

**Special Meeting Minutes  
Fairfield BoE, October 9, 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.

**Voting Summary:**

**Call to order of the Special Meeting of the Board of Education and Roll Call**

Chairman Philip Dwyer called the Special meeting to order at 6:58PM. Present were members Trisha Pytko, Christine Vitale, Jessica Gerber, Philip Dwyer, Jennifer Jacobsen, Nick Aysseh, Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly and Jeff Peterson. Jennifer Leeper was not present. Others present were Superintendent Dr. Toni Jones, members of the central office leadership team, and approximately 20 members of the public.

**Adoption of Policies**

**Adoption of Policy 6146: Requirements for Graduation**

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved/Mr. Aysseh seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education adopt Policy 6146: Requirements for Graduation”

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved/Mr. Peterson seconded to amend Policy 6146 to reflect the number of credits on Page a to be cut in half; and to amend the third line on Page d, Section V, “Notification:” to read “the areas of Mastery Based content experiences.” Motion passed 8-0.

Mrs. Jacobsen moved/Mrs. Gerber seconded to amend Policy 6146 as referenced in Enclosure 1A.

Mr. Dwyer moved/Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded to postpone the vote on this motion to the next Regular BoE meeting. Motion passed 8-0.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved/Mr. Aysseh seconded to delay action on this policy vote to October 23, 2018. Motion passed 7-1 (Ms. Pytko, Mrs. Vitale, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mrs. Jacobsen, Mr. Aysseh, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly in favor; Mr. Peterson against.)

**Adoption of Policy 0200: Education Goals**

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved/Mr. Peterson seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education waive the First Reading of **Policy 0200: Educational Goals** and adopt Policy 0200 as enclosed, as new language was reviewed on June 12, 2018, August 28, 2018, and September 11, 2018” Motion passed 8-0

**Approval of District Improvement Plan Update**

Mr. Peterson moved/Mr. Aysseh seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve the District Improvement Plan as updated September 25, 2018” Motion passed 8-0.

**Approval of BoE Goal**

Mr. Peterson moved/Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve the September 11, 2018 BoE Goal #1, with the understanding that it will be based on the receipt of the 2019-2029 enrollment projections.”

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved/Mr. Dwyer seconded to amend the first line of “Goal #1” to read “The Board of Education will explore and research to make a decision on or before June 30, 2019 with BoE action on all four of the following items” Motion passed 8-0.

Original motion, as amended, passed 8-0

Mrs. Gerber moved/Mrs. Vitale seconded to suspend the rules and extend the meeting to 11:30PM. Motion failed 4-4 (Mrs. Vitale, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mrs. Jacobsen in favor; Ms. Pytko, Mr. Aysseh, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Peterson against).

### **Adjournment**

Ms. Pytko moved/Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded the recommended motion “that this Special Meeting of the Board of Education adjourn.” Motion passed 8-0. Meeting adjourned at 10:59PM.

### **Detailed Minutes:**

Mr. Dwyer reported that the BOE approved the Secretarial contract 8-0, in the previous 5:45pm Special Meeting.

#### Mill Hill Update

Mr. Dwyer gave a brief update on the Mill Hill project; the charge has not changed. The building committee did not respond to the Superintendent’s memo, but has not requested additional funds. Mrs. Gerber said there is some concern about the June 30, 2019 deadline, as the project is already a bit behind. Mr. Aysseh said the goal is to meet the deadline, but the project should be priced correctly and there shouldn’t be any hasty decisions. Mr. Morabito said the reimbursement rate is unknown after June 30; if that deadline is not met, the district is delayed from filing for reimbursement for one whole year and the Town risks carrying those payments with interest for the year.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly expressed concern that a project delay may impact the 19/20 budget, the waterfall and other projects. Mrs. Gerber said that previous projects have been brought before the BOF and RTM as late as June and still were able to meet the June deadline, but this is not an optimal timeframe. Capital projects are typically presented in December. Dr. Jones added that Mr. Mayer could shed more light on the bond resolution timeline. Mr. Dwyer added that he will make sure the building committee understands that the June 30, 2019 deadline is mandatory.

#### Presentation: Innovative Learning Initiative – An Update

Mr. Honohan (Executive Director Digital Learning) led the presentation with Sheila Ferrara, Nikki Callahan and Karin King. Innovative Learning and Vision of a Graduate includes enhanced instruction, skill development, and the use of technology and digital resources. The elementary grades 3-5 are very excited about STEAM and are engaged in projects that allow open communication, sharing and perseverance. The District Technology Plan (2015-2018) supports Innovative Learning by providing a network that meets capacity, implementing a 1:1 mobile computing device program, and managing a wireless system to ensure coverage and access. Currently, 3,912 Chromebooks have been distributed. Chromebooks use approved resources and allow safe access to information and applications. Students learn Digital Citizenship and tips for tech support. Professional Development is ongoing.

The presenters responded to Board questions:

*Mr. Peterson* asked if there were any issues with the Chromebooks, and to what degree was the use of Chromebooks based on outcome-based research? Mr. Honohan said few issues have been reported and student achievement will be viewed in the long-term. Dr. Jones added that most high-performing districts tend to have more access to technology and she believes the district will see increased results.

*Ms. Pytko* asked about monitoring, uses beyond providing a search engine, and the timeline of the rollout. Ms. Byrnes said certain items are blacklisted, and there is content filtering and tracking for security. Algorithms are constantly updated. Dr. Jones said a classroom management component for teachers is provided for class instruction. An email was sent to the Board on June 9 with information on Chromebooks, but additional timeline information can be provided.

Mr. Aysseh questioned the tracking mechanisms. Ms. Byrnes said there are firewalls, filtering and tracking, and even when used at home, the devices 'phone home.' There is minimal offline capability.

*Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly:*

- Will 7<sup>th</sup> graders use Chromebooks for SBAC testing? Ms. Byrnes said yes, Chromebooks have been pre-programmed.
- Are there any pilot programs in place? Ms. King said teachers are presently using Chromebooks in the classroom and there are also workshops. Ms. Callahan added that the district has been integrating technology for many years and invited the Board to view some of the projects that have been developed. These are very high end units that previously had to rely on carts. This is not a new tool; the only thing that is new is that every child now has a tool.
- What is the underlying science in the elementary STEAM program? Ms. Ferrara said the first marking period focuses on building, which embraces the inquiry and engineering side of STEAM, while incorporating elements of science and math.
- What was Goal #2 in the Tech Plan? Mr. Honohan said it was assessment; goals weren't linked and were left out.
- How are parents informed of the feedback process? Mr. Honohan said he appreciates feedback from everyone and is working on the best way to capture the narrative of what is working and what needs more work. The feedback form was presented at most Open Houses; the website has a place for direct questions and feedback, much of which has come from teachers.
- Are there long-term savings? Dr. Jones said copier and textbook costs are reduced, the Chromebooks are cheaper than HP, and there aren't any carts.

*Mrs. Jacobsen:*

How can the Board follow state statute for recommending texts with online resources? Dr. Jones said the BOE will still approve textbooks. Ms. Byrnes said online texts are balanced with open educational resources; the resource list on the website is up to date.

*Mrs. Vitale:*

- Can you provide information on the new Digital Learning administrative position? Dr. Jones said this position adds a needed instructional piece to the technology infrastructure. A new technology committee will ensure that technology decisions consider the instructional component. Ms. Byrnes added that the district Technology Plan is currently being revised.
- Concerned with teacher consistency of teacher comfort with digital learning. Dr. Jones said teachers learn and grow at their own pace, as is the case now.
- How many students have opted out? Mr. Honohan said some students are still opting in after not doing so initially; he does not have a final opt-out number yet.

### Graduation Policy

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Mr. Aysseh seconded that the Board of Education adopt Policy 6146: Requirements for Graduation.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said the policy was first introduced in June to address statutory changes and additional changes have been made since then; she deferred to the Board on whether to adopt or defer to the next meeting. She also

recognized that other changes to the policy as enclosed were needed – including correcting the number of credits and adjusting the bottom of page d.

Ms. Vitale, speaking on behalf of Ms. Leeper, said there is an interest to pursue financial literacy within the Health curriculum. Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said if mandated, this would impact FTE. Mr. Cummings said a course for financial literacy is currently offered.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Mr. Peterson seconded to amend Policy 6146 to reflect the number of credits on Page a to be cut in half; and to amend the third line on Page d, Section V, "Notification:" to read "the areas of Mastery Based content experiences."

**Motion Passed: 8-0**

Mrs. Jacobsen moved, Mrs. Gerber seconded to amend Policy 6146 as referenced in Enclosure 1A.

The Board discussed the community service amendment, centering on whether it should be mandatory and the number of hours that may be required. Mr. Aysseh, Mr. Dwyer, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly and Mrs. Vitale supported the mandatory requirement; Mrs. Gerber, Mrs. Jacobsen, Mr. Peterson and Ms. Pytko supported voluntary service. Some of the pros of mandatory community service included giving back and having positive life experiences. Some of the cons included difficulty with tracking service hours and placing additional stress on students. Dr. Jones added that mandatory community service emulates the IB program; additional FTE would be required to monitor and track the service hours. Headmasters Mr. Ebling and Mr. Hatzis agreed that while community service is beneficial, a mandatory requirement would create a conundrum of accountability and further impose upon the process to assist students in danger of not graduating. Mr. Ebling added that many students work or pursue passions outside of community service, and a mandatory community service requirement could prove difficult for those students.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly appreciated the Headmasters' comments and wished she had heard this sooner; her understanding from previous discussions at policy meetings was that FTE would not be impacted.

Mr. Dwyer moved, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded to postpone the vote on this motion to the next Regular BoE meeting.

**Motion Passed: 8-0**

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Mr. Aysseh seconded to delay action on this policy vote to October 23, 2018.

**Public Comment:**

*Mr. Smoler*, FEA President: Supports motion to postpone, would like to express thoughts to the committee.

**Motion Passed: 7-1**

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

Oppose: Mr. Peterson

Adoption of Policy 0200: Education Goals

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Mr. Peterson seconded that the Board of Education waive the First Reading of Policy 0200: Educational Goals and adopt Policy 0200 as enclosed, as new language was reviewed on June 12, 2018, August 28, 2018, and September 11, 2018.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said this is a reflection from Central Office and is consistent with the district.

**Motion Passed: 8-0**

District Improvement Plan

Mr. Peterson moved, Mr. Aysseh seconded that the Board of Education approve the District Improvement Plan as updated September 25, 2018.

Dr. Jones added that the only change from the previous version was to add the columns for Specific Actions indicating progress and completion.

*Responding to Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly:*

- The Instructional Rounds item was not edited out as some schools still do those.
- The last bullet on page 13 refers to training for social/emotional health.
- Section 1A is all new language, and does not require additional educational goal revisions. This section fits together with the Academic Expectations.
- The Work Plan addresses the development of a rubric to measure responsible citizenship; this is more about the culture and climate of the school.
- The graph on page 18 shows how various components fit together to meet the Vision of a Graduate.

*Responding to Mrs. Jacobsen:*

- Complete items may continue to be a work in progress; for example, a great job was accomplished with transitions (Item 1-9), but work and progress will continue even after implementation.
- Item 1-24: The Policy Committee may revise the homework policy before June 2019; the homework policy will have many layers and staff will need time to work through it.
- Students may bring their own devices.
- Middle schools will be reviewing schedules, including clubs.
- Duct cleaning at FLHS will be completed in 2019.
- The special education audit confirmed what is already reflected in the Work Plan.

**Motion Passed: 8-0**

Approval of BOE Goal

Mr. Peterson moved, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded that the Board of Education approve the September 11, 2018 BoE Goal #1, with the understanding that it will be based on the receipt of the 2019-2029 enrollment projections.

Mr. Dwyer gave a brief background on the goal. It encompasses multiple similar goals that were submitted by Board members, and consolidates them into one. Dr. Jones said this was the most consistent goal that was submitted. Mr. Dwyer added that the remaining goals will be addressed at an upcoming meeting.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Mr. Dwyer seconded to amend the first line of "Goal #1" to read "The Board of Education will explore and research to make a decision on or before June 30, 2019 with BoE action on all four of the following items"

**Motion Passed: 8-0**

Dr. Jones said consultants are currently working on updating the 10-year projections and the Board can decide the extent to which it would like the consultants to study redistricting; several scenarios have already been provided. Drilling down to the street level would take place after June. The Board may also address some difficult decisions regarding solving Racial Imbalance and facility capacity; this will provide the guidance that consultants will need. The June 30, 2019 deadline does provide some time. Mr. Cullen is researching properties for WFC.

Mr. Peterson said that there are many things in WFC that need to be fixed. The broad sense of the Board is that redistricting is a high priority, large task, with much work to be done.

Mr. Aysseh felt the Board should not spend money before deciding which direction to take. Will Racial Imbalance be solved with redistricting, which would also solve everything that goes along with it? It is important to give the consultant a charge that makes sense so that scenarios make sense. Mr. Aysseh and Ms. Pytko felt the next Town Hall meeting should address redistricting.

Mrs. Gerber suggested that previous 2016 scenarios provided by Milone and MacBroom may no longer be viable and added that those plans were predicated on Mill Hill being built to a 504 capacity.

Dr. Jones said the Board can decide the next level of work for the consultants. Mrs. Jacobsen and Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked for a calendar or timeline and Mr. Dwyer recommended a decision-making tree. Board members added that WFC and ECC issues remain and have to be addressed; affordable housing and other types of projections from the Town should be provided. Mrs. Vitale asked the Board to revisit the idea of a long-term planning committee.

*Public Comment:*

*Bob Smoler, FEA President:* Facilities issues need to be addressed. A centralized model for ECC is essential.

*Matthew Hallock, Somerville Street:* Thanked the Board and asked that the Child's Garden preschool at the Oldfield School site be investigated as an alternate facility for ECC.

**Original motion, as amended, Passed: 8-0**

BOE Budget Considerations:

Mr. Dwyer asked Board members to suggest items of interest for the upcoming budget.

*Mrs. Gerber* asked how Innovative Learning and the WFC move will affect the budget. Dr. Jones said the WFC move is reflected as a placeholder in the waterfall. New devices will be added at the middle school level, but aside from that, Innovative Learning will not have a huge impact.

*Mrs. Jacobsen* mentioned items in the special education audit, and also requested a more detailed breakdown of section 503. Dr. Jones and Ms. Byrnes said more detail is in the back of the book.

*Mrs. Vitale* will be looking for more information on facilities, such as solving the heat and humidity issues in the short term. Mr. Peterson mentioned that the BoF was informed of the air conditioning issue at the Capital Planning Workshop.

Mrs. Gerber moved, Mrs. Vitale seconded to suspend the rules and extend the meeting to 11:30PM.

**Motion Failed: 4-4**

Favor: Mrs. Vitale, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mrs. Jacobsen

Oppose: Ms. Pytko, Mr. Aysseh, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Peterson

2017-2018 Fiscal Year – Financial Report

Mrs. Munsell briefly reviewed the year-end financial report. The 2017-2018 fiscal year began without a state budget, creating uncertainty. As a result, \$2.3M was placed in reserve, which was then released. Technology was pre-purchased and \$600K was returned to the Town. Available balances were used to purchase instructional materials, STEAM materials and collaborative-space furniture, essentially restoring school allocations.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked what the Board was told when it approved the \$403K for pre-purchase. Mr. Dwyer said he would have to check the record but thought it was stated as technology.

Mr. Dwyer took a moment of personal privilege to acknowledge that he has enjoyed his past 6 years as Board Chairman, but will not be seeking reelection as Chair in November. He is looking forward to remaining a member.

Special Education Audit – Highlights

Mr. Mancusi said the consultant will return in November to discuss the audit in more detail. The purpose of the audit was to review special education, analyze inconsistencies with the IEP process, analyze service delivery with respect to a least restrictive environment, review comparative data from DRG A and B districts, and help identify possibilities to increase deficiencies. FPS students with disabilities (16-17 data) spend 78% of their school day within general education; better than DRG A and DRG B averages. Over the previous 2 years, FPS sped teacher to student ratio has increased due to the addition of more sped teachers. Four year cohort graduation data for 2016-2017 shows that 80% of FPS students with disabilities graduated in 4 years. FPS was commended for providing sufficient PD opportunities and instructional materials and is committed to supporting instructional improvement efforts. One of the recommendations included the reorganization of the Sped Coordinators. Next steps include incorporating the audit recommendations into the budget and developing additional PD opportunities to address areas of need.

Adjournment

Ms. Pytko moved, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded that this Special Meeting of the Board of Education adjourn.

**Motion Passed: 8-0**

Meeting adjourned at 10:59PM.

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