

**Regular Meeting Minutes  
Fairfield BoE, March 19, 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 7:35PM. Present were members Trisha Pytko, Jennifer Leeper, Christine Vitale, Jessica Gerber, Philip Dwyer, Jennifer Jacobsen, Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly and Jeff Peterson. Nick Aysseh was not present. Others present were Superintendent Dr. Toni Jones, members of the central office leadership team, student representatives Molly Baker, Ted Orben and Paul Rivera, and approximately 50 members of the public.

**Old Business**

*Approval of Policies*

Policy 1311.1: Community Relations, Political Activities of School Employees

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved/Mrs. Jacobsen seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve Policy 1311.1: Community Relations, Political Activities of School Employees.”

Mr. Dwyer moved/Mrs. Gerber seconded to amend the Policy and delete “Political materials and/or engagement as part of the instructional program,” paragraphs A through E. Following Board discussion, Mr. Dwyer withdrew his motion by unanimous consent.

Mr. Dwyer moved/Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded to amend the Policy and delete “Political materials and/or engagement as part of the instructional program,” paragraphs A through E, and direct that this form the basis of an Administrative Regulation. Motion passed 8-0.

The original motion to approve the Policy – as amended – passed 8-0.

Policy 1311.2: Community Relations, Political Activities in the Schools/On School Board Property

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved/Ms. Pytko seconded the recommended motion, “that the Board of Education approve Policy 1311.2: Community Relations, Political Activities in the Schools/On School Board Property.” Motion passed 8-0.

Policy 5144.1: Students, Use of Physical Force

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved/Mrs. Gerber seconded the recommended motion, “that the Board of Education approve Policy 5144.1: Students, Use of Physical Force.” Motion passed 8-0.

**New Business**

*Approval of UI Energy Opportunity Program – Proposed Project at McKinley Elementary School.*

Mrs. Gerber moved/Mrs. Vitale seconded to add a voting item to the agenda. Motion passed 7-0 (Mrs. Jacobsen was not in the room at this time).

Mr. Dwyer moved/Mrs. Gerber seconded “Approval of UI Energy Program Proposed for McKinley Elementary School” Motion passed 8-0.

At 10:50PM, Mrs. Gerber moved/Mrs. Vitale seconded to suspend the rules and extend the meeting to 11:30PM. Motion passed 6-2 (Ms. Leeper, Mrs. Vitale, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mrs. Jacobsen, Mr. Peterson in favor; Ms. Pytko, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly against).

*Discussion and Possible Action on Facilities Planning Research – Milone and MacBroom Scenarios*

Ms. Leeper moved/Ms. Pytko seconded to add discussion of “Scenario C” to the agenda. Motion passed 8-0.

Mr. Dwyer moved/Ms. Pytko seconded the motion “that the BoE agrees to remove from consideration items i, iv, v, and “scenario C” from Milone & MacBroom’s scenarios” Motion passed 8-0.

**Approval of Minutes**

*Approval of Special Minutes of January 23, 2018*

*Approval of Regular Minutes of January 25, 2018*

*Approval of Special Minutes of February 8, 2018*

*Approval of Regular Minutes of February 13, 2018*

Mrs. Gerber moved/Ms. Pytko seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of January 23, 2018, the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 25, 2018, the Minutes of the Special Meeting of February 8, 2018 and the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 13, 2018.” Motion passed 8-0.

**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 11:25PM.

**Detailed Minutes**

Mr. Dwyer said the district is doing everything possible to ensure student safety. He commended the Police Department and the Chief of Police in particular.

**Student Reports**

Ms. Baker reported for Fairfield Ludlowe High School: Over 700 FLHS students participated in the National Student Walk-out; a group of AP US Govt and AP Comparative Govt students will participate in the Washington DC March for Our Lives; Project Runway took place a few weeks ago; spring sports begin this week; Juniors will take the SATs this week; the combined orchestra performance featured guest conductor Robert Gardner; and the Music Dept. will go to Disney this week to perform. Given the number of snow days, Ms. Baker requested consideration of an earlier graduation date to allow for internships and college orientations.

Mr. Orben and Mr. Rivera reported for Fairfield Warde High School: The Girls Co-op Ski Team won the State Championship for the 6<sup>th</sup> year in a row; the Boys Co-op came in second place; the hockey and basketball teams made States; approximately 600 students participated in the National Student Walk-out; Fairfield University students shared college experiences with Health classes; hosted no-phone day a few weeks ago; Warde Achievement Gap Task Force presented in San Diego; hosted the American Math Competition and the National Latin Exam; the Business Team came in 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Junior Achievement Competition; the Unified Sports Basketball game was held last week; Coaches vs. Cancer game raised over \$2K; SAT’s are scheduled for Wednesday.

**Presentations**

*Technology Education Curriculum – Status Update*

Mr. McCandless led the presentation. Technology Education is the study of human innovation; it must keep pace with 21<sup>st</sup> century changes and ongoing updates in state standards. In middle school, Tech Ed is 3D modeling/printing, woodworking, graphic design, animation and transportation technology. STEM activities include measurement, organization, geometry, problem solving and aerodynamics. In high school, the new curriculum provides an avenue for students to implement theory knowledge into application practice and gain a deeper understanding of content. Current practices and future plans were reviewed for courses including Wood Technology, Transportation Technology/Applied Mechanics, CAD, Computer Technology, and Engineering. Future plans include digital classroom, certifications, internships, and software updates. Success can be judged by the use of DSM (design model), Project Success Assessment (based on USM Rubric) and Project-Based Assessments. An Advisory Council is in the works to help curriculum stay

current with industry needs, provide internships and research possible school-work opportunities. The council will be comprised of business leaders and staff.

In order to keep pace with technology, new classes may be needed in STEM areas, particularly Engineering, and course offerings may need modifications and updated technology. Tech Ed does not have AP offerings; the focus is on an early college experience and is curriculum-driven with more opportunity for specialization. Tech Ed integrates well with core courses and the department is working hard to recruit more female students.

#### *Library/Media Curriculum - Status Update*

Ms. Callahan and Ms. Faiella presented the status update for Library/Media Curriculum. The Library Learning Commons serves as the school's physical and virtual center for active and engaged learning. The curriculum addressed the 5 Big Ideas: Inquiry and Information Skills, Critical Thinking and Creativity, Communication and Collaboration, Independent Reading and Technology Skills; resulting in 22 exit skills for a 12<sup>th</sup> grader. The elementary level includes both fixed and collaborative schedules that allow technology integration. Middle school skills are always embedded in the curriculum. In high schools, goals are closely aligned with the Academic Expectations. Makerspaces allow movement from knowledge consumption to knowledge creation and include activities such as coding and engineering. Because the curriculum is integrated, separate achievement data is not collected. Moving forward, the department will continue to embed inquiry skills, focus on new science curriculum, implement digital citizenship instruction, support technology integration and develop core and consistent Maker Space initiatives.

Even with all the digital media and Learning Commons space, print books are still very popular. Each time there is a curriculum update, there is a need to change and adapt due to the embedded nature of this work. Success is measured at the elementary level with a tech skills checklist and rubric, at the middle school level with a process grade and rubric; and at the high school level with academic expectations. Digital citizenship, academic integrity and ethical use of media are reinforced with every project. Future plans include transforming spaces to include mobility, flexible work areas and comfortable seating.

#### Public Comment:

*12 Sherman parents (Joe, Alex, Matt, Sarah Ferrizz, Sara Nuland, Meghann Dockum, Melanie Ross, Kathleen Raymond, Shannon Sherry, Jennifer Gainer, Eunice Oleksiw):* Spoke against pocket redistricting at Sherman Elementary.

*Mark Shalhoub, Verna Hill Road:* Spoke against closing Dwight Elementary School.

*Dale Resnick, Steiner Street:* Spoke against closing Jennings Elementary School.

*Liz Matthews, Wakeman Lane:* Spoke against redistricting in general and closing an elementary school.

*Frank Sahagian, FPS Teacher and Resident:* Thanked the Board for political activities policy changes; requested parts of the policy be scrapped altogether.

*Bob Smoler, FEA President:* Thanked the Board for addressing political policy; remains concerned that policy as it is now could have negative impact.

*Sue Miska, Ryegate Road:* Thanked the Board for the political policy; teachers should encourage student perspective.

#### **Old Business**

##### *Approval of Policies*

##### *Policy 1311.1: Community Relations, Political Activities of School Employees*

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Mrs. Jacobsen seconded that the Board of Education approve Policy 1311.1: Community Relations, Political Activities of School Employees.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly alerted the Board of several minor modifications to the policy since the last meeting. She would be happy to consider the policies as a First Read should the Board choose that path. The policy is an attempt to provide guidance. All sample policies that were reviewed were from CAFE and were initially far more prescriptive; the general intent is to provide a balance.

Mrs. Gerber, while understanding the genesis of this policy, questioned how the policy committee arrived at including

the classroom in its policy. Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said the policy does not deprive anyone of his or her constitutional rights to free speech.

Mr. Dwyer said last year's campaign activities held directly outside of a school building was the driver for the policy. He would prefer the section 'Political Materials and/or Engagement as Part of the Instructional Program, paragraphs A through E,' be removed. Ms. Pytko felt that section should remain and is an important part of the policy – countless hours were spent discussing these paragraphs while she was a temporary member of the Policy Committee.

Dr. Jones felt a guidance document would be more appropriate and more helpful to staff than policy 1311.1. Policy 1311.2 addresses her concern from last year's concert event. As currently written, Policy 1311.1 would not have changed any past actions on the part of administrators, and there aren't many complaints about this. The code of conduct is enforced when needed.

Mr. Dwyer moved, Mrs. Gerber seconded to amend the Policy and delete "Political materials and/or engagement as part of the instructional program," paragraphs A through E.

Mr. Dwyer felt unease with that section as it could be misconstrued by some. Mrs. Gerber agreed and added that the teacher comments the Board has heard thus far have been negative. Mrs. Leeper expressed some concern over the possibility that a parent could inject his view in order to provide 'balance.'

Mr. Peterson added that the idea was to create a safe harbor for teachers without suffering negative commentary from the public. Additionally, it was to allow latitude on enforcement.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly suggested taking Mr. Dwyer's amended section and addressing that through Administrative Regulations.

Following Board discussion, Mr. Dwyer withdrew his motion by unanimous consent.

Mr. Dwyer moved, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded to amend the Policy and delete "Political materials and/or engagement as part of the instructional program," paragraphs A through E, and direct that this form the basis of an Administrative Regulation.

Public Comment:

*Frank Sahagian*, FPS Teacher and Resident: Administrative regulations is a terrific compromise and more appropriate.

*Bob Smoler*, FEA President: Administrative regulations is a wonderful compromise and supports the amendment.

**Motion Passed: 8-0**

**The original motion to approve the Policy – as amended – Passed: 8-0**

*Policy 1311.2: Community Relations, Political Activities in the Schools/On School Board Property*

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Ms. Pytko seconded that the Board of Education approve Policy 1311.2: Community Relations, Political Activities in the Schools/On School Board Property.

**Motion Passed: 8-0**

*Policy 5144.1: Students, Use of Physical Force*

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Mrs. Gerber seconded that the Board of Education approve Policy 5144.1: Students, Use of Physical Force.

**Motion Passed: 8-0**

## New Business

### *Approval of UI Energy Opportunity Program*

Mr. Cullen and Mr. Morabito said the vote is timely – UI is running out of money for the program.

Mrs. Gerber moved, Mrs. Vitale seconded to add a voting item to the agenda.

**Motion Passed: 7-0** (*Mrs. Jacobsen was not in the room at this time*).

Mr. Dwyer moved, Mrs. Gerber seconded “Approval of UI Energy Program Proposed for McKinley Elementary School”

Mr. Morabito reviewed the proposal and said it creates an immediate savings on our energy bill. This program is not new to the district - eight district schools have recently participated in this program. For McKinley, the monthly savings would be approximately \$840/month, but after the payback for the work– the savings would jump to approximately \$3600/month. Mr. Dwyer and Mrs. Gerber requested a spreadsheet showing overall district savings with this program.

**Motion Passed: 8-0**

### *Discussion and Possible Action on Facilities Planning Research – Milone and MacBroom Scenarios*

- i. Close an elementary school (Scenario A and B) \*Two items*
- ii. Relocate WFC (Scenario D2)*
- iii. Consider grade reconfiguration (Scenario D and F) \*Two items*
- iv. Relocate CO as part of grade reconfiguration*
- v. Consolidate to one High School*

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly explained the background for these items; the list is the result of ideas generated by the Adhoc Committee for Operational Effectiveness to address structural change. At this time, there is no real timeline for a decision on these items except to inform the community of ideas that will not be considered.

#### *i. Close an elementary school (Scenario A and B)*

Mrs. Gerber suggested removing the first item, based on projected enrollments and the associated costs of closing an elementary school. Mr. Peterson, Mrs. Vitale and Ms. Leeper agreed. Mr. Dwyer is against closing a school; building planning usually projects out 30-40 years. In addition, redistricting guidelines were adopted in 2015 that do not support closing a school.

#### *ii. Relocate WFC (Scenario D2)*

Mr. Dwyer said the WFC building is very old, in need of repair and in a poor location. Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly agreed but said staff have done a wonderful job making the interior very welcoming; she would like this to remain on the list until she has more information. Mrs. Jacobsen agrees and would like to hear from the WFC Administrator. Ms. Leeper is interested in moving WFC back in-house until a more appropriate setting can be found.

#### *iii. Consider grade reconfiguration (Scenario D and F)*

Mrs. Gerber said more detail would be helpful. Scenario F does not appear feasible due to middle school space limitations. Mr. Dwyer referred more to the concept of grade reconfiguration, which can also be K-2 and 3-5 scenarios. Mr. Peterson requested to hear more about the educational component of this idea; younger siblings would be separated. Ms. Pytko said grade reconfigurations would not maintain the concept of neighborhood schools. Mrs. Jacobsen would like to hear more about this item – particularly from the McKinley and Jennings communities. Mrs. Vitale and Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said this idea is worth exploring. Ms. Leeper requested feedback from Dr. Jones.

At 10:50PM, Mrs. Gerber moved, Mrs. Vitale seconded to suspend the rules and extend the meeting to 11:30PM.

**Motion Passed: 6-2**

Favor: Ms. Leeper, Mrs. Vitale, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mrs. Jacobsen, Mr. Peterson

Oppose: Ms. Pytko, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly

*iv. Relocate CO as part of grade reconfiguration*

Dr. Jones mentioned the CO rent is very reasonable; it would be very expensive to move the IT staff. Mr. Cullen said the CO location is actually a Rooster River agreement that was made with the Town's assistance and expires June 2026. The CO space is approximately 21,000 square feet, the amount is \$92K and utilities are approximately \$68K. Mrs. Jacobsen would like this item removed from the list – CO is very busy with people coming and going; it is safer to have CO at a non-school location.

*v. Consolidate to one High School*

Mr. Dwyer does not support this item – there is not enough space at the high schools for a consolidation. Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly agreed; she did not want this item to move forward.

Ms. Leeper moved, Ms. Pytko seconded to add discussion of "Scenario C" to the agenda.

Mrs. Gerber recognized that it may be necessary to redistrict at some point, although redistricting walkers would appear to be counterintuitive. Mrs. Vitale agreed that redistricting is an item for future discussion.

**Motion Passed: 8-0**

Mr. Dwyer moved, Ms. Pytko seconded that the BoE agrees to remove from consideration items i, iv, v, and "scenario C" from Milone & MacBroom's scenarios.

Public Comment:

*Rena Paris*, Morehouse Hwy: Concern in the community regarding Jennings.

*Liz DellaVolpe*, Garden Drive: Concern in the community regarding Jennings.

*Meghann Dockum*, Fairfield Resident: Thanked the Board for clarifying.

*Sara Nuland*, Fairfield Resident: Thanked the Board for clarifying.

**Motion Passed: 8-0**

Mr. Dwyer said he will add Ms. Leeper's emailed items to the list. Ms. Pytko asked that the ECC re-location be added as an item.

**Approval of Minutes**

*Approval of Special Minutes of January 23, 2018*

*Approval of Regular Minutes of January 25, 2018*

*Approval of Special Minutes of February 8, 2018*

*Approval of Regular Minutes of February 13, 2018*

Mrs. Gerber moved, Ms. Pytko seconded that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of January 23, 2018, the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 25, 2018, the Minutes of the Special Meeting of February 8, 2018 and the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 13, 2018.

**Motion Passed: 8-0**

**Superintendent Report**

Dr. Jones reported on the National Student Walk-out and was very proud of the students. She thanked police for quickly mobilizing to assist the district. She attended the event at Ludlowe, and Mr. Cummings attended at Warde.

The 'Vision of a Graduate' event was well-attended and participants contributed to a great discussion.

SAT's will not be administered if there is an impacting snow event on Wednesday.

### Committee/Liaison Report

Ms. Pytko reported for SEPTA: On, March 21<sup>st</sup> there will be a presentation on Anxiety; March 28 is the monthly meeting; March 30 is the SEPTA Teen Social Group.

Mr. Peterson reported for the BOF: The BOF Open Forum will be held on Saturday, March 24 at 9:30 am in the FLHS auditorium.

Mr. Dwyer reported for the Holland Hill BC on behalf of Mr. Aysseh: The project is currently on time and on budget.

### Open Board Comment

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said it was an exciting weekend for Odyssey of the Mind with a record number of students participating. There were many top-tier finishers.

Ms. Leeper said she is a member the newly formed Finance Committee, together with Mr. Aysseh and Mrs. Vitale. The committee will meet soon to set the 2018 meeting schedule and elect a Chairman.

Ms. Pytko was excited to have recently signed up to be a Mill River Guide.

Mr. Dwyer reminded the Board of the self-evaluation meeting in late April and requested topics. There will be an outside facilitator. Mrs. Gerber asked that new Board members receive guidance on this meeting.

### Adjournment

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

### Motion Passed: 8-0

Meeting adjourned at 11:25PM.

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