

**Regular Meeting Minutes
Fairfield BoE, May 23, 2017**

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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 7:54PM. Present were members Eileen Liu-McCormack, Marc Patten, Jessica Gerber, Philip Dwyer, Trisha Pytko, Nick Aysseh, Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly and John Llewellyn. Donna Karnal was not present. Others present were Superintendent Dr. Toni Jones, FLHS student representative Catherine Behjati, FWHS student representatives Ashley Agrello and Brittany Shuster, members of the central office leadership team, and approximately 10 members of the public.

Election of BOE Vice-Chairman

Mrs. Gerber nominated Ms. Pytko for Vice Chairman; Mr. Aysseh seconded the nomination.

Nomination Carried: 6-2

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

Oppose: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Llewellyn

Student Reports

Ms. Behjati reported for Fairfield Ludlowe: Senior internships run from May 24 – June 15; Ludlowe will have a reception on June 14 for the companies that hosted the student interns; the May 17 Family/Consumer Science night was a success with great food and clothing; the senior prom last Saturday was a great way to end the year; the FCIAC softball semi-finals take place this afternoon against Darien; both lacrosse teams are in the state tournament. Ms. Behjati said she and her classmates are excited to graduate and she thanked her teachers and the Board of Education; she enjoyed her experience as a BOE student representative.

Ms. Agrello and Ms. Shuster reported for Fairfield Warde: The varsity baseball team beat Ludlowe at Harbor Yard; Warde Boys Track beat Ludlowe – while Ludlowe Girls Track beat Warde; the mock crash took place before junior prom; the National Honor Society held its induction ceremony; Warde Day/Career Day took place on May 19 with keynote speaker Steve Greenberg giving tips on job applications. Ms. Agrello and Ms. Shuster thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve as BOE representatives.

Next year, the students will attend University of Connecticut, Loyola Marymount and Kent State.

Old Business

Adoption of Policy 5141.213 –Students–Administering Medication–Opioid Overdose Protection

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Mr. Patten seconded that the Board of Education adopt Policy 5141.213, Students–Administering Medication–Opioid Overdose Protection.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly stated that she did not receive any additional questions on any of the policies up for a vote. Mr. Llewellyn asked for the definition of medical advisor, is this an employee? Mr. Coyne said the school medical advisor is Dr. McDonald; he serves the Board of Health and is not an employee.

Mr. Patten said he did not believe that medical advisors are always on the Board of Health. What are the implications of the training requirements and cost? Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said she will follow up with more information, but her understanding is that training is covered by the Board of Health.

Motion Passed: 8-0

Adoption of Policy 5144.1 –Students – Use of Physical Force

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Mrs. Gerber seconded that the Board of Education adopt Policy 5144.1, Students – Use of Physical Force.”

Mr. Llewellyn said the paragraph on ‘Required Training and Prevention Training’ did not include the same list of school employees as listed in the policy definition of ‘School Employee.’ Perhaps strike substitute teachers from the definition up front. If subs are not trained, are they allowed to use physical restraint? Maintenance and custodial staff are also not listed.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said she is not sure why there is a difference. Mr. Coyne said substitutes are school employees but are not required to be trained and he believes there is pending legislation to change that. Maintenance and custodial employees are not in direct contact with students.

Mr. Llewellyn

- Questioned paragraph D and the use of a psychopharmacologic agent – clearly there should be training on this before people are allowed to do this. This should be mentioned in paragraph G and in ‘Required Training.’
- Questioned the language regarding notification in paragraph F.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly withdrew her motion by unanimous consent of the Board; this item will be on the next meeting’s agenda.

Adoption of Policy 6142–Instruction – Basic Instructional Program

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Mrs. Gerber seconded that the Board of Education adopt Policy 6142, Instruction –Basic Instructional Program.

Motion Passed: 8-0

Adoption of Policy 6173– Instruction – Homebound/Hospital Instruction

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Mrs. Gerber seconded that the Board of Education adopt Policy 6173, Instruction – Homebound/Hospital Instruction.

Mr. Llewellyn – in the first line and also in the 3rd paragraph referencing discipline, how is ‘teaching service’ defined?

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said it is dependent on the circumstance and may be PLATO or a teacher. Future legislation may determine the number of teaching hours required for expelled students. Dr. Jones added that online instruction has a teacher behind it.

Mr. Llewellyn – not clear on the intent of the last paragraph – could teachers accept remuneration from another party?

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said teachers are not allowed to accept remuneration – there could be a conflict of interest with recommending oneself; Dr. Jones said the general practice is to pay for the set number of hours.

Mr. Patten referenced the 3rd paragraph – who decides when home instruction ‘may’ be provided, should the term be changed to ‘shall?’ Dr. Jones said the change in language is a legal piece. Mr. Coyne added that state statute requires home instruction for ages 16 and under. For students older than 16, it is at the district’s discretion but is usually provided.

Mr. Llewellyn moved, Mrs. Liu-McCormack seconded to amend the policy by changing the final sentence in the policy to read: “No teacher during the school year shall accept remuneration for tutoring students in his/her class unless the student is designated as a homebound student and the tutor is **remunerated by and** employed by the Board of Education.” (new language in bold)

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked whether changing ‘tutor’ to ‘teacher’ would provide enough clarification.

Mr. Llewellyn said no. He withdrew his motion with unanimous consent from the Board, so that Mrs. Liu-McCormack could proceed with her amendment.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack moved, Mr. Llewellyn seconded to amend the policy by changing the final sentence in the policy to read: “No teacher during the school year shall accept remuneration for tutoring students in his/her class. **However, if a student is designated as a homebound student, a tutor may be employed by the Board of education.**” (new language in bold)

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly confirmed with Dr. Jones that the new language reflects current practice.

Public Comment on Amendment:

Mr. Smoler, FEA President: A non-homebound student with medical issues might need a tutor, and in some cases, the classroom teacher may be the best tutor; perhaps add “with permission of the Superintendent.”

Mr. Dwyer does not support the amendment; wordsmithing a policy at the Board table is not good practice.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly again stressed the importance of receiving comments and questions in advance – there may be legal questions. She is OK with this amendment, given assurance from Dr. Jones.

Motion Passed: 7-1

Favor: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Patten, Mrs. Gerber, Ms. Pytko, Mr. Aysseh, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Llewellyn

Oppose: Mr. Dwyer

Public Comment on Main Motion:

Suzanne Miska, Ryegate Road: Hopes the disconnect with policy and process improves.

Mr. Llewellyn asked if the Board would entertain adding superintendent approval language to allow for similar cases as those mentioned by Mr. Smoler.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said she is not favor of opening the door to allow payment for tutoring services when a student is out – she would question the criteria for fairness in such cases.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack - should teachers not be paid as tutors for their students? Should the district pay? Wants to understand what the policy is saying.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly - the policy states that, aside from homebound or hospital, teachers cannot be paid to tutor their own students – due to the inherent conflict of interest.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack wants to ensure that the policy is implemented consistently district-wide. Dr. Jones added that after a student is out for more than 2 weeks, or has multiple short-term medically-related absences, the district will pay.

Ms. Pytko wanted to be clear that this policy is specific for instances such as medical leave; it is not for those students who simply need extra help.

Original Motion, as amended, Passed: 8-0

<i>New Business</i>

New Course: Computer Science Principles

Dr. Boice introduced Mr. Zhitomi to present the Computer Science Principles course. Last year, the College Board added a new AP Exam for Computer Principles. Staff is already available to teach this course and nothing needs to be purchased. Mr. Zhitomi said the year-long Computer Science Principles course provides an introduction to the basic principles of Computer Science from the perspective of mobile computing, including programming in App Inventor, a graphical programming language for mobile devices. The curriculum engages students and supports the development of problem-solving skills using computational thinking practices. The course involves a strong writing component and students will maintain a portfolio of their work.

Mrs. Gerber

- Is this an AP course? Dr. Boice said no, the idea was to not discourage students with an AP designation, although they may take the AP exam.
- Is the only prerequisite Algebra 1? Mr. Zhitomi said yes.
- When will it be available and how many have signed up? Dr. Boice said it will be available in the fall, and is in the Program of Studies, pending Board approval. Mr. Zhitomi said there is already one full class at Warde.

Mr. Patten – Would students who choose to take the May AP exam be prepared, given the pacing guide for units 7 and 8? Mr. Zhitomi said unit 7 is an optional unit for the AP exam; the College Board will review student portfolios on the website through the end of the school year, plus the AP exam score.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly

- At what point are students encouraged to take the AP exam? Mr. Zhitomi said he would encourage high scoring students and help them prep with a portfolio.
- Is this course ready to go, is any summer work required? Mr. Zhitomi said the course is ready to go and no summer work is needed. Several schools outside the district are offering the course as an AP and he has referenced many colleagues outside the district.
- Is any part of this course redundant to the middle school coding course? Mr. Zhitomi said it accelerates past that course, but is not as advanced as the current AP Computer Science course. It may turn into a prerequisite for the AP Computer Science course.

Mr. Llewellyn – Thinks this looks like a great course. Could you provide the link to the actual curriculum? Mr. Zhitomi said the software is from MIT and the curriculum is from Trinity College; the link is available on Trinity's website. It is web-based and uses google accounts.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack – Is this more mathematical? Is it a coding language? Mr. Zhitomi said it is not language-bound but teachers have freedom to choose the coding language; students can create using GUI drag and drop blocks; using phones or tablets, students will have 2 projects and can create games or apps.

Discussion of 17-18 Budget

Mr. Dwyer - Given the uncertainty at the state, the Board may choose to leave budget decisions up to management at this time; a Board vote may prove restrictive.

Dr. Jones reviewed the Budget recap handout. As of now, the budget has been reduced \$33K. The other factor is that the contribution to town pension will be \$129K more than budgeted due to a decrease in the investment return assumption. The bottom of the recap handout shows maintenance accounts and projects that are on hold; detail was provided in Mr. Cullen's memo.

Mrs. Gerber

- Is the Tier 1/Tier 2 document still accurate? Dr. Jones said previously frozen items on that list are unchanged.
- Where are we now with elementary sections and when is the final determination made? Dr. Jones said it is too early to tell. Going in to the budget, there were 13 sections that could go up or down.
- Will we stay within class size guidelines? Would like to have a discussion on this before the end of August. Dr. Jones said all parents will be contacted and attendance confirmed if a class section appears to be at the threshold. A different approach to class size may be to add a section once all sections in a grade reach the threshold, rather than just one section.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly

- What is the \$10K for roofing? Mr. Cullen said the preventative maintenance program is working well and the roofs are in good shape. This is not a project reduction.
- What is the hazardous materials item? Mr. Cullen said that is used to investigate issues throughout the school year.
- Are there any summer projects that can be done during the school year? Mr. Cullen said the Knapps Hwy tennis courts.

Mr. Llewellyn

- Does the contractor pay to reinstall curbs they have damaged? Mr. Cullen said yes.
- What will be the budget process going forward? Requested that all documents up for discussion be included with the agenda, even if previously provided.
- Any cuts to educational items should come back to the Board.

Mr. Dwyer

- Regarding the provision of previously provided documents, Board past practice has been to include documents not previously distributed.
- A new budget list will be created prior to the next meeting. The suggestion is to allow Dr. Jones to manage the list and balance the budget based on what happens at the state level. The Board may choose to vote on the list, but that could prove restrictive.

Mr. Aysseh

- If the Board votes on those items, would the Superintendent have to return to the Board with any changes? Mr. Dwyer said yes.
- Would Dr. Jones then have discretion if the Board did not vote? Mr. Dwyer said the Superintendent would have discretion within the list.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said she would like to see energy savings with solar and might question some items on the list, but voting may not be in the best interest at this time.

Mr. Patten said he agrees to leave this at the discretion of the superintendent.

Ms. Pytko – Would like clarification on class size. If the state takes more money, the list should come back to the Board.

Mr. Dwyer added that the list will be updated, as has been done in the past when there is a shortfall.

Mrs. Gerber – it is the Board’s responsibility to vote but understands this year is different. Would like to know if class size will change.

Mr. Dwyer said class size discussion will be on the next agenda.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack – if the reduction gets higher, it should return to the Board.

First Reading of Policy 4112.5 – Personnel Certified/Non-Certified

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said this policy must be in place by the end of the year.

Mr. Llewellyn referenced paragraph 4 – submission should occur prior to hiring. Does not want someone with a checkered past working with children for 30 days. The policy should include a statement of consent for fingerprinting.

Approval of Minutes

Approval of Regular Minutes of May 9, 2017

Mrs. Gerber moved, Ms. Pytko seconded that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 9, 2017.

Motion Passed: 6-2

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

Oppose: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Llewellyn

Superintendent Report

Dr. Jones attended the Family/Consumer Science night and the fashion show was fabulous. She was also very impressed with all the concerts and art shows. The 17-18 calendar has been provided again for the Board's consideration; 4 early release dates have been added to cover \$200K of PD with no cost to the district. Understands that this may be difficult for some parents. Trying to be creative and thoughtful going in to the 17-18 budget year.

Mr. Cummings added that PD will allow staff to be trained and is a necessary investment. For example, as Social Studies is implemented in grades 3-5, PD will be used to train teachers, build collaboration, and share resources and materials.

Dr. Boice added that it has been difficult giving up summer work. Curriculum leaders and liaisons and coordinators spend hours writing lessons and assessments and work hard to ensure consistent delivery. Early release dates can somewhat make up for the summer work, but it is not an even exchange.

Mr. Cummings said the early release dates that were added are Dec 12, Jan 30, Mar 13, and May 22.

Mrs. Gerber added that February 15 is an additional half day for middle school and high school.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack questioned the limited benefit of the May 22 PD date – could this be moved up? Dr. Boice said this could be used for SAT and other data analysis; a May date will be valuable.

Ms. Pytko said a late PD date could also be used to create a common final; professional learning communities are very beneficial.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly is not happy with what is being lost this summer. Proposed using October 9 as a full day of PD, restoring 3 half days to full days, and changing the last day of school to June 13.

Mr. Dwyer said that staff will take all suggestions to heart and will come back with a final proposal

Mr. Llewellyn – How many teaching days are in the contract for the year? Mr. Cummings said 187.

Mr. Patten agreed with Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly. Would like to see more PD.

Mr. Dwyer said this will be an action item on the next agenda. Suggested that the administration take all suggestions discussed tonight and present any decision to the Board members in advance of the next meeting.

Committee/Liaison Report

Mr. Dwyer reported that new Board member Mr. Aysseh will assume the liaison position for the Holland Hill Building Committee and be on the Transportation Advisory Board; Trisha Pytko will join the Policy Committee.

Mrs. Gerber reported that OHS fencing will be installed over the summer.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly thanked Ms. Pytko for joining the Policy Committee. The June 8 PTAC annual awards will recognize 3 active members of the community.

Mr. Dwyer reported that the HHBC feels it is on schedule for state filing by June 30.

Mr. Aysseh reported that the HHBC meets on Thursday and will be on the May 31 BOS Special Meeting agenda.

Open Board Comment

Mr. Patten proposed adding a July meeting date to address what is happening at the state-level.

Mrs. Gerber attended the Rotary Student Awards luncheon; it was great to see all the student talent.

Ms. Pytko and her daughter enjoyed the many school carnivals held recently.

Public Comment

Suzanne Miska, Ryegate Road: Requested color copies of financial documents discussed at tonight's meeting.

Adjournment

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

Motion Passed: 8-0

Meeting adjourned at 10:03PM