

**Regular Meeting Minutes
Fairfield BoE, May 19, 2015**

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.

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

Student Award Presentations were held at 7:00 PM.

Chairman Philip Dwyer called the Regular meeting to order at 8:02PM. Present were members Eileen Liu-McCormack, Donna Karnal, Jessica Gerber, Philip Dwyer, Paul Fattibene, Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly, Marc Patten and John Llewellyn (arrived 8:33PM). John Convertito was not present. Others present were Deputy Superintendent Karen Parks, members of the Central Office Leadership Team, student representative Tyler Shuster, and approximately 25 members of the public.

Student Reports

Mr. Tyler Shuster reported for FWHS: Juniors will begin SBAC testing this week; AP exams ended last week; finals are approaching; Junior Prom was last Saturday; Senior Prom is May 30; the National Honor Society is inducting new members on Thursday; the FWHS band will march in the Memorial Day Parade; and Warde TV is preparing for the final broadcast. Mr. Shuster thanked school officials and the Board for the opportunity to represent Warde as a student member of the Board. Ms. Karnal wished him well.

Public Comment

Kelly Jacobson, Fairfield Resident: District Improvement Plan data reporting.

Paul Jacobson, Fairfield Resident: Goals in District Improvement Plan, CMT Science scores.

Presentation

Draft World Language Curriculum and Textbook

Dr. Boice introduced Ms. Frankel, World Language Coordinator for grades 9-12, and Ms. Cowenhoven, World Language Coordinator for grades 4-8, and both gave an overview of the World Language program. They reviewed the process of writing the curriculum beginning with World Language Rounds in the Fall of 2012, followed by teacher training, writing teams, internal review, edits, parent focus groups and more. Major shifts in the curriculum were presented including World Readiness Standards, thematic units, vertical and horizontal alignment, and emphasis on the 3 modes of communication. Curriculum documents, costs of texts and curriculum implementation were reviewed. Dr. Boice and Mrs. Parks thanked the entire department.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly thanked the presenters and asked about the impact of a future rollout to lower grades. Dr. Boice said some adjustments would be required in a future rollout to lower grades. Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked about speaking Latin; the AP Spanish Exam; the numbering of levels; and the academic goal for 4th and 5th grades. Ms. Frankel and Ms. Cowenhoven responded that assessments and exemplars are being created for students to speak Latin; the AP Spanish Exam will remain the Language and Culture; the level numbers create consistency; one of the goals for 4th and 5th grade is to build a foundation for comprehension.

Mrs. Gerber thanked the presenters; asked about the separation of Italian 40; requested clarification on the general timetable regarding the impact of a future rollout to lower grades; and asked about the need for a new textbook. Ms. Frankel responded that some 40 and 50 level themes were combined for the benefit of seniors. Dr. Boice said more will be known if adjustments are needed after next year's implementation. The new texts are very strong in interpersonal and presentational communication.

Mr. Patten asked about course levels; Dr. Boice explained that the high school level 10 will be the same course as the middle school level 10 which will be taught over a 2 year period. Mr. Patten asked for examples of actual changes in the curriculum and whether we are on target with the budget. Curriculum has been enhanced with more global issues; cultural comparisons and the use of persuasive and lifestyle conversation; Ms. Frankel confirmed the curriculum is within budget.

Mr. Fattibene asked if separating Italian Level 40 harms the curriculum alignment. Dr. Boice said no and that Italian teachers felt this was appropriate. Mr. Fattibene confirmed that Level 50 is only offered for French and Spanish; he

asked about the thematic approach; and also asked if World Language was aligned with the Common Core. Ms. Frankel responded that the thematic approach is beneficial for learning languages and is supported by the ACTFL; World Language is not part of the Common Core but correlations were made. Mr. Fattibene suggested adding language stating the primary goal is to prepare students for a global society and to be lifelong learners.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked why Ohio and Virginia are referenced; Ms. Frankel said those states are ahead of the curve with their use of thematic units.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack asked at what grade level those states began the World Language program and which textbooks they use. Ms. Frankel said some districts in Ohio begin in KDG, and many of the schools using thematic units do not use textbooks. Dr. Boice said Virginia has a diverse population and has immersion programs in some schools. Mrs. Liu-McCormack expressed her concern about the pacing of the material; she hopes that World Language is more fully implemented in the near future. Ms. Frankel said speaking skills are being promoted in the new curriculum, and students will have more time for emphasis on skills. Mrs. Liu-McCormack felt the chosen text is not a World Language teaching text and asked if Mandarin would be taught pinyin-based. Ms. Frankel said this is still under consideration, and the EMC text would be used, which has a combination of pinyin that progresses with characters. Ms. Healy and Ms. Chung, Chinese teachers, said that pinyin and characters appear side by side in the text; both are taught; the emphasis is on speaking and communication. Mrs. Liu-McCormack asked to see the text.

Ms. Karnal mentioned the loss of momentum in earlier grades due to the elementary schedule, and asked if 4 days a week for language could be provided in elementary. Mrs. Parks said this would have a budget impact.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack said the budget impact should not be an obstacle; money should be found to develop a full World Language elementary program.

Ms. Karnal confirmed that the elementary program will be looked at soon and asked if teachers requested the books. Ms. Frankel said teachers did want initial materials.

Mr. Llewellyn asked if the texts were thematic or more traditional and also asked about measurable standardized testing. Dr. Boice said there is no textbook perfectly aligned to theme-based curriculum; the texts chosen are the closest aligned to the curriculum and are the most recent with the new standards; supplemental materials can be used; national tests are criterion reference tests and are included in the budget; teachers will write common assessments this summer.

Public Comment:

Tricia Donovan, Fairfield Resident: Supports World Language, especially 6th grade offerings.

Suzanne Miska, Ryegate Road: Supports World Language, especially grades 9-12.

Christine Vitale, Verna Hill Road: Congratulated staff for excellent World Language program.

Mr. Dwyer thanked the World Language teachers for their work on the new curriculum.

Old Business

Approval of Policy 4118.5

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Ms. Karnal seconded that the Board of Education approve Policy #4118.5 – Personnel –FPS Acceptable Use Policy.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly clarified that the language was crafted by our attorneys; the title for data retention on page 2 is appropriate. Mrs. Parks added that links to document retention information is available online.

Motion Passed: 8-0

New Business

First Reading of Draft District Improvement Plan (DIP)

Mr. Dwyer said additional discussion of the Plan will take place at the June 10 Town-hall style meeting. Mrs. Parks said the strategies are not listed in order of priority and she reviewed the changes in the Plan from the previous version: (1) page 16 was previously an appendix ;(2) on page 17, indicator#10 was added ;(3) on page 18, the school climate survey data is an average rather than a percentage; (4) on page 21, a description for Capstone Experience has been added; (5) on page 27, 2-6 has new language; and (6)on pages 31-40, section 4, student performance indicators are listed; baseline data is calculated where available; the targets were set by the District Data Team.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack liked the amount of data but felt cumulative metrics should be added, iReady should also have a metric measuring percent at Advanced Level, and school-level targets should show the percent change. Mrs. Parks said that SBAC baseline data and targets are not yet available, SAT data is being pursued and the state is discussing replacing SBAC with SAT for 11th graders. Mrs. Liu-McCormack requested all metrics be posted online by school, and said it would be interesting to see subsets of students such as gender, minority and Free/Reduced Lunch subsets. Mrs. Parks said the achievement gap lies only with the socio-economic subset known as Free/Reduced Lunch. Targets are set by the district; School Improvement Plans address targets and will be aligned with the district; schools may also address additional targets not listed in the Plan.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly requested the Policy Committee work be added on page 3 for historical accuracy and asked if any additional policy work might be needed to implement the DIP; Mrs. Parks said no. Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked about the calculation of graduation rates; Mrs. Parks said the state has a complicated formula for this and previously had a 4 and 5-year graduation rate but has moved to 4 and 6-year graduation rates. Each student is assigned a graduation year when entering KDG. Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked if the new high school schedule might increase the number of students enrolled and improve the chances of reaching the 2020 target earlier; Mrs. Parks said this is a possibility, and if the target is reached sooner it will be re-set; this is true for all targets. Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked if assessments follow a cohort of students. Dr. Boice said the data is displayed by grade level, but cohort data can be pulled from it.

Mr. Llewellyn asked if there were any intention to add an intermediary target such as 2018, and suggested adding language into the DIP for an annual presentation to allow for tweaking that may need to occur. Mrs. Parks said the use of intermediary targets has not yet been decided. Mr. Dwyer said page 8 reflects the review process.

Mr. Fattibene agreed with Mr. Llewellyn's idea of a specific time, prior to September, for an annual review and proposed new language regarding Board of Education review of the DIP and modifications that may be considered. Mr. Dwyer suggested a blending of the existing paragraph with the new language.

Mr. Llewellyn felt the SAT's and SBAC's should be included even if targets are unknown, and suggested adding the ACT's as well. He also felt a category should be added for career and college placement perhaps using existing Naviance software to obtain acceptance rates. He agreed with Mrs. Liu-McCormack's previous suggestion regarding iReady and STAR to have a measure for percent at advanced level. Mrs. Parks said the data might not be reported this way; Mr. Chiappetta said while no category exists for advanced level, a Lexile measure, while not grade specific, could be used. Mrs. Parks said she will bring this to the District Data Team for discussion.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly is not comfortable with the college acceptance measure or the inclusion of the SAT and SBAC as measures. She does agree with Mr. Fattibene's suggestion to annually review the DIP. The data produced in the district is enormous and the Board must decide which measures are important to avoid initiative fatigue.

Mr. Fattibene expressed his concern that the DIP does not have enough national assessments. The language on page 27, 2-6, should be re-phrased without the term 'top notch.'

Mrs. Liu-McCormack liked the addition of #10 on page 32, the AP Calculus and Multivariable measure. She would like to see a measure added for the percentage of middle school students taking high school math. Mrs. Parks will bring this suggestion to the District Data Team, but she cautioned against obtaining data that is not valuable. Mrs. Liu-McCormack also recommended adding to page 27, 2-1, that the Board annually review all School Improvement Plans with pros and cons listed.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly objected to the added language and felt it was excessive.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack requested that language on page 27, 2-6, be removed and said the Board had not decided that was a priority. Mrs. Parks said the language was changed at the Board's request, the idea is to create an alternative high school program that is so well-functioning that it attracts students from other districts.

Mr. Dwyer said the Board will decide on the priority by voting on the Plan.

Mr. Llewellyn disagreed; he has requested but has not seen a business plan to grow the program and thinks it should be a separate topic. The vote on program expansion should take place separately. Mrs. Liu-McCormack agreed.

Mr. Patten said the alternative high school is a priority; language should be included on page 27 regarding a plan for the alternative high school program as the Board recently approved increased funding for its improvement. He agreed with using a placeholder for a national test and said a general college statistic would be an interesting indicator. He is happy with all the changes in the DIP.

Mr. Dwyer recommended deferring agenda items after 7A until the next meeting.

Ms. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Ms. Karnal seconded to suspend the rules and extend the meeting to 11:10PM.

Motion Failed 5-3

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

Oppose: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Fattibene, Mr. Llewellyn

Mr. Llewellyn moved, Mrs. Liu-McCormack seconded to suspend the rules and extend the meeting to 11:30PM.

Motion Passed 8-0

Mr. Llewellyn said no additional work would be required to add the SAT and ACT as measures. Improvement is needed in the alternative high school program, but a full analysis should be done before it is expanded.

Public Comment

Christine Vitale, Verna Hill Road: Disagrees with the college measure.

Suzanne Miska, Ryegate Road: College form, use of SBAC measure, Free and Reduced benchmark, community involvement.

Tricia Donovan, Fairfield Resident: DIP input from stakeholders, use of test data, track identification process.

Ms. Karnal said she would like to see a college measure that shows students' acceptance into their school of choice.

Mr. Llewellyn asked about a public session on the DIP. Mr. Dwyer said a public forum meeting with a focus on the DIP will take place on June 10; the final vote takes place the end of June.

First Reading of Policy 4217 – Personnel – Certified – Non-Certified Conduct

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said the policy is entirely in red as it is all new language. The policy committee took CABE language and made some adjustments.

Mr. Fattibene suggested changing: (1) In the 3rd paragraph, second line, replace 'only as' with 'if'; (2) the second bullet, add 'influence or' before 'trust';(3) and the last line add 'as employees' after conduct.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack asked if more specifics should be added to 'appropriately-dressed' and suggested using 'business casual.' Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said this was discussed and is entrusted to the administrators. Mrs. Liu-McCormack also recommended adding 'and respectfully' to 'is expected to deal effectively with students.'

Mr. Patten agreed that a policy should exist for volunteers but it should be separate from a staff policy. Mrs. Parks said the CABE policy did not address volunteers and the policy committee felt strongly that volunteers should be included in this policy. Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said paragraph 3 only applies to staff; volunteers had to be written in after that paragraph.

Mr. Dwyer said this will be voted on at the next meeting unless substantive changes are made.

Public Comment:

Nancy Haberly, Duck Farm Road: Volunteers should have a separate policy.

Mr. Fattibene moved, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded to postpone agenda items 8A-C and 9-11 to the next Regular meeting.

Mrs. Gerber said she attended the Osborn Hill gym ribbon-cutting ceremony. She thanked Mr. Morabito for his dedication over the past 3 years in getting this done.

Motion Passed 8-0

Adjournment

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Mr. Patten seconded that this Regular Meeting of the Board of Education adjourn.

Motion passed 8-0

Meeting adjourned 11:20PM

Respectfully Submitted

Jessica Gerber, Fairfield Board of Education, Secretary