

**Regular Meeting Minutes  
Fairfield BoE; August 26, 2014**

**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 7:40PM. Present were members Eileen Liu-McCormack, John Convertito, Donna Karnal, Jessica Gerber, Philip Dwyer, Paul Fattibene, Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly, John Llewellyn and Marc Patten. Others present were Superintendent David Title, members of the Central Office Leadership Team, and approximately 15 members of the public.

*Public Comment*

Brian Haberly, Duck Farm Road: Riverfield teacher letter  
Nancy Haberly, Duck Farm Road: Personnel matter

*Presentations*

District Improvement Initiatives for 2014-2015

Dr. Title discussed District Improvement Initiatives in Attachment 1a and noted that each initiative has at least one Central Office administrator assigned to it.

Mr. Convertito is looking forward to future reports on #6 and #12, and also expressed safety concerns over the remaining portables with regards to #21 and #29. Dr. Title offered that items #21 and #29 address the need to rid the district of portables, interim measures are being looked at due to the slow project approval rate.

Mr. Llewellyn requested that core subject curricula review be added to the agenda schedule in addition to the review of the Art curriculum; Mr. Dwyer stated that a curricula review plan will be developed in November. Mr. Llewellyn asked if flexible grouping will be rolled out district-wide on the elementary level; Dr. Cutaia-Leonard responded that some schools have adopted a departmentalized approach in 5<sup>th</sup> grade with each group divided differently. Mr. Llewellyn requested School Improvement Plans be easily accessible on the web and asked if the BOE will approve these; Dr. Title said they are currently posted; he will ensure the path is easily found; the BOE will review the District Improvement Plan; the School Improvement Plans will align to it.

Ms. Karnal asked about items #5 and #7. Dr. Title responded that Dr. Cutaia-Leonard had already addressed #7 and the high school schedule is currently undergoing revision to increase instructional time.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack asked how School Improvement Plans tie in to Board Goals; Mr. Dwyer responded that Board Goals address Board actions separate from staff. Mrs. Liu-McCormack would like to see item #12 address high performing students and felt this item is biased towards struggling learners. Dr. Title offered that item #12 was flagged due to the Mission Statement and stated that many other district initiatives addressed high performing students. Mrs. Liu-McCormack requested a curricula review schedule.

Mr. Patten referred to item #4. Dr. Title mentioned that the Board will be presented with options in November; while not a voting item, the Board can provide budgetary guidance.

Mr. Dwyer requested and received Board approval to proceed with questions only on Attachments 1b and 1c, rather than a full presentation.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack asked how the strategy of success will be communicated; Dr. Title mentioned the question is how to measure progress towards the BOE Mission and Goals; ideas on measures will be given in November. Mr. Dwyer stated that this will continue to be on future agendas under the Superintendent's Report.

Mr. Llewellyn asked for a sample of Data Team data, results and actions to be provided prior to budget season; Dr. Title and Mr. Dwyer said this could possibly be on the December agenda.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly offered that Data Teams, by virtue of the work that is getting done, are a messy process that is hard to understand unless one is involved.

Mr. Patten asked if the Rounds Process is new and requested a presentation on it; Dr. Title replied that it has been done for several years and is tied to School Improvement Plans.

Impact of State of Connecticut Legislative Actions

Dr. Title highlighted the impact of several legislative actions from 2013-2014 which included the regional calendar implementation delay, the possibility of a Kindergarten start date change/phase-in, and school climate plan.

Mr. Patten asked if there were additional unfunded mandates; Dr. Title stated that all are unfunded.

Mr. Llewellyn requested the status of the concussion and food allergy policies; Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly stated the food allergy policy may be ready for the full Board at the next meeting. Ms. Karnal added that much progress was made on the food allergy policy and discussion remained on implementation.

<i>Old Business</i>
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Adoption of Board Goals

Mr. Dwyer presented the Board Goals and explained that the number next to each goal represented the ranking by the Board; any goal can be voted on regardless of the ranking.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly commented on the differences between Board and District goals.

Mr. Patten moved, Mrs. Gerber seconded that the Board of Education adopt Board Goal(s) # 1, 2, 3, entitled –

- 1) High School Schedule: Provide budget support and resources necessary to implement the administration's new high school schedule by fall, 2015;
- 2) Long Range District Improvement Plan: Approve, by June 2015, a Long Range District Improvement Plan to achieve the Board's Mission and Educational Goals with measures of success, action plans and all budgetary impacts; and
- 3) Manage the schools in an efficient and cost effective manner, while maintaining and improving the quality of educational programs -- per Enclosure No. 3

Mr. Patten offered that these goals have been top goals for the last few years.

Mrs. Gerber mentioned that the high school schedule in particular has been a top goal.

Mr. Convertito wouldn't support Goal 3 as the Board only oversees and does not manage.

Mr. Fattibene only supports Goal 2 as he hasn't yet seen the new high school schedule; there may be funding issues; Goal 3 is a perpetual goal, the Board does manage schools but doesn't administer the management; Goals should be specific.

Mr. Llewellyn asked the difference in the implementation of a high school vs. elementary schedule.

Mr. Dwyer responded that he put the high school schedule first in his vote to provide more instructional time.

Dr. Title added that the only change in the elementary schedule is the lettering to equalize the specials, there is no change in instructional time.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked if Board support is helpful in regards to the high school schedule. Dr. Title said the Board does not vote on the high school schedule, but Board support is always welcome; the Board can address budget implications, if there are any, during the budget process. Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly reminded the Board that it voted on moving ahead with Mission and Goals and Communication committees when the outcome was unknown.

Mr. Convertito asked if the long-range District Improvement Plan would include a revised high school schedule. Dr. Title responded that it would include the consequences of the high school schedule such as instructional time and professional development.

Mr. Convertito asked if the mover and seconder would change the motion to remove item #3, Mr. Dwyer asked if the Board would approve this by unanimous consent; Mr. Fattibene objected.

Mr. Convertito moved, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded to amend the main motion to remove item number 3 – "Manage the schools in an efficient and cost effective manner, while maintaining and improving the quality of educational programs" from the main motion and keep item numbers 1 and 2 only.

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Mr. Dwyer made a ruling based on past Board practice to not allow public comment on Board Goals since they are an administrative matter. Mr. Llewellyn challenged this ruling.

**Challenge Failed 4-4-1**

Favor: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal, Mr. Fattibene, Mr. Llewellyn

Oppose: Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Patten

Abstain: Mr. Convertito

**Motion “to amend the main motion and remove item #3” Passed 6-2-1**

Favor: Mr. Convertito, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Fattibene, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Patten

Oppose: Ms. Karnal, Mr. Llewellyn

Abstain: Mrs. Liu-McCormack

Mr. Fattibene moved, Mr. Llewellyn seconded to amend the revised main motion -- “that the Board of Education adopt Board Goal(s) # 1 and 2, entitled –

- 1) High School Schedule: Provide budget support and resources necessary to implement the administration’s new high school schedule by fall, 2015;
- 2) Long Range District Improvement Plan: Approve, by June 2015, a Long Range District Improvement Plan to achieve the Board’s Mission and Educational Goals with measures of success, action plans and all budgetary impacts;

and remove Item #1 from the main motion.

Mr. Fattibene said it was difficult to commit to an unknown, and felt more comfortable with alternate wording in #1 regarding the budget.

Mr. Llewellyn didn’t want to commit to an unknown budget cost; and would agree to a revised amendment without the ‘budget support’ term.

Mr. Dwyer trusted that costs would be contained.

Mr. Convertito was agreeable to Mr. Fattibene’s suggestion to change the language.

Mr. Patten said the word ‘develop’ was a problem.

Mr. Dwyer confirmed that this expresses the intent of the Board to revise the schedule.

Mr. Fattibene moved, Mr. Llewellyn seconded to amend the amendment regarding removing item #1 from the main motion, and instead of removing item #1, change the language of the goal to read, *“to develop and implement a new High School schedule by Fall 2015”*

**Motion Passed 5-1-3**

Favor: Mr. Convertito, Ms. Karnal, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer Mr. Fattibene

Oppose: Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly

Abstain: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Llewellyn, Mr. Patten

The amended motion: “that the Board of Education adopt Board Goal(s) # 1 and 2, entitled –

- 1) High School Schedule: to develop and implement a new High School schedule by Fall, 2015;
- 2) Long Range District Improvement Plan: Approve, by June 2015, a Long Range District Improvement Plan to achieve the Board’s Mission and Educational Goals with measures of success, action plans and all budgetary impacts

**Motion Passed 9-0**

Mr. Convertito moved, Mrs. Gerber seconded to call the question.

**Motion Passed 6-3**

Favor: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Convertito, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Fattibene, Mr. Patten

Oppose: Ms. Karnal, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Llewellyn

The original motion, moved by Mr. Patten and seconded by Mrs. Gerber, as amended to read “that the Board of Education adopt Board Goal(s) # 1 and 2, entitled -- 1) High School Schedule: to develop and implement a new High School schedule by fall, 2015; 2) Long Range District Improvement Plan: Approve, by June 2015, a Long Range District Improvement Plan to achieve the Board’s Mission and Educational Goals with measures of success, action plans and all budgetary impacts -- per Enclosure No. 3”

**Motion Passed 9-0**

Mr. Dwyer confirmed with several members of the Board that more discussion on Board Goals was requested due to confusion over the intent of the motion to call the question.

Mr. Llewellyn moved, Ms. Karnal seconded to reopen the discussion on Board goals.

**Motion Passed 5-3-1**

Favor: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal, Mr. Fattibene, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Llewellyn

Oppose: Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Patten

Abstain: Mr. Convertito

Mrs. Liu-McCormack moved/Mr. Llewellyn seconded to approve items 4 and 6 –

- 4) Raise Student Achievement #1 – to ensure the continuous improvement of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment,
  - 8.1: To ensure the implementation of a measurable plan of action that ensures that all students of all levels are appropriately challenged and equipped with globally competitive learning skills to reach their full potential
  - 8.2: To ensure the implementation of an action plan to evaluate and enhance the effectiveness of the elementary and middle school programs for children with special needs, as well as gifted, to increase student achievement
  - 8.3: To ensure the review, evaluation and enhancement for the effectiveness of the various instructional methods and district assessments implemented in-district, including both building and district initiatives, in order to identify and implement best practices.
  
- 6) Annual Goal Setting Process: Every year the Board shall put together a comprehensive list of Board Goals and Objectives that address each of the below topics, respectively:
  - a) Raise Student Achievement for All Students
  - b) Improve the Fiscal Management of the BoE budget
  - c) Ensure an Effective Board of Education
  - d) Ensure we have the highest quality Human Resources

Mrs. Liu-McCormack felt that student achievement should be the highest goal every year, and these goals are being done in other districts.

Mr. Llewellyn stated that the Board has lost focus on student achievement; there is a need to measure what the Board has done in the past and whether it has been effective.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly stated her opposition to both goals; that these goals are redundant and overstep the bounds of what the Board should be doing; that language in 8.2 regarding specials needs and gifted students is not mutually exclusive.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack disagreed with Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly and stated that the Board should not neglect its duties in student achievement and is agreeable to change the wording in 8.2.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly disagreed with Mrs. Liu-McCormack and felt this was already covered in the Mission and Goals; student achievement is on the agenda 4 times this year; this goal will affect staff time.

Mr. Fattibene said every Board member believes in raising student achievement; these important concepts can be included in the long-range District Improvement Plan, instead of being adopted as goals.

Mr. Convertito did not appreciate the insinuation that Board members don't care about student achievement; when goals are pulled from other districts' websites, it doesn't necessarily mean they are getting done, and he does not support the motion.

Mr. Convertito moved, Mr. Patten seconded to call the question to close debate on items 4 and 6.

**Motion Passed 6-3**

Favor: Mr. Convertito, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Fattibene, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Patten

Oppose: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal, Mr. Llewellyn

**The original motion on items 4 and 6, as moved by Mrs. Liu-McCormack and seconded by Mr. Llewellyn Failed 3-6**

Favor: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal, Mr. Llewellyn

Oppose: Mr. Convertito, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Fattibene, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Patten

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Mr. Convertito seconded to approve Goal #8 – “Fairfield Public Schools Advocacy: The BoE will provide timely and relevant communication to the community about the school district’s successes, its plans for improvement of student achievement and operations. In time for the 2015-16 budget review process, we will ensure community decision-makers are provided accurate information in response to questions or misleading information promulgated throughout the community”.

**Motion Passed 7-2**

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

Oppose: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Llewellyn

Mr. Patten stated that previous work on this through the Communications Committee was exemplary and it can be achieved.

Mr. Llewellyn felt this should be standard operating procedure and disagrees with the statement ‘accurate information’ in regards to controlling of information.

Mr. Fattibene expressed concern that this is already done; approving this as a goal implies that it is not being done.

Mr. Dwyer stated that there is always room for improvement and he will support it.

<i>Approval of Minutes</i>
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*Approval of Minutes of July 15, 2014 Special Meeting*

Mrs. Gerber moved/Mr. Convertito seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the 6:00pm Special Meeting of July 15, 2014”

**Motion Passed 7-0-2**

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

Oppose: 0

Abstain: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Convertito

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*Approval of Minutes of July 15, 2014 Special Meeting*

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved/Mrs. Gerber seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the 6:30pm Special Meeting/Executive Session of July 15, 2014”

**Motion Passed 6-0-2**

Favor: Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Fattibene, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Llewellyn, Mr. Patten

Oppose: 0

Abstain: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Convertito

(Ms. Karnal was out of the room.)

*Approval of Minutes of June 24, 2014 Regular Meeting*

Mrs. Gerber moved/Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 24, 2014.”

**Motion Passed 8-0**

Favor: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Convertito, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Fattibene, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr.

Llewellyn, Mr. Patten

(Ms. Karnal was out of the room.)

*Superintendent’s Report*

Dr. Title reported that his blog is now retired in favor of his twitter account @FairfieldSuper; this will not be a delegated account and will contain his comments.

Mr. Fattibene asked if tweeted information will be available from other sources, and Dr. Title said that would depend on what was being tweeted.

Mr. Dwyer confirmed that this will not be official communication.

*Committee/Liaison Report*

Mr. Patten noted that the RTM overwhelmingly approved the Riverfield and non-recurring projects.

Mr. Dwyer updated the Board on the By-Laws Advisory Ad-hoc Committee, an additional member is needed, after which a chair will be elected and members will decide on the timing and location of meetings; FOI rules must be followed in publishing the agenda and minutes.

*Open Board Comment*

Mr. Convertito had the pleasure of observing an elementary math PD and congratulated the staff on the collaborative effort. The Policy Committee is currently working with the allergy policy and he asked the community to be aware of the allergy risks.

Mr. Dwyer mentioned that the BOE meeting schedule for the year was placed at the Board table; items may be added; he also noted that he attended the Mill Hill playground dedication ceremony.

Mr. Llewellyn asked for a financial review on health insurance. Dr. Title and Mrs. Munsell added that AON does not provide this data until December.

*Adjournment*

Mrs. Gerber moved, Ms. Karnal seconded the recommended motion “that this Regular Meeting of the Board of Education adjourn”.

**Motion passed 9-0**

Meeting adjourned 10:51PM.