

**Regular Meeting Minutes
Fairfield BoE, April 9, 2019**

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 Christine Vitale called the Regular meeting to order at 7:40PM. Present were members Trisha Pytko, Jennifer Leeper, Philip Dwyer, Jessica Gerber, Christine Vitale, Nick Aysseh, Jennifer Jacobsen, Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly, and Jeff Peterson. Others present were Superintendent Dr. Toni Jones, FLHS student reps Mr. Holtz and Ms. Phillips and FWHS student reps Mr. Rivera and Ms. Solari, members of the central office leadership team, and approximately 25 members of the public.

New Business

Approval of Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Fairfield Board of Education and the Fairfield Educational Paraprofessionals Union

Mr. Aysseh moved/Mrs. Jacobsen seconded the recommended motion “The Board of Education hereby moves to provide funding for and to otherwise approve the Tentative Agreement for a successor collective bargaining agreement with the paraprofessionals union for the term of July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2021. The Board further moves to delegate to the Board Chair the authority to execute the final contract document on behalf of the Board.”

Motion passed 9-0.

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

Mr. Aysseh moved/Mr. Dwyer seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education establish **Friday, June 14, 2019 at 6:00PM** as the date and time of graduation for Fairfield Ludlowe High School and Fairfield Warde High School.”

Motion passed 9-0.

Approval of Minutes

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved/Ms. Pytko seconded the recommended motion, “that the Board of Education approve the following minutes:

2-27-2019 6:30 BOE Special Meeting

2-27-2019 7:30 BOE Special Meeting

3-12-19 BOE Regular Meeting”

Motion passed 9-0.

Mr. Aysseh moved/Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded to suspend the rules and extend the meeting to 11:05PM.

Motion passed 9-0.

Adjournment

Mr. Aysseh moved/Mrs. Jacobsen seconded the recommended motion “that this Regular Meeting of the Board of Education adjourn.” Motion passed 9-0. Meeting adjourned at 11:04PM.

April 9, 2019

Detailed Minutes:

Mrs. Vitale noted the upcoming retirement of Mr. Cullen, Executive Director of Operations, thanked him for his many years of service, and wished him the best. She welcomed his replacement, Mr. Patrick Bradbury.

Student Reports

Mr. Rivera and Ms. Solari reported for Fairfield Warde High School: Warde Day will be held on Friday and includes faculty presenters; the Identity and Equity conference was held with 12 schools and more than 200 students participating; distracted driving was featured in the senior 'Save a Life' assembly; Holocaust survivor Judith Altman spoke to Social Studies classes about her incredible story; SATs were taken by Juniors and the Science based NGSS testing was held a few weeks ago; several student international trips will take place next week and include travel to China, England, France and Germany.

Mr. Holtz and Ms. Phillips reported for Fairfield Ludlowe High School: International Day will feature multiple speakers sharing various cultures and global perspectives; the Red Cross Blood Drive was held last week; the Falcon Council teamed up with the Gay/Straight Alliance to create a forum for LGBT issues; the upcoming Germany trip will be a great experience that features STEM; the Baseball team is 3-0, Boys Track is 1-0, Girls Track is 1-1, Tess Stapleton broke records for high jump and long jump, Boys Lax is 2-0; the co-ed Acapella group 'Close Harmony' performed at Kingswood Oxford School with Aidan Kilgallon featured as the best male solo vocalist and event proceeds benefiting education and health in Paraguay; Wright House was victorious over Warner House in the Battle of the Houses; the Music Dept. had an exciting field trip to Boston that included a Spirit Cruise through Boston Harbor.

Mr. Peterson recognized all the middle schools that held their musicals over the weekend.

Presentations

Music Curriculum Presentation, Grades 6-12:

Ms. Hoefer, Music Curriculum Coordinator for PK-12, presented the Music Curriculum for Grades 6-12. The curriculum is aligned with FPS Vision of a Graduate. Much of the content has remained the same, though more specifics have been added to make the vertical alignment more cohesive; the documents include a course cover page, title and summary statement, course skill objectives, overarching goal for all music courses, and artistic processes and anchor standards. Assured experiences connect songs and musical genres to other subject and content areas. Several courses were reviewed in detail. The 2019 Music Merchants recently awarded Fairfield Public Schools with the national recognition of "2019 Best Communities in Education." An audio of the Town Wide Choral Festival was shared.

Ms. Hoefer responded to Board questions:

1. How well attended are music electives in middle school and high school? There is good turnout. Tech classes have surged, piano is always filled, Music Theory at Ludlowe has 20 students, and Vocal Studio has approximately 12-15 students. The only class that is a struggle to fill is Tech II.
2. Is there any support for a male Level 8 course? If the demand exists, but it is difficult to meet that challenge; an all-male ensemble would be great.
3. Does the normal budget cover PD? Yes.

4. What are some examples of interdisciplinary music curriculum? Incorporating South African songs, diaphragmatic breathing, and math and fractions as embedded in music. Certain genres are assured experiences, but it also depends on the teacher.
5. Is there any transition needed, as K-5 Music was already approved? No, the Music Dept. has been bridging the gap already.
6. Does Music Theory use textbooks? It is not tied to one text, rather different resources are used.
7. Any thought to having a marching band? While not out of the question, marching bands are expensive with additional uniforms and instruments, and very demanding of time; additional staff would be needed.
8. Are we meeting the need for students that are interested in performing? Multiple performance opportunities exist. The Acapella program is thriving, there are several jazz bands and many district-wide groups as well.
9. Will any 8th grade work count towards high school credit? No.
10. What are the considerations for mastery credit? Open to the idea for using the All Eastern and All State festivals as reaching mastery for graduation requirements, but this option has not been pursued yet.

Fairfield Cares – Presentation of 2019 Developmental Assets

The 2019 Profile of Fairfield Youth was presented by Amanda Romaniello (Fairfield Cares) and Denique Weidema-Lewis (Positive Directions). Data from the presentation was gathered through an electronic, anonymous survey given to 797 Fairfield students, grades 7-12. There was a passive opt-out and the margin of error was 9%. The survey gathers information on teen assets that fit into 4 categories: constructive use of time, boundaries and expectations, empowerment and support. It also gathers data on ways to reduce risky behavior. While most Fairfield teens are not participating in risky behaviors such as drinking and driving, the survey revealed a 14% increase in gambling (from 4% to 18%) since the previous 2016 survey. The responses can be broken down further when looking at the larger survey, but even the larger survey will not break it down by grade and gender.

Mr. Dwyer mentioned that he works with Fairfield Cares. He thanked the presenters and appreciated that their organizations financially supported this longitudinal study, which has been used in the past to obtain funding for services. Mrs. Jacobsen added that she too works with Fairfield Cares and is grateful for the community support.

Mr. Peterson would have appreciated an advance copy of the results.

Ms. Weidema-Lewis and Ms. Romaniello responded to questions:

1. What percentage of middle school and high school students are represented in the survey? 45% are middle school and 55% are high school students.
2. What is the breakdown of the 30-day substance use rate? Alcohol consumption increases at each grade level, 7-12.
3. The question on gambling will most likely be expanded further with additional questions in the next survey, such as the type of gambling taking place. Similarly, the question on depression warrants further questioning as well. The schools, however, have a different questionnaire that is used to identify depression.
4. Comparisons to national data would be difficult; the closest comparative is the Search Institute data.
5. The one question on college stressors shows that stress increases with grade level.

6. Fairfield Cares has purchased aggregate data for middle school and high school but data is not further broken down by school. The report will be made public in a readable format.
7. The 9% margin of error reflects those surveys that were missing more than 40 out of 160 questions, or surveys that showed a pattern, such as choosing the first response for every question.
8. What will staff do with the data and how does it impact the school climate survey? Dr. Jones said the data is taken very seriously and is used for curriculum and extra programming. The middle schools will incorporate vaping data into Health curriculum.

Old Business

Facilities Update

Mrs. Vitale asked the Board for comment on the revised redistricting guidelines, while mentioning that it is a working draft document and a recap of previous Board comments.

- Mrs. Jacobsen and Ms. Pytko asked when the Board will be voting on the new guidelines. Mrs. Vitale said it will be on the agenda as a First Read in May, after the April 30 Forum.
- Mr. Aysseh felt the Board should move forward on this to give the public notice and a chance to weigh in, before giving a formal charge to Milone and MacBroom.
- Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly felt it was important to maintain both the original and revised versions. She suggested an April 23 brainstorming session to revisit Dr. Jones' tentative timeline and wanted to publicly dispel a rumor that the Board is considering pocket redistricting.
- Mr. Aysseh said he would like to examine all options which may include pocket redistricting. The Board needs to first determine the goal – is it to solve racial imbalance or provide equitable facility utilization? It is important to maximize all the new space. Data is needed before making a determination and the Board will do its due diligence.
- Ms. Pytko requested a redlined document that shows changes to the redistricting guidelines document. It is important to remember the previous guidelines.
- Mr. Dwyer requested that class size policy and district guidelines be added to the document.

Dr. Jones spoke to several unanticipated facility issues, costing approximately \$500K, which will be covered via budget savings:

- Burr – new leak in small closet
- OHS – roof leaks
- Dwight – monitoring the building
- FLHS – leak in one of the classrooms

Mrs. Vitale added that the FLHS bathroom is not included in this list and that bathroom renovations were a project that was deferred years ago. Dr. Jones said the plumbing and pipes are old. Mr. Cullen added that the schools that were built in the 60's have very old plumbing and plumbing at FLHS is rotting. He is working hard to update the waterfall schedule and the Facilities Plan, and FPS is fortunate that the Town has funded so much.

New Business

Approval of Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Fairfield Board of Education and the Fairfield

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Educational Paraprofessionals Union

Mr. Aysseh moved, Mrs. Jacobsen seconded the Board of Education hereby moves to provide funding for and to otherwise approve the Tentative Agreement for a successor collective bargaining agreement with the paraprofessionals union for the term of July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2021. The Board further moves to delegate to the Board Chair the authority to execute the final contract document on behalf of the Board.

Mrs. Jacobsen thanked the school team and the paraprofessionals and recommended approval of the contract.

Motion Passed: 9-0

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

Mr. Aysseh moved, Mr. Dwyer seconded that the Board of Education establish **Friday, June 14, 2019 at 6:00PM** as the date and time of graduation for Fairfield Ludlowe High School and Fairfield Warde High School.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly would like to improve how the graduation date is communicated to the public and asked Dr. Jones to elaborate on the cost savings of holding graduation on Friday, rather than Monday. Dr. Jones said \$42K on transportation will be recouped, in addition to accompanying expenses of a school day. In the event there is a subsequent 'no-school day,' FPS still has 1 additional day – the state requires 180 and FPS now has 181.

Mrs. Vitale added that senior awards will take place on June 13th.

Public Comment:

Bob Smoler, FEA President: Friday is the Sabbath for Jewish families, and some may be preparing for it, which may prevent them from participating in graduation in the same way as they may otherwise. Not sure how many families are impacted but asked the Board to consider this issue.

Dr. Jones added that she has only received positive feedback on the graduation date. FPS is an inclusive district that tries hard to be very responsive to religious holidays as required by law. School events are held district-wide every day of the week including Saturdays and Sundays. Everything -- senior exams, award ceremonies and college orientations -- was taken into consideration.

Motion Passed: 9-0

First Read of Fairfield Proposal of Solar at School Sites

Mr. Scott Thompson (Chair, Sustainability Task Force and RLMS Parent), presented the proposal together with Ms. Mary Hogue (Sustainability Task Force) and Mr. Matt Coleman (Sky View Venture).

Mr. Thompson briefly reviewed the solar power purchase agreement incentives and spoke to the positive impact on the environment, and the educational and budgetary benefits. Based on district comments, the proposal has been modified since it was first presented in March.

- Due to neighbor concerns, aesthetics and safety, the RLMS proposal has shifted from a carport proposal to a rooftop proposal. Despite being more than 10 years old, the roof is in good shape and provisions can be made to remove and replace the solar panels when the roof is eventually replaced.
- The Burr carport proposal will not interfere with the basketball court area.

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- Some of the Stratfield neighbors have a birds-eye view of the lot and work is being done to develop a screening plan to mitigate the view of the carport.
- The ultimate goal is to not have any opposition and have community support for mission of clean energy for the Town.

Mr. Aysseh said Mr. Cullen has done an excellent job with roof warranties and expressed several concerns about tinkering with those as well as the following:

- *Putting solar on the RLMS roof and rate guarantee.* Mr. Cullen said the RLMS roof is in good shape, but he would prefer solar panel installation on a new roof. FPS does not currently have roof warranty extensions on roofs with solar panels and the RLMS roof replacement is not currently in the Long Range Plan. Mr. Coleman will provide additional financial and PPA rate information prior to the next meeting; solar prices have come down and the process is more efficient. The sun shined less over the last year and a half, resulting in less solar production at Warde and Ludlowe.
- *Moving HVAC units on other proposed roofs, particularly planning for Sherman.* Mr. Cullen said some HVAC units will have to be moved. Sherman's roof warranty is about to expire and a new roof is needed.
- *Obstruction of play areas at Burr and Stratfield.* Mr. Thompson said the carport structures are high enough to accommodate fire engines, and the Burr basketball play area will be unaffected. Will solicit PTA and PE teacher input.
- *Carport effect on school traffic; requested more information on school events that take place in parking lots.* Mr. Thompson said carports will not affect traffic, and may even serve to calm traffic.
- *The effect that carports have on character of the buildings.* Mr. Thompson agreed that the carports have a different look, and the idea is to promote the new look as a spot for renewable energy.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly thanked the presenters for their responsiveness to the public and echoed some of Mr. Aysseh's concerns regarding the carports. Mr. Peterson agreed and added that the outdoors shouldn't look like a parking lot when you look up. Mr. Thompson noted the concern and added that the ecological benefit of the proposal is that it is taking advantage of a parking lot without degrading it.

Ms. Leeper asked if school staff appreciates carports. Mr. Thompson said that teachers haven't been surveyed, but carports will keep cars cooler in the summer and schools tend to hold events under them.

Mr. Dwyer said a vote can be done on each individual proposal; Mr. Coleman would prefer the vote be taken on the proposal as an entire package but doesn't want one project to hold up others.

Budget Update

Dr. Jones said the RTM forwarded one question; FPS appears before the RTM tomorrow.

Approval of Minutes

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Ms. Pytko seconded that the Board of Education approve the following minutes:

2-27-2019 6:30 BOE Special Meeting

2-27-2019 7:30 BOE Special Meeting

3-12-19 BOE Regular Meeting

Motion Passed: 9-0

Superintendent Report

Dr. Jones reported that Mr. Ebling announced his retirement at the end of July. The interview process for the new Headmaster will begin in May.

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Committee/Liaison Reports

Ms. Pytko reported for *SEPTA*: Sweet 16 was a huge success; looking for members to shape SEPTA in 19/20.

Ms. Leeper reported for the *Finance Committee*: Revenue from signage is approximately \$750. The Math Academy survey revealed that 14 families are interested.

Mrs. Gerber reported for the *MHBC*: The meeting tomorrow will focus on interviewing construction candidates: Gilbane, Turner and AP Construction .

Mrs. Vitale reported for *PTAC*: Encouraged all to take the Water Pledge and recommended all take advantage of the Fairfield tree planting program; approved a new High Five for Fairfield Students.

Mrs. Vitale reported for *RSBC*: HVAC will not be installed this summer, but will move forward with electrical.

Open Board Comment

Mrs. Vitale reported that the Superintendent Search will be underway with HYA consultants interviewing stakeholders.

Mr. Aysseh moved, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded to suspend the rules and extend the meeting to 11:05PM.

Motion Passed: 9-0

Public Comment

Peter Ling, Dorothy Street: Not in favor of Stratfield carport due to aesthetic reasons; already finds the mechanicals on the roof of the school to be appalling and loathsome.

Nancy Grabowski, Fairfield Resident: Not in favor of RLMS carport; wanted to understand the next step in the carport proposal.

Debby Dwyer, Fairfield Resident: Not in favor of carport at RLMS; it would take away from the campus feel and pleasing view of the school.

Reini Knorr, Alberta Street: The Warde carports have not been detrimental to Warde; students park under them and the Flea Market vendors prize those spots. While not the prettiest thing in the world, we should get used to the look of carports.

Adjournment

Mr. Aysseh moved, Mrs. Jacobsen seconded that this Regular Meeting of the Board of Education adjourn.

Motion Passed: 9-0

Meeting adjourned at 11:04PM

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Gerber, Fairfield Board of Education Secretary