championship. Mr. Nene added that the cheerleaders should also be recognized and Fairfield Ludlowe won first place in the Junior Achievement Business Challenge.

Ms. Agrello reported for Fairfield Warde High School: On March 2nd, students took the school-administered SAT, she also took the SAT that was administered on March 5; 10th graders completed the CAPT Science test; a successful blood drive, senior voter registration, and the National Latin exam and course selection all took place; the Sadie's dance will take place this Friday; girls Basketball Team made it to the finals; congratulations to New England Wrestling Champions, Tim and Charlie Kane; and the student forum is preparing for the Battle of the Houses.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack asked about the winning project in the Jr. Achievement Business Challenge and SAT comparisons. Mr. Nene said a business challenge problem is presented and solved by the team. Ms. Agrello said the new SAT is more application-based.

Mr. Llewellyn asked Ms. Agrello if SATs tests she took were essentially the same and she said yes.

Public Comment

Christine Vitale, Verna Hill Road: Supports RYASAP survey. Does not support extending the school year.

Presentations

Consideration of the Regional Youth Adult Social Action Partnership (RYASAP) Survey

Mr. Robert Francis, RYASAP CEO, gave an overview of the RYASAP survey and how the data is used. Assets and strengths of young people will address issues; by strengthening assets, risky behaviors are reduced. The survey is generally given every 2 or 3 years. Results are used extensively by federal and state governments, as well as communities and groups like RYASAP. In the greater Bridgeport region, there is generally a 1% opt-out rate.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked for clarification on the number of students that take the survey and opt-out communication to parents. Mr. Francis said the survey is administered to 25% of students in grades 7-12, in all 5 middle and high schools. Dr. Title said an opt-out notice will be sent out through Infinite Campus (IC).

Mr. Llewellyn asked for further clarification on the opt-out notice. Dr. Title said an IC message can be sent with an attachment; the method of delivery depends on how parents have defined their communication within IC.

Ms. Karnal asked about the length of the test and the possibility of debriefing students as there are many interesting topics covered in the survey. Mr. Frances said the survey is approximately 40 minutes; a very experienced teacher would be needed to debrief students immediately following the test; the survey fosters community focus groups in the weeks following the survey.

Mr. Patten asked if the survey only takes a half a period, and whether it is the same survey that was administered 2 years ago. Dr. Title said the survey takes place in a 'mini' and is restricted to that length of time – similar test conditions are needed for trend-line data. Mr. Frances said there is no change to the survey from 2 years ago.

Middle School Computers Curriculum

Ms. Vilenski and Ms. Wilson said the Middle School Computers Curriculum is being updated to align with 21st century skills and ISTE standards. The curriculum development included the review of standards, focus groups, and online forms for parent feedback. 6th graders learn about productivity apps, internet use, document formatting and spreadsheets; 8th graders learn computer programming, graphic design and advanced coding concepts and skills. No additional resources are needed to implement this curriculum. Dr. Boice thanked the teachers for their presentation.

Mr. Dwyer thanked the presenters and all those involved.

Mr. Patten asked about the difference in the 6th grade curriculum, and the coding language that is used in the 8th grade. Ms. Vilenski said, while the 6th grade curriculum is similar, keyboarding is more differentiated, there is more depth in units, online drives were added, and there is more on internet safety. Dr. Boice said this is offered throughout the school year and was designed to allow flexibility. Ms. Vilenski added that the 8th graders are using Logo and Javascript, but others may be used, depending on what is current.

Mrs. Gerber asked, since this is an elective, how many take this course? Dr. Boice said it is a matter of administrators meeting the choices; the course will build over time.

Ms. Pytko asked, what presentation software choices are available? At what point in the curriculum do students learn to cite their work? Are 3D printers available? Is there a chance to use MakerSpace? Ms. Vilenski said 8th grade students are given a choice for software presentations; students are taught to cite their work very early on in elementary school and embedded hyperlinks are also taught as a way to cite work; tech-ed has 3D printers and CAD software; the library is working now to facilitate the use of MakerSpace.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked about footprint safety and sharing of data. Ms. Vilenski said awareness happens in all grades; Officer Irizarry comes to speak to the students on internet safety. Mrs. Maxon Kennelly asked about parent feedback and how this curriculum might impact the high school. Ms. Vilenski said several parents attended the focus groups and 10 online responses were received; collaboration with the high school business department enables the alignment of student skillsets. Dr. Boice added that the high schools have a gaming curriculum for those with higher levels of ability.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack thinks the progress is wonderful but expressed concern regarding the frequency of the curriculum review in order to constantly stay current. Is concerned about elementary students knowing more than the curriculum by the time they get to middle school. Dr. Boice said a curriculum review sequence is followed, but will be changed if the need arises. Mrs. Vilenski said they are always making small tweaks, they do differentiate and modify.

Mr. Dwyer added that the curriculum review process is now on a schedule, thanks to Dr. Title. If something is out of date, the staff would make a change.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack mentioned the possibility of creating a vision or where you want to be in 5-10 years with elementary, middle and high schools and it would be wonderful to integrate art with technology. It would be great to have a vision strategy. Ms. Vilenski and Dr. Boice said this is already happening, this is the library media department. There is a vibrant library curriculum and K-12 continuum. It includes technology, research and other components.

Mr. Llewellyn thought the presentation was great, kids need more access to coding and computer skills. He also asked when the technology plan that the Board received in the Friday packet would be addressed. Dr. Title said it was tentatively scheduled for the first June meeting.

Mr. Patten felt that Macs should be integrated. Ms. Vilenski said the middle schools only have PCs, but teaching concepts can be applied to any software that is used.

Old Business

Deletion of Policies

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Mr. Calabrese seconded that the Board of Education approve the deletion of Policies 6010, 5340, 3530, 4240, 3540, 3520”

Motion Passed: 9-0

New Business

Approval of the Holland Hill Educational Specifications (Two Portable Classrooms)

Mrs. Gerber moved, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded that the Board of Education approve the Holland Hill Educational Specifications (Two Portable Classrooms) as enclosed.

Dr. Title explained that filing the portable classrooms as a separate project will allow for state reimbursement.

Mr. Cullen made a notice that in the second line of the ed-specs the word “replace” should be changed to “provide.” The Board accepted by unanimous consent.

Mr. Dwyer mentioned the importance of acting on this tonight to maintain the tight schedule.

Ms. Pytko asked if the toilets were discussed. Mr. Dwyer said the committee is in favor of toilets.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked at what point were the toilets added? Mr. Cullen said the toilets were included in the architect’s drawings, and there would be a charge to remove them. This can still go out to bid as is; a deduct-alternate can be used if there is a need to remove them.

Mr. Llewellyn expressed concern with the cost of adding toilets to a temporary structure and asked about the portable placement in front of Holland Hill. Mr. Cullen said he was not sure of the portable plumbing cost. The portables would be placed in the front of the school due to the left side being all ledge; security fencing will be in place. Dr. Title added that having bathrooms in the portable enhances security and if the price is right and the building committee agrees, that would be a plus. \$250k was the amount mentioned initially for the portables; if the cost of the portables with bathrooms goes over that, it will be up to the building committee to manage the project’s budget. Mr. Llewellyn said he thought the bathrooms should be removed but he wanted to hear what other Board members thought.

Mr. Patten questioned the brevity of the ed-specs and asked if the existing portables would also be moved to the front. Mr. Cullen said the first paragraph in the ed-specs is direct from the state – these structures do not require lengthy ed-specs. Contractors may consider moving the existing portables in order to avoid blocking access to the site.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack asked, does ed-spec approval mean bathroom approval? We have never done a bathroom in a portable -- the bathrooms are a want, not a need, and cost is a factor. This all feeds into how much money the town has. Money is fungible at the end of the day. \$250,000 is a big nut for a 3-year temporary project.

Mr. Dwyer said managing the cost is the decision of the building committee.

Mr. Llewellyn asked, can the building committee modify the plans in any way after BOE approval? Mr. Cullen said yes, but they must comply with the ed-specs. Mr. Llewellyn said the only way to ensure the bathrooms are not included is to have that language in the ed-specs and he asked for the Board’s opinion on making a change to the ed-specs.

Mr. Dwyer said he would be in favor of the bathrooms, provided the cost was OK.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly also liked the idea of the bathrooms and asked how the architect decided to add in bathrooms. Mr. Cullen said the architect asked if he should include bathrooms and was told yes; the cost to remove them from the drawings would be \$4-\$5,000 more. Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked, is it a problem if the ed-specs and drawings don’t match? She would not want to overspend because of the bathrooms. While it was a surprise that the drawing of the portables have bathrooms, she feels the important point is to stay within the budget.

Mr. Llewellyn felt it could be bid both ways – with and without the bathrooms, so there is no need to spend money to alter the drawings.

Mr. Dwyer said he mentioned to the building committee - the importance of the project being on time and within

budget.

Ms. Pytko said she is concerned about going over budget and there was some discussion on whether approving the ed-specs meant also approving the bathrooms. Is frustrated that the Board has been put in this position. If money is available, however, she would support the bathrooms.

Mr. Llewellyn felt the ed-specs should be changed and the bathrooms taken out in order to maintain control of the project.

Mr. Calabrese agreed, he wants a mention in the ed-specs of not having bathrooms; he doesn't want to see portables going over \$250K, and is against the bathrooms. Fencing will provide security. He feels this is a surprise to the Board and he doesn't like surprises.

Mrs. Gerber said she was torn; she was concerned about the timing and budget impact on the major renovation and expansion part of the project.

Ms. Karnal doesn't like surprises, agrees with Mr. Llewellyn.

Mr. Patten asked if explicitly stating 'no bathrooms' in the ed-specs would negate the plans; he doesn't want to expend funds on bathrooms at the expense of other things. The ed-specs should be left as is with the understanding that the Building Committee should not add bathrooms.

Public Comment:

Pam Iacono, RTM District 8: Ed-specs are vague; does not support the bathrooms.

Sue Miska, Ryegate Road: Ed-specs should be more specific.

Jill Vergara, RTM District 7: Supports the bathrooms.

Jennifer Meehan, Szost Drive: Supports the bathrooms.

Ms. Karnal asked how the plans ended up with bathrooms in the first place. Mr. Cullen said the architect asked whether bathrooms should be included and was told yes. After moving through the Town bodies, however, it became clear that that bathrooms should not be included. At that point, however, there would have been a fee to remove them, so they were left as is and can be removed as a deduct-alternate. Mr. Cullen emphasized that deduct-alternates and add-alternates occur frequently; this helps to provide options and clarity. The plans would not have to be changed.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack felt it would be unfair to pass the cost on to another body. Mr. Cullen repeated that the drawings would not have to be changed and can be used in the bidding process with a deduct-alternate; the deduct alternate can be agreed upon or rejected. Mrs. Liu-McCormack asked, does any language need to be changed to make sure this happens?

Mr. Dwyer was not sure if an amendment could be crafted to provide increased assurance.

Mr. Llewellyn questioned if there was a quote from the architect for changing the drawings, and asked how much modification would be needed and wanted to avoid going over budget. The most recent three building projects have gone over budget and he thinks we should avoid this happening. He said the bathrooms are nice things to have, they were put in through an administrative judgment and were a surprise to the Board and he thinks it's still our money so we need to remove the bathrooms from the ed-specs.

Mr. Dwyer added that the building committee has the responsibility to remain within budget; by using the deduct alternate, both ed-specs and plans could be used and this would ensure the project stays on time.

Ms. Pytko asked whether the building committee wanted the bathrooms. Mr. Dwyer said 1 member did not, the others were in favor of asking for the price.

Mr. Llewellyn moved, Mr. Calabrese seconded to add a third bullet point, saying "Portable units shall not contain bathroom facilities."

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly mentioned adding the condition 'unless'.

Mr. Calabrese said the cost for all 3 years would have to be included in that conditional price.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said uncertainties are part of every project. Budget overruns are due in large part to estimates; she doesn't want to hold up the project, but would prefer language that says the first thing to be cut

are the bathrooms; she opposes the amendment.

Ms. Karnal asked about the cost of portables with and without bathrooms. Mr. Cullen said there is a difference, but he did not have an exact number.

Mr. Patten felt the ed-specs should be left as is; the building committee will not want to ask for more money from the Town.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack disagreed; the Board is part of the checks/balance. There are always going to be wants, but we shouldn't approve them. What if someone wants to put in skylights or something else that's a want. The cost of the bathrooms will be expensive, there are a lot of unknowns. We had not planned for bathrooms to be part of the portables.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly felt that building projects always have approximations and she will vote against the amendment.

Mr. Calabrese asked if the \$250K estimate included bathrooms. Mr. Cullen was not sure.

Public Comment:

Monique Sudikoff, Lockwood Road: Parents have real fears with portable security.

Suzanne Miska, Ryegate Road: Suggested allowing alternative language for options.

Jill Vergara, Old Post Road: The Building Committee considered the additional plumbing costs.

Mr. Llewellyn said if the pricing is acceptable, the Building Committee can request amended ed-specs.

Mr. Patten confirmed with Mr. Cullen that the amended ed-specs and current plans/specs can be used in the bid process and receive bids both with and without bathrooms. Mr Cullen said yes, the deduct-alternate is a separate page; the building committee would have to return to the Board if it wanted bathrooms. Dr. Title and Mr. Dwyer expressed concern with the timing and the possibility of delay, given the lack of conformance.

Mrs. Gerber asked, what is the latest possible install date to be ready for the first day of school, and does it take longer to install portables that have bathrooms? Mr. Cullen said the portables should be completely installed by August 23rd in order to be ready for the first day of school; bathrooms would have to be factored in and would require more time.

Dr. Title recommended a vote on parallel plans to avoid losing the timetable. TPZ and state approval is still required. The Board can make it clear it does not want the bathrooms. Is concerned about the project being delayed.

Mr. Dwyer said he is not in favor of the amendment.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack said she believes flexibility exists based on Mr. Cullen's comments; the amended ed-specs can be used with the plans & specs.

Motion Passed: 5-4

Favor: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal, Mr. Calabrese, Ms. Pytko, Mr. Llewellyn

Oppose: Mr. Patten, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly

The Original Motion, as amended, Passed: 5-4

Favor: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal, Mr. Calabrese, Ms. Pytko, Mr. Llewellyn

Oppose: Mr. Patten, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly

Approval of the Plans and Specifications for two portable classrooms at Holland Hill Elementary School, Project # TMP 051-GVHQ

Ms. Pytko moved, Mrs. Liu-McCormack seconded that the Board of Education approve the Plans and Specifications, as amended to conform to the previous motion, for two portable classrooms at Holland Hill Elementary School, Project #TMP 051-GVHQ.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack confirmed with Mr. Cullen that this language achieves what is needed.

Mr. Patten asked if it was too vague; Mr. Dwyer said no, it gives direction to the staff.

Mr. Llewellyn asked, how would an add-on be presented to the state? Would this work if bathrooms were to be added on? Mr. Cullen said an add-alternate is a separate sheet; this would work for bathrooms to be added.

Dr. Title said clarity is needed from the state before submission to ensure acceptance.

Mr. Llewellyn said a new motion may be required in this case.

Mr. Dwyer mentioned that the motion could be added on to with 'as may be required' but he thinks that's overthinking things. He reread the motion that Ms. Pytko moved and Mrs. Liu-McCormack seconded: that the Board of Education approve the Plans and Specifications, as amended to conform to the previous motion, for two portable classrooms at Holland Hill Elementary School, Project #TMP 051-GVHQ.

Motion Passed 9-0

Approval to Amend the 2015-16 School Calendar for Primary Election Date of April 26, 2016.

Mrs. Gerber moved, Ms. Karnal seconded that the Board of Education approve to amend the 2015-16 school calendar per Enclosure No 4.

Dr. Title said security concerns are driving this calendar modification request; the police department made the recommendation. When the calendar was presented, it was not known if either party would hold a primary. Currently both parties are scheduled to hold a primary on April 26. Presently, and barring any future snow days, the last day of school is June 17. The request is to not have school in session April 26, but to have professional development for staff.

Mr. Llewellyn asked if Chief MacNamara was involved in the discussions and Dr. Title said yes; and also included Lt. Weihe and the registrars.

Mr. Patten mentioned that the requirement for days of instruction is still being met.

Motion Passed: 9-0

First Reading of Policies for Deletion: 1410, 5127, 1145, 1140, 1470, 0120, 5550

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said deleting these policies removes redundant language.

Mr. Llewellyn asked about Policy 1140, is this overly broad? What if a teacher has a handout? Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said the goal is to delete redundant language; she was careful to not delve into the policy language.

Mr. Calabrese said he could earmark this for a content change; quick edits are not always so quick.

First Reading of Policy 5125.11 – Students, Health – Medical Records

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly stated that CABE's language was not changed for this policy and asked that any questions be sent to her prior to the next meeting.

Mr. Llewellyn moved, Mrs. Liu-McCormack seconded to add an item to the agenda – "that the Board of Education request the Superintendent provide Board members with (a) the 'statistical analysis of all iReady scores against the SBAC results' that Dr. Title referenced in an email to Board members dated November 25, 2015, and (b) the most current iReady system generated reports entitled 'District Performance' report and the 'Intervention Screener' report by school (without the 'Detail By Student' information) as requested on November 22, 2015. This information shall be provided by March 31, 2016."

Mr. Llewellyn felt these should have been provided in November; the by-laws were changed to accommodate this; and he felt the reports are easily available. He reminded Board members that this is something that should be discussed.

Mr. Patten made a Point of Order, this is a motion to add an item to the agenda, not to discuss the item.

Mr. Dwyer said he received the email and understood that parents would receive iReady reports and the April meeting would address the assessments. The by-laws do not provide a timeframe for adding items to the agenda.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said she did see the response from Dr. Title addressing this; assessments will be covered at the April Board meeting. She is not in favor of the motion.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack is in favor of delaying this request to the April 5 meeting if the reports will be addressed at that time. But if the intent is not to discuss it at the April 5 meeting then let's not wait. Dr. Title clarified that the April 5 Status Update is on curriculum, and there will be some student performance data and iReady results including an overview of how the district performed. But there may not be at the level of detail that some people want.

Mr. Llewellyn said he is asking for 2 pages that have summary data info on them. The Board said there would be no problem in adding items to the agenda.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack asked, if this won't be addressed on April 5, and the data is easily accessible, then why not do this and have a discussion? She's confused why we wouldn't do this.

Mr. Patten is not favor of adding this item.

Mrs. Gerber clarified that there must first be a motion to add an item to the agenda.

Mr. Llewellyn said he's not asking for administrator time, and this requires no effort.

Motion Failed: 3-6

Favor: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal, Mr. Llewellyn

Oppose: Mr. Patten, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Calabrese, Ms. Pytko, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly

Approval of Minutes

Approval of the Minutes of the February 16, 2016 Regular Meeting

Mrs. Gerber moved, Ms. Pytko seconded that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 16, 2016.

Motion Passed: 7-2

Favor: Mr. Patten, Ms. Karnal, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Calabrese, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly

Oppose: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Llewellyn

Superintendent Report

Dr. Title updated the Board on the Racial Imbalance Plan. No action is required at this time, however, the state may require an appearance before the State Board of Education in the near future.

Mr. Dwyer said all Board members are welcome to attend.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said the numbers from the Board's current plan, as shown on page 1 of the enclosure, show that it is working.

Community/Liaison Reports

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly mentioned that Community Service Grants are available from the PTAC.

Mrs. Gerber said the FLHS Building Committee plans to go the Town Bodies in April to request funding.

Mr. Patten said the Holland Hill projects were approved by the RTM, as were the non-recurring capital projects. The March meeting of the Board of Health will discuss the manual for school nurses and updates to guidance plans.

Mr. Dwyer said Superintendent Search Firm names have been shared with the Board; the Search Committee will interview firms and make a decision by the end of March. The goal is to make a timely and 'right' decision.

Open Board Comment

Mr. Calabrese said he and Mr. Dwyer attended CABE's "Day on the Hill" on March 2 to advocate for Fairfield. Many parents attended and he thanked Representatives Devlin and McCarthy-Vahey for meeting with them.

Approved 4/5/2016

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said the Odyssey of the Mind Competition will take place in April, teams from TMS, Stratfield and McKinley are going and she wished them all good luck.

Mr. Llewellyn said that he has asked for topics to be put on meetings agendas and they never have been put on. The Board said that items could go on the agenda but they haven't. He then submitted an FOI request related to his previous motion on adding an agenda item related to iReady reports. He also read from a CT Statute.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack didn't know if anyone on the Board read CAFE Journal, so she read a portion of the journal, an article on gifted education, for the public. She said it offered a progressive view on gifted education and she would love for us be able to move forward. Not all teachers are trained to help gifted students. It would be wonderful to bring these ideas to Fairfield and get more kids involved in our gifted strategies. There's a ton more gifted students in our district than we realize.

<i>Adjournment</i>

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

Motion Passed: 8-0

(Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly was not in the room.)

Meeting adjourned at 10:50PM

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