

**Regular Meeting Minutes
Fairfield BoE, April 5, 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.

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 7:36PM. Present were members Jennifer Leeper, Jessica Gerber, Philip Dwyer, Jennifer Jacobsen, Nick Aysseh, Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly and Jeff Peterson. Trisha Pytko and Christine Vitale were not present. Others present were Superintendent Dr. Toni Jones, members of the central office leadership team, student representatives Molly Baker, Isabella Schichter and Paul Rivera, and approximately 50 members of the public.

Voting Summary:

New Business

Establish Date and Time of Fairfield Ludlowe High School and Fairfield Warde High School Graduation

Mrs. Gerber moved/Mrs. Jacobsen seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education establish Wednesday, June 20, 2018 at 6:00p.m. as the date and time of graduation for Fairfield Ludlowe High School and Fairfield Warde High School.” Motion passed 7-0.

Approval of Minutes

Approval of Special Minutes of March 19, 2018 and Regular Minutes of March 19, 2018

Mrs. Gerber moved/Ms. Leeper seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of March 19, 2018, and of the Regular Meeting of March 19, 2018.” Motion passed 6-0-1 (Ms. Leeper, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mrs. Jacobsen, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Peterson in favor; Mr. Aysseh abstained).

Adjournment

Mrs. Gerber moved/Ms. Leeper seconded the recommended motion “that this Regular Meeting of the Board of Education adjourn.” Motion passed 7-0. Meeting adjourned at 9:53PM.

Detailed Minutes:

Student Reports:

Mr. Rivera reported for FWHS: SATs were held on March 21; a successful 9/10th grade dance was held 2 weeks ago; the Achievement Gap Task Force held its second annual conference at SCSU on March 29 with many schools participating; spring sports season has begun despite the bad weather; the solar carport ribbon cutting ceremony was held on April 2; all are looking forward to spring break.

Ms. Baker and Ms. Schichter reported for FLHS: The Cheerleading team competed in Orlando, Florida and won the Overall Grand Champion Trophy and now rank first in the Grand National Division; AP Literature students from both Warde and Ludlowe toured the Museum of Modern Art to learn more about post-modernism; juniors completed the NGSS Assessment; the Red Cross Club Blood Drive had an excellent turn-out; a group of students participated in the DC “March for our Lives” event and met with Rep. Jim Himes; the Webster Bank Arena will host the college fair; there is an upcoming community college fair at FLHS; the GSA club attended the True Colors conference at UCONN.

Presentations

Science Curriculum

Mr. Cummings, Chief Academic Officer, began the presentation by pointing out the themes of Inquiry, Real World, Problem Solving and Engagement that have been evident in recent curriculum updates and presentations. The new and exciting cross-curricular concept is also evident in the new Science Curriculum. Mr. Wakeman (Director of Elementary Math, Science and Enrichment) and Ms. Faggella (Director of Secondary Science and STEAM) led the presentation on the Next Generation Science Standards and Curriculum. Parent and teacher focus groups provided feedback which was used to clarify language. Representative teacher groups attended NGSX training, and middle and high school staff have participated in professional development.

The standards have 3 dimensions: Science and Engineering Practices, Disciplinary Core Ideas (Content) and Cross-Cutting Concepts. A diagram overlaying Math, Science and ELA helped explain the development of inquiry skills, and the Library Media Curriculum piece emphasizes those skills together with integrating critical thinking/creativity, communication and collaboration, independent reading and technology skills in all content areas. There will be an increased emphasis on student-generated questions and application of prior experiences. Curriculum document layout, evaluation, timeline and next steps were reviewed. Chromebooks will be purchased next year in support of science. AP Biology teacher Dr. Kelly explained the importance of currently using a Chromebook, a reliable technology that is very helpful for teaching 21st century skills – students have full access to resources and less paper is used.

Next year, all 9th graders will take Biology. Mrs. Gerber asked about planning for the biology bubble of students next year since there will be 10th graders taking the class as well for that one year. Ms. Faggella said the district has many teachers with multiple science certifications that can cover this immediate need. All of the new courses offered in high school are well-subscribed.

Mr. Peterson liked the cross-cutting concept and asked how the emphasis with hands-on work will be balanced with teaching content. Ms. Faggella said the content is embedded in the hands-on experience. Direct instruction will still exist; students will have limited choice and freedom. Teachers will have daily collaborative planning time. LMC specialists use Code.org to teach coding skills.

Mrs. Maxon Kennelly had several questions:

1. Will content be reduced in HS to allow more for the process of learning? How will allocated time for science and social studies be affected in elementary? Mr. Wakeman said there will be a convergence of content areas; teaching non-fiction reading also teaches social studies and science. There will be 6 weeks of alternating units with social studies and science. The implementation guides allow some flexibility.
2. Will AP Bio teachers be assured that students understand the basic factual elements? Ms. Faggella said the standards are focused on concepts rather than minutiae; for example, students will still learn mitosis, but much of the memorization is removed. This will be spelled out in the implementation guides; AP practices are nearly identical to the NGSS practices. Content is aligned for continued study in AP.
3. How can adjustments be made without feedback from the field test? Mr. Wakeman said the test is focused more on thinking and reasoning. The state is planning to release items in the fall to help with test understanding. Elementary students in Fairfield and other districts will be taking the assessment prior to curriculum implementation.

4. How to prepare 8th and 11th graders for testing? Ms. Faggella said the plan is to create some support materials for the 11th graders next year. The state mandates 2 years of science and Fairfield mandates 3. Students have flexibility with the science path.

Ms. Leeper asked a few questions on testing, consistency and grading. Ms. Faggella said the NGSS pilot test is state mandated, even though the curriculum has not yet been rolled out. Teachers will be writing the STEAM units this summer and a focus will be to engage all learners at all levels; students will have a choice. Mr. Wakeman said elementary science instruction is now approximately 45 minutes per day, but there is some discrepancy across the district. Going forward, FPS will streamline and provide consistency. Grades will depend on the tasks that students are doing; there may be a rubric where the solution has to meet certain criteria; this will allow for variety in the response.

Mrs. Jacobsen was dismayed that the state website still shows the pilot test taking place next year, and asked:

1. Update on resources? Ms. Faggella said students will continue to use current resources with the addition of Chromebooks for 7th graders and all high school courses. This will allow access to digital resources such as scientific journals. The search for a text is continuing.
2. Will the state mastery have one right answer? Ms. Faggella said there will be more than one correct answer on the state assessment – there are multiple correct answers to match curriculum delivery.
3. Will the state assessments be used for placement decisions? Ms. Faggella said no; the CAPT scores were never used for placements.

New Business

Establish Date and Time of Fairfield Ludlowe High School and Fairfield Warde High School Graduation

Mrs. Gerber moved, Mrs. Jacobsen seconded that the Board of Education establish Wednesday, June 20, 2018 at 6:00p.m. as the date and time of graduation for Fairfield Ludlowe High School and Fairfield Warde High School.

Due to the 180-minimum day requirement, Dr. Jones said this is the earliest date that graduation can take place and will not conflict with middle school graduations. Ideally, graduation would take place on the last day of school, but it is late in the year and students have to travel to college orientations. However, a 185-day school calendar with a pre-set graduation date would not require an April review; this is a change that is currently under review for next year.

Public Comment:

Emma Manderville, Woodcrest Road: Internship conflict with summer programs.

Motion Passed: 7-0

Possible Budget Changes

Dr. Jones said the BOS adjusted the budget with the \$60K in pension savings and \$190K in bus contract savings, putting the BOE budget at 2.95%. This is very positive news.

Mr. Dwyer thanked Dr. Jones and her staff for the tremendous work on the budget and for being immediately responsive to all the questions from multiple Town bodies. The Board will vote on the 2 adjustments in May. Given the recent questions regarding AON's reported projected savings on the switch to CT Partnership 2.0, Mr. Dwyer confirmed the actual savings is \$2.6M. Projections will not be necessary next year.

Approval of Minutes

Approval of Special Minutes of March 19, 2018 and Regular Minutes of March 19, 2018

Mrs. Gerber moved, Ms. Leeper seconded that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of March 19, 2018, and of the Regular Meeting of March 19, 2018.

Motion Passed: 6-0-1

Favor: Ms. Leeper, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mrs. Jacobsen, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Peterson

Abstain: Mr. Aysseh

Superintendent Report

- Dr. Jones reported that student art will be made into banners posted at the Fairfield train station.
- A visit to the Walter Fitzgerald Campus featured the generosity project, which included student-made hope bracelets.
- The safety forum was well-attended. Some of the security changes have already been implemented. A group of parents are hoping to raise funds for security, and perhaps that money could be used to purchase window blinds.
- The Sherman Principal hiring process is well underway and the candidate pool is strong.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly and Ms. Leeper asked about advertising WFC slots to outside districts as a step towards accepting tuition paying students. Mr. Mancusi said he is working on a pamphlet to that effect.

Committee/Liaison Reports

Mr. Aysseh reported that there is a Holland Hill BC committee tonight.

Mr. Peterson reported on the BOF meeting. The budget was approved. The Sherman Phase III project was approved unanimously. The Mill Hill Project was approved with an amended motion that various size schools would be explored and the Building Committee would provide updates to the Board of Finance. Mr. Dwyer added that cost will be a factor in determining whether Mill Hill will be a 504. Dr. Jones said Mr. Tetreau said BOS re-approval is not needed for the amended resolution and it can be forwarded to RTM; the \$1.5M is sufficient to explore the varying sizes.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said the Policy Committee will begin work on social media and graduation requirements.

Ms. Leeper reported that the Finance Committee reviewed sponsorships and town collaboration. Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly added that there may be some policy implications.

Mr. Dwyer reported:

- Dr. Evan Pitkoff/CES is retiring and Dr. Charles Dumais will begin at CES on July 1.
- Interested building committee applicants should contact the Town.
- Still need a BOE representative to serve on the Administrators Contract.

Open Board Comment

Mr. Aysseh questioned whether Mill Hill capacity should be a future agenda item, given the recent BOF approval. He also requested a May update on reallocated funds – there is a difference of \$600K on the reserve items. Mr. Dwyer noted that the May Quarterly Financial Report will address that item.

Approved 5/8/2018

Ms. Leeper requested more information on Open Choice projections.

Mr. Dwyer noted that an executive session is required prior to the end of May regarding contracts; the BOE Self-evaluation is April 24.

Public Comment:

Sylvia Figel, Twin Brooks Lane: Safety standards at Mill Hill.

Adjournment

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

Motion Passed: 7-0

Meeting adjourned at 9:53PM.

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