

**Regular Meeting Minutes  
Fairfield BoE, November 28, 2017**

**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 7:15PM. Present were members Trisha Pytko, Jennifer Leeper, Christine Vitale, Jessica Gerber, Philip Dwyer, Jennifer Jacobsen, Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly, Nick Aysseh and Jeff Peterson. Others present were Superintendent Dr. Toni Jones, FLHS student representatives Molly Baker and Isabella Schichter, FWHS student representatives Ted Orben and Paul Rivera, members of the central office leadership team, and approximately 20 members of the public.

Mr. Dwyer received unanimous Board consent to move agenda item 6A immediately following Public Comment.

*Student Reports*

Ms. Baker and Ms. Schichter reported for Fairfield Ludlowe High School: The Freshman Forum on underage drinking was held; the 5 senior spirit weeks were fun; the homecoming game took place on Thanksgiving with Roger Ludlowe High School and FLHS alumni attending; World Aids Day events will include speakers; the drama production 'Fake News' will take place this weekend; the blood drive is coming up; the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) will host Career Day on December 5; the Bella Boutique is student-run and provides unique gifts for the holidays – some proceeds will go to Americares and Operation Hope.

Mr. Orben and Mr. Rivera reported for Fairfield Warde High School: The entrepreneur class sold out all of its stadium blankets and more have been ordered – a portion of the profits will benefit Operation Hope; the Halloween parade for seniors was fun with teachers voting on best costumes; the CT US Attorney and other guest speakers came to Warde and addressed the heroin/opioid issue; at the request of Social Studies teacher Mr. Charles Flynn, Mr. Tetreau and several members of Planning/Zoning and RTM, discussed civics issues with students; suggested that Facebook be used to communicate alumni survey information; the CAS program helped support the hurricane relief effort and the PTA matched the \$500 gift; the 9<sup>th</sup> grade forum on drinking was held; musician student Mary Fulda was selected to perform at Disney World; fall sports have been very successful with numerous all-state and all-FCIAC athletes.

Ms. Pytko agreed with using the Facebook group to contact alumni for the post-graduate survey.

*Public Comment*

Mr. Sahagian, Chelsea Street: A committee addressing structural change is worthwhile and should be composed of BOE members only.

*Approval of OHS Project*

Mrs. Gerber moved, Ms. Pytko seconded that the Board of Education accept Osborn Hill Project 051-0126 as complete.

OHSBC Chair Kim Marshall and Vice-Chair Bill Dunn said the security fencing completes the project with a majority of the contingency funds remaining. Thanked Mr. Arnone and the parents who worked very hard to complete the entire project over multiple years.

Mr. Peterson thanked them for their work.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly also thanked them and asked for the names of the other committee members to express thanks to them as well. Ms. Marshall provided the names: Bret Bader, Susie Cardona, and Steven White.

Mrs. Gerber echoed the thanks and also thanked Sal Morabito.

**Motion Passed: 9-0**

Presentation

2016-2017 Student Data Report

Staff presented a data analysis of selected 2016-2017 student data that addressed areas of growth and continued need. The group reviewed related District Improvement Plan goals and action steps; communicated guiding principles of instructional improvement and described the process; and highlighted areas of growth and areas of need. Data was analyzed using cross-sectional, cohort, disaggregation, and district comparative analyses. Technology has been an extremely useful tool for real-time analysis. Data is used to identify instructional strengths, prioritize resources, and engage students and teachers in joyful learning while improving daily instruction.

Ms. Pytko: What do the STAR scores represent? Ms. Miner said the parent report provides a percentile ranking; a grade equivalent score is based on 10 months and will show the growth.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly:

- What is the correlation between STAR and SBAC? Dr. Rasmussen said there is strong correlation; the state mandates SBAC testing in grades 3-8 each year.
- For Math and LA, does the analysis show that data is informing for better instruction and skills, rather than teaching to the test? Dr. Rasmussen said teaching is done through problem solving; not to teach to the test. Mr. Chiappetta – the question of test prep vs. skill development – it is skill development with test awareness. For example, one of the issues that came to light regarding the listening component is that students didn't realize that they could listen more than once; once they did – the scores increased.
- Has there been analysis on the value of the assigned summer work? Dr. Rasmussen said no, the intent is for students to use it and not lose it.

Ms. Pytko: Will the listening component be incorporated into the skillset? Mr. Chiappetta said yes, it became a focus area for the entire middle school and will be incorporated down.

Ms. Leeper: Likes the strand level – any larger trend within elementary math based on SBA? Mr. Wakeman said the SBA is more of a pointer and not as specific. Problem solving seems to be a strength. Have recently bolstered long division and fractions; it is a continual process of revising and listening to teachers.

Mrs. Jacobsen: Concerned about pilot test participation in Science, based on strands that have not been taught; how prepared will staff be to roll this out district-wide? Mrs. Faggella said the field testing is for grades 5, 8 and 11. Have been working on embedding new curriculum into what students are currently doing. Confident that students will be fairly well-prepared; everyone in the state is in the same boat. This year, only the participation rate counts. Teachers have had a tremendous amount of PD, including NGSX training for several teachers (5-day intensive training in new standards).

Ms. Pytko: Why rolling out curriculum for only grades 9-12? Mrs. Faggella said that high school teachers are ready to roll this out. Also, the elementary recently rolled some intense literacy work and Social Studies in grades 3-5. Dr. Jones said elementary overload is a concern; budget is also a factor.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly likes the presentation and thanked the staff for the analysis; it is much more valuable than just looking at the data.

- Any consideration to a re-examination of the daily subject allotment in the elementary school schedule? Mr. Cummings said it is important to take advantage of having one teacher in elementary to integrate the instructional model.
- Is the skills rubric and vertical alignment part of this discussion? Mr. Cummings said the rubric is used as an assessment tool. Also need to be more finite in expectations.
- Is interested in the SAT and Strategic School Profile data. Would like feedback on the additional recess time.

*Approved 12/12/2017*

- How often is PD from different schools and outside groups? Mr. Cummings said PD across schools is done at the middle and high school levels. This year it will take place in elementary. There are many highly skilled people in-district and outside PD is also used. Want teachers to leave sessions with change practices.
- Referencing a slide from Dr. Pugliese, what is the impact of feedback from students and family? Dr. Pugliese said this comes from building administrators and their interactions with students and parents; there is no formal process to get family feedback other than through headmasters and housemasters. Also get informal feedback directly from parents.
- What level of support does the College Board provide as a result of course re-design? Dr. Pugliese said College Board does a series of PD and offers a comprehensive response when there is a course redesign – they do a good job.
- The presentation referenced real-time tech work, does that come with a budget impact? Dr. Jones said the internal tech dept. has done a tremendous amount of in-house work, so there is no additional expense.

Mrs. Gerber asked for more details about the Newcomer Academy. Mr. Chiappetta said this is currently in the idea phase. Greenwich has a successful model, but it is important to understand district structure.

*Approval of 2018-2019 School Calendar*

Ms. Pytko moved, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded that the Board of Education approve the 2018-2019 School Calendar as enclosed.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly: October 8 is Columbus Day and is interested in lessening the impact on childcare coverage by moving the early dismissal on October 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> to October 8<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Jones mentioned that the survey to families indicated the current calendar preference.

Mr. Dwyer: Hesitant to move days when staff hasn't had sufficient time for review.

Mrs. Vitale added that October 10 is the PSAT day.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked for input from the headmasters, especially regarding the impact of rotation days. Mr. Hatzis said the PSAT day is not a strong instructional day and the early dismissal on that day is very helpful. Wednesday and Thursday would be the same rotation day. Mr. Ebling said Monday is a very useful day for staff and students to help prepare for the very busy Wednesday and Thursday; prefers the Wednesday, Thursday early dismissal days.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Mr. Aysseh seconded to amend the calendar and change the early dismissal on Thursday, October 11, 2018 to Monday, October 8.

Mrs. Gerber expressed her concern that parents have already been surveyed and were fairly definitive; also hesitant to make changes at the table.

**Motion Failed: 2-6**

Favor: Mr. Aysseh, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly

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

*(Ms. Pytko was out of the room at this time.)*

**The original motion -- "that the Board of Education approve the 2018-2019 School Calendar as enclosed" Passed: 9-0**

Mrs. Gerber stated the last day of school has not previously been reflected as an early dismissal, but typically the final 2 days are early dismissal days. Dr. Jones said it all depends on the number of snow days and how the year plays out.

New Business

*Approval of the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Fairfield School Administrators Association and the Board of Education: July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019*

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Mrs. Gerber seconded that the Board of Education approve the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Fairfield School Administrators Association and the Board of Education for the period July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019.

**Motion Passed: 8-0-1**

Favor: Ms. Leeper, Mrs. Vitale, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mrs. Jacobsen, Mr. Aysseh, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Peterson  
Abstain: Ms. Pytko

*First Quarter Financial Report*

Mrs. Munsell reported that this was the first time in her career to close out the first quarter without a state budget. Because of this uncertainty, the district has placed \$2.3M in reserves. The budget was passed on October 31, but subsequent hold-back announcements have been made. DDS residential outplacements account for \$1M of the reserves. There were savings associated with the October 1 2017 SEBAC agreement as related to the CT Partnership 2.0 Plan, but we do not have a forecast for the fiscal year. A transportation efficiency study resulted in the elimination of 2 busses which accounts for some savings as well.

Mr. Peterson: Regarding Line 311, is utility usage on track for the year? Mrs. Munsell said yes.

*Discussion and Possible Action on Options for the Adhoc Committee on Operational Effectiveness*

Mr. Dwyer noted that Dr. Jones provided an updated review of structural changes that warrant follow-up. Four new Board members have yet to weigh in on the committee. At this time, the committee cannot move forward, as only one Board member has responded affirmatively to be a sitting member of the committee. Does not recommend having more than 3 Board members serving on the committee.

Mr. Aysseh said he would vote to disband the committee and suggested a fresh start with a finance subcommittee. The current committee does not have clear goals.

Mrs. Gerber agrees. Having seen the direction of the committee, it wasn't going to work. Best to start with a standing Board committee rather than an adhoc.

Ms. Leeper agreed. A permanent subcommittee of the Board is the best direction.

Mr. Peterson said many are interested in the work and ideas behind the committee, but the right structure is needed. Hopes for a tighter focus; more time is needed to listen to the public.

Mrs. Vitale agrees to disband the committee. The work needs to be done; the Commission statement is broad. Believes there could be 2 committees – finance and facilities.

Ms. Pytko echoed the sentiment. Should disband the committee and have a standing committee.

Mr. Dwyer said buy-in is needed from various town bodies. Decisions will be difficult. Concerned about putting this into a finance committee. The committee owes a responsibility to act in the best interest of 10K students, programmatically and financially.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly would prefer to hold off on disbanding the committee until a bylaw change is made.

Mr. Dwyer said action can be taken at the December 12 meeting, but Mr. Aysseh commented that there is no committee at present; end it now and make a concerted effort to have a new plan to tackle these issues.

*Approved 12/12/2017*

Ms. Leeper moved, Mr. Aysseh seconded to disband the existing Ad Hoc Committee on Operational Effectiveness.

*Public Comment*

*Suzanne Miska*, Ryegate Road: Fairfield Resident: Likes the direction the Superintendent is taking; the town would like to see a cost analysis.

Mrs. Vitale commented that she had also volunteered to serve on the committee. If Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly agrees, there could be one more committee meeting to issue a final report to the Board.

**Motion Passed: 9-0**

Mr. Dwyer said Dr. Jones' report could be used in the future committee.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly offered that members could express interest in being part of the future committee.

*Approval of Minutes*

*Approval of Regular Minutes of October 10, 2017*

Mrs. Gerber moved, Ms. Pytko seconded that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 10, 2017.

**Motion Passed: 7-0-2**

Favor: Ms. Pytko, Ms. Leeper, Mrs. Vitale, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Aysseh, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly

Abstain: Mrs. Jacobsen, Mr. Peterson

*Approval of Special Minutes of October 24, 2017*

Mrs. Gerber moved, Ms. Pytko seconded that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of October 24, 2017.

**Motion Passed: 7-0-2**

Favor: Ms. Pytko, Ms. Leeper, Mrs. Vitale, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Aysseh, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly

Abstain: Mrs. Jacobsen, Mr. Peterson

*Superintendent Report*

Dr. Jones reported that she attended many recent events including the Alumni Day at the FLHS/FWHS football game, the Halloween parade at FWHS, and International Day at McKinley. She thanked and commended all school sites that honored veterans, and gave a special thank you to Mr. Tom Quinn who attended many of these events. Thanked the PTA for sponsoring the parent seminar on the opioid crisis.

The instructional team worked multiple hours on the data presentation and she thanked them for sharing the great work that occurs in the district.

The large budget focus areas listed in the handout are estimates. Staff is working hard on the budget now and 4 areas are listed:

1. High School intensive model will be a line item shift from a consultant line to staffing. It is a larger number, but there is no financial impact. The CLC-S at Riverfield is a complex learner cohort for students with social/emotional needs. At TMS, we are adding a CLC, resulting in all middle schools having a CLC.
2. Science Curriculum costs in grades 9-12.

Approved 12/12/2017

3. Health Insurance Increases.
4. Transportation contract is being negotiated now.

Mrs. Gerber:

- Is Riverfield the 5<sup>th</sup> CLC elementary program? Dr. Jones said yes; the numbers warrant a new program. The CLC-S has a social/emotional component and is different from the other CLC programs.
- Is the TMS CLC due to larger numbers? Dr. Jones said yes. The middle school coordinator, Mr. Goodison, is working with families to have outplaced students return to district, so the program is growing.
- Would be helpful to have a separate presentation on these programs.

Mr. Aysseh

- Asked about the formation of the ELL Academy. Dr. Jones said this is still in development. Need to look at logistics and space requirements. There is a sense of urgency on what is available for English learners.
- Is the transportation contract part of the competitive bid process? What are the drivers for the increases? Dr. Jones said yes. Mr. Dwyer added that the Town Purchasing Dept. handles the bid process and signs the contract. Mrs. Munsell said the consultant and Town Purchasing Director thought the increases would be larger due to the Affordable Care Act and paid time off, but that is not the case.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly

- Will the Riverfield CLC-S students be coming from all over the district and will those students then attend different middle schools? Dr. Jones said yes, they will work on that.
- Will the Newcomer Academy be in different locations? Dr. Jones said parents typically prefer a home school location so that students can be with siblings and friends.

Mrs. Jacobsen: Asked if the district will still maintain the same number of buses. Dr. Jones said this is still an estimate based on current year numbers.

Mrs. Vitale: Will TMS be populated with students from other CLCs? Dr. Jones said no.

<i>Liaison Reports</i>
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Ms. Pytko said an upcoming SEPTA meeting will offer a caregiver course.

Mr. Aysseh reported for Holland Hill Building Committee. Plans have been generated to move portables and break ground in March.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly reported for the PTAC that Ginger Katz was the featured speaker at the opioid crisis seminar. The plan for the new PTAC website is to consult with the high school tech talent. Several elementary schools will have a holiday outreach to Bridgeport. The Achievement Gap Task Force Committee is continuing their work this year with several high schools. Regarding policy, requested Board input on the BOE handbook that is currently in draft form. If the Board finds this valuable, the policy committee will address it. Upcoming policy work includes graduation requirements and political activities.

<i>Open Board Comments</i>
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Mr. Aysseh said he is excited to work with the Board and the new members. Mentioned that Tom Quinn, the HHBC Chair, is a phenomenal citizen of Fairfield and will be inducted into the Veterans Hall of Fame with a ceremony on Monday, December 4 in Hartford. All are welcome.

Mrs. Gerber added that the Board will have a Town Hall meeting on December 14 at 7:30, moderated by former BOE Chair Pam Iacono. Thanked Dr. Jones for making the budget calendar change as requested. Asked if BOE topics for upcoming meetings will be posted online. Mr. Dwyer said the BOE meetings topics page is a dynamic document, but the official meeting dates will be posted.

*Approved 12/12/2017*

*Public Comment:*

*Mr. Patten, Former BOE member:* Requested and received permission from the Chairman to remark on his service to the Board over the last 4 years.

Mr. Dwyer noted the December 6 Special Meeting regarding the Para Contract will take place at 7:00 PM.

<i>Adjournment</i>
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*Ms. Pytko moved, Mrs. Gerber seconded that this Regular Meeting of the Board of Education adjourn.*

***Motion Passed: 9-0***

*Meeting adjourned at 10:30PM*

*Submitted by Mrs. Gerber  
Fairfield Board of Education, Secretary*