

**Regular Meeting Minutes  
Fairfield BoE, August 28, 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 Regular Meeting of the Board of Education and Roll Call

Chairman Philip Dwyer called the Regular meeting to order at 7:37PM. Present were members Trisha Pytko, Jennifer Leeper, Christine Vitale, Jessica Gerber, Philip Dwyer, Jennifer Jacobsen, Nick Aysseh, Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly and Jeff Peterson. Others present were Superintendent Dr. Toni Jones, members of the central office leadership team, and approximately 15 members of the public.

### Approval of Minutes

Mrs. Gerber moved/Mrs. Vitale seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve the *Special* Minutes of June 26, 2018 and the *Regular* Minutes of June 28, 2018” Motion passed 9-0

### Adjournment

Ms. Pytko moved/Ms. Leeper seconded the recommended motion “that this Regular Meeting of the Board of Education adjourn.” Motion passed 9-0. Meeting adjourned at 10:55PM. BOE Regular August 28 2018

## **Detailed Minutes**

### Old Business

#### *Graduation Policy Update:*

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said the committee will be prepared with a first read by the October 9 BOE meeting. Any additional edits should be discussed with Dr. Jones prior to forwarding the committee.

#### *Discussion of Structural Change Ideas*

Mrs. Gerber questioned the school pairing chart under Grade Reconfiguration; she was concerned that other Town bodies might use the idea of saving 20 sections without factoring in unknown costs, such as transportation. She asked who put together the school pairing chart. Dr. Jones said she put together the chart, which provided a simple view based on schools that are next to one another; other costs and issues not included in the chart were listed directly below the chart without any specific numbers.

Mr. Aysseh expressed frustration that this item was again being discussed and requested that it be completely removed. Mr. Dwyer said the Board can effectively remove this item from further discussion by approving Board Goals which would simultaneously address the other 4 items. Ms. Leeper requested that a math/science academy, similar to the gifted program, be added as an option.

Several Board members requested a timeline for discussion and/or approval of structural change ideas listed in the memo. Ms. Pytko said the timeline would be a helpful preparation tool so that members have ample time to study data.

The Board discussed possible timelines:

Mr. Dwyer said the lease for WFC is scheduled for renewal in Spring 2019. Dr. Jones said if the Board chooses to address a new site for WFC, it should be done quickly in Sept/Oct, and she will begin now to include staff and community in the conversation.

Mr. Dwyer said the Early Childhood Center is outgrowing its currently facility on the Warde campus, forcing an additional classroom placement at Stratfield. This item does not have a specific timetable, and Dr. Jones said she does not expect the Special Education audit to have an impact on this. The Sped audit report is scheduled for the 2<sup>nd</sup> September meeting.

All components of the Racial Imbalance Plan will be reviewed for effectiveness. Mr. Dwyer said the magnet program and redistricting are part of the Racial Imbalance report that will be presented to the state by Spring 2019. The progress of the Mill Hill Building Committee at that time is an unknown factor. A consultant will need to be hired prior to March 2019. Ms. Pytko said she preferred to use a different consultant than the one previously used. Dr. Jones added that the state will be checking that we have had a conversation about redistricting. Mr. Aysseh added that other Town bodies have made it clear that redistricting should be explored as an option and he would like to take initial steps to discuss it as a formal agenda item in the coming months.

Mrs. Vitale asked if there were any concerns regarding redistricting and adding students in Holland Hill for state reimbursement. Dr. Jones said previous enrollment numbers were acceptable for reimbursement.

Mr. Aysseh requested legal consultation on the ramifications of not complying with Racial Imbalance. Dr. Jones said she had discussed with outside counsel and was told there is no precedent. Mr. Peterson expressed interest in pursuing this item at an upcoming Board meeting; Mr. Dwyer said he would take that under advisement and has some concerns.

## New Business

### *Board Goals*

Due to the complex BOE Board Goals document, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly proposed that Board members re-submit 2-3 goals with SMART language: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound. The Board agreed with the proposal and with the concept to re-submit and vote prior to the next meeting on 9/11. Mr. Dwyer added that the goals are BOE goals, and any change to by-laws should be presented at the November meeting.

### *WFC Tuition*

Mr. Mancusi presented the updated concept of accepting tuition students at WFC, with a baseline tuition of \$35K, offered to districts without alternative programming options. Sped and 504 services would be billed per diem, similar to Open Choice, and language to this effect is present in the new paragraph. Mr. Aysseh requested data on the average cost of a WFC student, including supplemental IMPACT costs. Mr. Mancusi clarified that he would only accept students whose level of need would not exceed what can be given in a public school. Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said she was in favor of the concept, so long as there is no negative impact to Fairfield students, as WFC serves a varying degree of student needs.

Mr. Mancusi said any change to program location would be shared with applicants, and there is space for additional tuition students should other districts be interested. The Board has previously approved a total of 5 tuition students. Enrollment decisions would be made by Mr. Mancusi and Ms. Donowitz.

### *Facilities Plan and Waterfall*

Mr. Dwyer said the Waterfall is a dynamic document and will be used at the upcoming Board of Finance Capital Planning Workshop on 9/18. Mrs. Gerber noted that date is the eve of Yom Kippur.

Mr. Cullen reviewed the Summary of Changes document, and responded to Board questions on district projects:

- The district saved \$1.5M in roof extensions at RLMS and McKinley. Burr has a different roof system which did not do as well and most likely will not be extended. Roofs are added back to the plan depending on the number of years the extension was granted for.
- The HVAC district-wide system needs an upgrade to its dial-in service in order to provide enhanced and tamper-proof security. Dwight's HVAC was last upgraded in 1999. The renovations at Sherman and Mill Hill will not affect the new HVAC control upgrades. Mrs. Gerber asked about any way to make un-air-conditioned schools more comfortable and was told that classrooms without air conditioning have been provided with fans.
- Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly questioned the statement in the Facilities Plan regarding Holland Hill, stating that there may be some additional site/building needs. Some Board members felt this statement would legitimize leaving construction items undone, for example, the Stratfield retaining wall has yet to be built. Mr. Dwyer clarified that ed specs are adhered to, but issues do arise. Ed specs do not include Preventive Maintenance.
- The Mill Hill construction number of \$18.72M is the Holland Hill number plus escalation and is a place-holder until an accurate number is realized. The \$25M number previously mentioned was a verbal response to a Board member.
- The cost increases in line 45 (Jennings), and 62 (Dwight) will be provided in more detail. The Dwight bathrooms have been rejected several times, resulting in a cost escalation.
- The \$200K listed for the WFC move is a place-holder until an accurate number can be provided. The cost to move in to St. Emery's was \$157K. Mr. Aysseh added that no decisions have been made yet to move WFC or ECC.
- The PM for the FWMS elevator has improved, pushing out the replacement. Mr. Aysseh suggested applying for a community grant for this project.
- TMS lighting has missing ceiling tiles throughout the school due to poorly designed pads and grid.
- The Warde windows replacement number is the same that was used initially for Fairfield Ludlowe windows and does not include remediation costs if PCBs are found. There is some concern with the results of the preliminary chlorine testing.

### [Approval of Minutes](#)

Mrs. Gerber moved, Mrs. Vitale seconded that the Board of Education approve the *Special Minutes* of June 26, 2018 and the *Regular Minutes* of June 28, 2018.

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

### [Superintendent's Report](#)

Dr. Jones reported that Convocation was a great, energetic start to the school year.

### *District Priorities*

Dr. Jones said the Fairfield Staff Work Plan within the Vision of a Graduate document directly correlates to the District Improvement Plan. Two educational goals were added, and there are 6 tenets of the VOG: All students will be Innovators, Collaborators, Critical Thinkers, Responsible Citizens and Goal-Directed Resilient Learners.

Mr. Dwyer added that the District Improvement Plan is a dynamic document similar to the Facilities Plan and it will have changes. The Board may choose to re-approve when necessary.

Dr. Jones addressed Board questions:

- Hybrid Learning is a methodology that is used in math and allows flexibility. It includes online learning.
- Academic Expectations for elementary and middle schools will be more building-specific.
- School Climate will use the same metric as last year.

Dr. Jones and Ms. Byrnes addressed Board questions on the Chromebook initiative and Innovative Learning.

- 3,983 Chromebooks were ordered, including pre-purchase and replacement devices. There will be 30 loaner devices at each middle school and 50 at each high school.
- Research on tech support in other districts revealed very few problems. The devices are lightweight, compact and not as sensitive as many laptops. Students will not be allowed to decorate the Chromebook, but they are asked to get a cover and can decorate the cover. Currently, there will not be a fee for a replacement, unless it is an egregious loss. Google forms will be used to track damages and replacements. Students may still be allowed to bring their own device, however, there is more capacity on the district device network.
- Not sure yet if students will be required to return devices at the end of the year. Other similar districts at first required devices to be returned, but changed their minds after it was logistically easier for students to keep devices. It also allowed more student engagement over the summer.
- Devices typically last about 4 years, after which Google will no longer update. This is a hot topic right now among Tech Directors in the state.
- Currently researching a regional grant for those without internet access, which would provide a hotspot function for filtered internet access with a timer.
- The timing of the staggered rollout will depend on how well the rollout goes.
- A tremendous amount of planning for this effort has ensured plenty of available bandwidth and an updated student pledge. Students will attend mini classes on digital citizenship. Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly recommended a tech help desk 'staffed' by tech savvy students. Ms. Byrnes noted that this is a department goal, with some students actually having certification for certain products.
- There is a newly negotiated Chromebook price when compared with last year.
- Camera coverage stickers will be provided.
- Responsibility for home internet use lies with the parent. Schools have many tools and filters in place. The district already has over 8000 devices, so this is not new. Courses will be available for parents to learn more.
- The 7<sup>th</sup> grade teaching staff requested to be part of the Chromebook roll-out. The Work Plan includes additional middle school roll-out next year.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly requested the DIP Crosswalk document be discussed on an upcoming agenda and feels it is appropriate to vote on it, but questioned the reduction of student performance indicators down to eight. In the original DIP, there were 10 pages of baseline data. Dr. Jones said staff struggled with so many indicators, and in some cases, calculations were done by hand. Data and assessments have also changed. Mr. Dwyer recommended that the Policy and Finance Committees propose guidance on performance measurements for the new document.

#### *Educational Legislation Update*

Ms. Colleen Deasy reviewed important education legislation changes and highlighted:

- Restraint, Seclusion and Exclusionary Time-Out. The district's existing policy must be modified by January 1, and most of the changes are due to definitions.
- Student Data Privacy. New requirements and exceptions have been effective since July 1 and the Policy Committee is working on this.

- Guidelines for Life-Threatening Food Allergies and Glycogen Storage Disease and Administration of Epinephrine. Bus drivers must take Epi-Pen administration training and students may carry medication.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked for the background on the search and seizure of student's personal electronic devices. Mr. Dwyer suggested asking the state representatives about this and Ms. Deasy said she would follow up.

#### *Summer 2018 Work and Projects Update*

Dr. Jones and Mr. Cullen reported on the Warde turf field project. New upgraded scoreboards are ready to be delivered, but require steel and electrical work before they can be installed. New concrete and electrical companies will be starting soon, as previous contractors quit the project. An August 10 message gave details on the athletic practice and game schedule. If needed, transportation will be provided. Parks and Rec is ensuring non-school teams are notified and rescheduled.

Several Board members expressed frustration that teams weren't notified in a timely manner of the impact to practices and games. The Warde community was told in 2017 that the turf field would be completed by the end of August 2018, and then they weren't given any notification that this timeline would not be possible until they received an email in August. Dr. Jones said the contractual requirement is for turf completion by the end of September, but the track and scoreboards were supposed to be completed. The project hit delays beginning in late June, and it wasn't until mid-July that more was known and some detail was provided. Mr. Cullen and Dr. Jones wanted to ensure that accurate timing was reflected in all messaging. The district is hopeful that the turf field will be ready in mid-September, following the issue of the warranty. The Track portion of the project will now take place after Track season.

Mr. Cullen added that 48 other summer projects were completed.

#### [Committee/Liaison Reports](#)

Mrs. Vitale reported for PTAC: Friday, September 7 is the kick-off meeting.

Mrs. Vitale reported for the Sherman Building Committee: Bids are coming in.

Mr. Dwyer reported for the Mill Hill Building Committee: The committee chair will provide an update to the BOE in September, after he has met with the BOF and BOS.

#### [Public Comment](#)

*Fairfield Resident:* The Warde turf field schedule issue is taking a toll on parents.

*Jeff O'Connell, Steiner Street:* Dissatisfied with turf delay.

*Dale Resnick, Steiner Street:* Requested reassurance that the Jennings/McKinley pairing is off the table. Requested public comment in the middle of long meetings, to avoid the long wait to speak.

*Sylvia Marsans-Sakly, Collingwood:* Dissatisfied with turf field delay. Questioned the racial imbalance issue.

#### [Adjournment](#)

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

**Motion Passed: 9-0**

Meeting adjourned at 10:55PM.