

**Regular Meeting Minutes  
Fairfield BoE, May 9, 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 7:35PM. Present were members Eileen Liu-McCormack (arrived 7:45PM), Marc Patten, Donna Karnal (arrived 7:45PM), Jessica Gerber, Philip Dwyer, Trisha Pytko, Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly and John Llewellyn. Others present were Superintendent Dr. Toni Jones, FLHS student representatives Catherine Behjati, and Sean Oppenheimer, FWHS student representative Ashley Agrello, members of the central office leadership team, and approximately 120 members of the public.

*Student Recognition*

The Board recognized the All-State, All-Eastern and All-National musician honorees. Ms. Hoefer introduced the 30+ students. Dr. Jones, the Board and audience congratulated them with a round of applause.

The Board also recognized *Individual* State Champions in Wrestling, Fencing (Women’s Foil), Indoor Track, and Girls Swimming. *Team* State Champions were recognized in Dance (4<sup>th</sup> year in a row), Girls Skiing (5<sup>th</sup> year in a row), Bowling (2<sup>nd</sup> year in a row), Boys Indoor Track 4x800, and Girls Swimming 200-yard Freestyle Relay. Athletic Directors Mr. Parness and Mr. Fry introduced the students and coaches to the Board. Dr. Jones, the Board and audience congratulated the students with a round of applause.

*Student Reports*

Ms. Behjati and Mr. Oppenheimer reported for Fairfield Ludlowe: The Juniors’ badminton tournament took place last month; the spring drama production, “Mame,” was well-received with a great turnout; the upcoming Family Consumer Science night will include PK students modeling clothes made by the fashion department and food provided by the culinary students; the Warde/Ludlowe baseball game will take place at Harbor Yard on Friday; Junior and Senior proms will take place in the next 2 weeks – Grim Reaper Day, the mock crash and assembly will focus on the seriousness of drunk driving; AP tests will be this week and next; *US News & World Reports* reported that FLHS is the 10<sup>th</sup> best high school in CT; 17 students won National Latin Exam Awards.

Ms. Agrello reported for Fairfield Warde: A sense of pride for all the students being recognized; battle of the houses took place in April; the first student-led Identity in Education conference was held with Warde, Ludlowe and Harding high school students participating; AP testing is going well; the spring production “Oklahoma” had great reviews; the jazz ensemble dinner dance is coming up; the baseball game at Harbor Yard is on Friday; induction for the National Honor Society takes place next week; junior prom is on May 20; senior prom on June 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly – what is the direction of the Identity Conference going forward? Ms. Agrello said a broader conference is planned.

Mr. Dwyer said the student representatives are welcome to share their final thoughts at the May or June meetings.

*Presentation: PK-12 English/Language Arts Status Update*

Dr. Jones congratulated Mr. Cummings on his recent appointment as Chief Academic Officer. Mr. Cummings said he very much appreciates the opportunity to work with the superintendent.

Mr. Cummings said the PK-12 English/Language Arts (ELA) curriculum was revised in response to the adoption of the Common Core standards. Much has been learned since the revisions; students have acquired skills and knowledge and teachers have improved the instructional practice. He introduced Ms. Khairallah, Curriculum Leader grades PK-5, and Mr. Chiappetta, Curriculum Leader grades 6-12.

Ms. Khairallah and Mr. Chiappetta presented with Ms. O'Donnell (Holland Hill), Ms. McGoey (Stratfield Principal), Ms. Formato (FWMS) and Ms. Ruegger (FLHS).

The singular goal of ELA has not changed – to continuously improve the reading and writing life of all Fairfield students. Changes in the curriculum included alignment to the Connecticut Core standards and articulation of grammar, usage and mechanics scope and sequence. Professional development included coaching classroom teachers, the use of assessments to modify implementation, revision of rubrics and grammar, usage and mechanics mapping. Key adjustments included revised implementation based on shifting national assessments, integrating inquiry to promote application of Language Arts skills across the curriculum, vertical articulation, and the focus on analyzing and critiquing multiple texts.

Next steps include the use of student work to plan instruction and guide professional development, early intervention process for review and standardization, implement skill-based portfolios in grades 9-11, focus on transitions, create and implement a writing scoring system, collaborate with Library/Media and Social Studies, and map content and academic vocabulary.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack:

- Are we introducing script again in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade? Ms. Khairallah said this is part of the approved curriculum; 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teachers have latitude with this. It's happening across the district and they will continue to work on this.
- Is notetaking new? Ms. Khairallah said notetaking starts in KDG and continues with non-fiction units and readers' notebooks.
- Mrs. Liu-McCormack loves these two things, wants to make sure they are implemented. Ms. Khairallah said teachers make judgements on how to adjust instruction and prioritize depending on class needs and priorities. The amount of time may vary on needs and priorities.
- Is there a grammar rubric for all elements, like semi-colons, colons, etc? Mr. Chiappetta said yes – the pacing guide is very clear and is included in the curriculum document on the website. Mrs. Liu-McCormack asked if this is available to the public so that parents can stay on top of things. Mr. Chiappetta said that the majority of this is in the curriculum documents.
- Is there a pacing guide for spelling and vocabulary? Ms. Khairallah said this work is ongoing and is part of the Common Core standards. Mrs. Liu-McCormack wants to know how transparent this is for the public. Ms. Khairallah says the standards are listed. Mr. Chiappetta said there are no word lists per se – the new SAT and SBA assess vocabulary in context, rather than isolated words; work is being done now to map that out. Ms. Khairallah added that there was a switch to a spelling inventory.

Mr. Patten:

- Are handwriting skills taught after 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, what is the national trend? Ms. Khairallah said it is in the approved curriculum with a resource; the focus in middle school is on keyboarding; have to think about classroom priorities. There is mixed research on the trend.
- Any feedback from secondary students from the last 2 years? Has the block schedule helped? Ms. Ruegger said simultaneous classic literature pairings with young adult literature have been made to ensure students are motivated to read more; there is a 'march madness' of books which is a fun way to battle on which book is best. The block schedule affords students more responsibility to read daily, when not in class.
- Commended the team for the work done between transition years.

Ms. Pytko, are rubrics calibrated? Ms. Ruegger and Mr. Chiappetta said yes.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly

- Is there is a coordination of skills rubric, such as with Social Studies? Mr. Chiappetta said the work in assessing across disciplines has begun.
- Will Science teachers need some non-fiction reading PD, given the next-generation Science standards? Mr. Chiappetta said work has begun with non-fiction reading at the middle school level. Students are already able to transfer non-fiction reading skills across disciplines.

- Have SBA assessment trends been identified in grades 3-8? Ms. Formato said yes for FWMS – with the lower scores on listening, has started to teach strategies for that skill. Ms. Khairallah said expanded opportunities for digital reading exist in the primary grades. We want to inspire kids to read closely.
- Is the PSAT benchmark the same for 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> graders? Mr. Chiappetta said no, cut scores are different.
- Is there a shared common experience with classic texts? Ms. Formato said yes. Mr. Chiappetta said teachers were consulted on the reading list.
- In elementary, how much will the new schedule, PD and data teams help to form what is being done in the classrooms? Ms. McGoey said the use of data teams with actual student work helps to show how students are progressing.

Mr. Dwyer thanked the entire ELA department for the hard work on this presentation.

*Old Business*

*Approval of the Family and Consumer Science Curriculum*

Mrs. Gerber moved, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded that the Board of Education approve the Family and Consumer Science Curriculum.

**Motion Passed: 8-0**

*Approval of the Solar Carport Proposal at Fairfield Ludlowe High School and Fairfield Warde High School*

Mrs. Gerber moved, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded that the Board of Education approve the Solar Carport Proposal at Fairfield Ludlowe High School and Fairfield Warde High School.

Mr. Dwyer said the proposal has some changes since the first reading. Mr. Thompson reviewed the changes in the new document, which were a result of boiler plate items. He thanked Mr. Llewellyn for bringing the items to his attention. Three votes will be required for this project: Zoning variance for Warde which was approved, BOE and BOS. Site survey work has already begun, and coordination with the window project resulted in no concerns.

Ms. Pytko – how is site-survey work at FLHS being done without this being an approved project? Mr. Thompson said this is being done at the developer’s risk with school approval to do some advance site work.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly expressed some concern about the location of support structures. Mr. Thompson said support columns will be placed on the “X” between 4 spaces, when not on the grass. He clarified that the standard car mirrors wouldn’t be able to reach the steel support columns, so there is little risk of mirrors hitting the columns.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack

- Where in the proposal does it show the cost of the electricity used for car charging? Mr. Thompson said it is about \$150/year per car and is in the FAQs. These are wall outlets with level 1 charging.
- What would be the maximum cost incurred without a permit fee? Mr. Thompson said 20 chargers at \$150 each equals \$3K per school per year.
- Why the different PPA pricing? Mr. Thompson said the Warde site is bigger and more efficient in the ratio of solar to steel.
- Is concerned that education funding is being diluted; feels this belongs at the town level and not in the K-12 budget. Mr. Thompson said the proposal is to have a permit fee to cover the cost of charging.

Mr. Dwyer asked if the suggested proposed fee equals the cost. Mr. Thompson suggested a fee of 50% of the \$150 – since cars would not be plugged in all the time.

Mr. Llewellyn

- Thanked Mr. Thompson for addressing his concerns off-line and asked about the savings with the Parks/Rec structure. Mr. Thompson said the Parks/Rec structure resulted in a 36% savings in electrical for 2015-2016.
- What was the environmental testing that was done? Mr. Thompson said it was load testing for the foundation.
- He is also concerned about the cost and suggested amending the motion to have a permit fee to cover the cost.

Mr. Patten clarified that there would still be a net savings even if all 20 spaces were used. It is a win-win scenario and he is in support of this.

Mr. Llewellyn moved, Mrs. Liu-McCormack seconded to amend the motion and add the following sentence: “Access to electric vehicle charging will be made available subject to the district recovering 100% of the cost of power utilized.”

Mr. Llewellyn – will the meters show how much is being charged? Mr. Thompson said meters will not be attached to charging stations; the permit fee of \$75 would more than cover the yearly cost of electricity.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack asked for a guarantee of no cost to the budget. This sets a precedent and is not a mandate; we are diluting the purpose of education funds. Mr. Thompson said he is a volunteer and has no basis to provide a guarantee.

Mr. Dwyer said he is not in support of the amendment. A fee can be implemented accordingly.

Mr. Patten said he does not support the amendment; need to look at the big picture at what is happening at the state level with the budget. Fees can be charged as we see fit.

Mr. Llewellyn said this is a 20-year agreement, with more usage expected.

Mr. Llewellyn moved, Mrs. Liu-McCormack seconded to amend the amendment to read: “Access to electric vehicle charging will be made available subject to the district recovering power utilized by collecting an EV charging fee.

*Public Comment:*

*Suzanne Miska*, Ryegate Road: Disagrees with any additional fees imposed on students.

*Greg Hatzis*, FLHS Headmaster: Explained the current parking fee structure; not easy to monitor if students share their assigned spots with others.

*Mr. Mohab*, Skyway Venture (the developer): There will be a timer; the charging stations, or sockets, can easily be turned off if the limit is reached or exceeded.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack said the no-overflow guarantee should be written into the amendment.

Mr. Llewellyn said parking spots are assigned and plugs can be turned off; there is no way to guarantee without meters. Not all students will pay this fee – only those who wish to purchase power.

**Amendment to the Amendment Failed: 3-4-1**

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

Oppose: Ms. Karnal, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Ms. Pytko

Abstain: Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly

**Amendment Failed: 2-6**

Favor: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Llewellyn

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

*Public Comment on Main Motion:*

*Suzanne Miska*, Ryegate Road: Skeptical of the package; appreciates Mr. Thompsons’s work but doesn’t like fees.

Mr. Patten - Are fees charged at the Rec center? Mr. Thompson said no.

Mr. Llewellyn asked about the approval process; there needs to be a mechanism to recoup lost savings. Mr. Thompson said the final legal requirement is the Board of Selectmen.

DRAFT

Mr. Dwyer added that the Town controls the property.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said the timer addresses the BOF objection and it would be remiss to hold up the project.

**Original Motion Passed: 6-2**

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

Oppose: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Llewellyn

*Adoption of Policies*

*Adoption of Policy 6162.3 – Instruction – Instructional Resources – Instructional Resources for Teachers*

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Mrs. Gerber seconded that the Board of Education adopt Policy 6162.3, Instruction – Instructional Resources – Instructional Resources for Teachers.

**Motion Passed: 8-0**

*Adoption of Policy 6163.31 – Instruction – Curriculum – Basic Instruction – Dissection of Animals in the Classroom*

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Mrs. Gerber seconded that the Board of Education adopt Policy 6163.31, Instruction – Curriculum – Basic Instruction– Dissection of Animals in the Classroom.

**Motion Passed: 8-0**

*New Business*

*Approve Plans and Specs for the Tomlinson Middle School Partial Roof Replacement – State Project # TMP-051-QTFX*

Mrs. Gerber moved, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded that the Board of Education approve Plans and Specs for the Tomlinson Middle School Partial Roof Replacement – State Project # TMP-051-QTFX.

Mr. Morabito said this is part of the normal process for state reimbursement; it will go to the state tomorrow.

Mrs. Gerber said the Board has already approved the ed specs.

Ms. Karnal asked about reimbursement. Mr. Morabito said a percentage will be reimbursed.

**Motion Passed: 8-0**

*Third Quarter Financial Report*

Mrs. Munsell reviewed the June 30 Projected Expenses as of April 28. Projected savings are \$1.15M with projected deficits of \$1.6M, showing an overall deficit of \$500K as of 4/28/17. Funds in reserve total just over \$1M, with projected overall balance of \$523K.

Mr. Llewellyn:

- Are we short \$200K in Pupil Personnel, page 2? Mrs. Munsell said yes.
- Have we incurred additional legal fees of \$91K? Mrs. Munsell said that is a projected overage due to activity between December and the end of the year.
- In 2 months there are many overages in Special Education. Mrs. Munsell said Special Education has grown by approximately \$265K from Dec/January to April.

Mr. Dwyer said we are at risk for the \$780K should the state not pay.

Ms. Karnal, what has changed in the extra legal fees? How many times is legal brought in? Mrs. Munsell couldn't speak to specifics but approximated 60% is special education. Dr. Jones said we can print out the legal fees sheet.

Mr. Patten – are there any savings for not having school on June 6? Mrs. Munsell the savings is \$50K in transportation. Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly- what accounts for the savings in Extra Curricular Salaries and Transportation? Mrs. Munsell said part of the transportation savings is due to 2 fewer days of school – the rest is special education savings; will get specifics of the extra-curricular number; there is a different rate of pay based on experience.

*First Reading of Policies*

- 5141.213 – Students – Administering Medication – Opioid Overdose Prevention
- 5144.1 – Students – Use of Physical Force
- 6142 – Instruction – Basic Instructional Program
- 6173 – Instruction – Homebound/Hospital Instruction

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly received a question on Policy 6142 from Mrs. Liu-McCormack, were we setting the bar low? The wording is straight from state statute. The rigor and challenge comes from the curriculum.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack wanted to ensure consistency.

Mrs. Gerber added the previous policy was a simple laundry list of subjects, so this policy has a bit more detail.

<i>Approval of Minutes</i>
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*Approval of Regular Minutes of April 6, 2017*

Mrs. Gerber moved, Ms. Pytko seconded that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 6, 2017.

**Motion Passed: 5-3**

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

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

*Approval of Special Meeting/Self-Evaluation Minutes of April 25, 2017*

Mrs. Gerber moved, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting/Self-Evaluation of April 25, 2017.

**Motion Passed: 6-0-2**

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

Abstain: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal

*Approval of Special Meeting/Town Hall Minutes of April 25, 2017*

Mrs. Gerber moved, Ms. Pytko seconded that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting/Town Hall of April 25, 2017.

**Motion Passed: 6-1-1**

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

Oppose: Mr. Llewellyn

Abstain: Mrs. Liu-McCormack

<i>Superintendent's Report</i>
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Dr. Jones reported that Ludlowe's spring production of "Mame" and Warde's production of "Oklahoma" were phenomenal. Warde organized the student-led "Identity in Education" conference – it was so well done it could be a model for the rest of the country. Excellent discussions regarding equity and diversity were taking place.

DRAFT

The district is still holding since the last FY-18 budget update in April. We are still at risk for \$2.2M in primarily 2 categories: Excess Cost and DDS Residential. To be conservative, all items and summer projects listed as Tier 1 are on hold for now. The Tier 2 list contains some items on hold highlighted in yellow (summer curriculum work, district professional development, school allocation reduction, District Improvement Plan implementations, and Secondary Administrator freeze) and some items that are not on hold and require a larger conversation, highlighted in orange (the Student Activity Fee, Building Rental Fee Increase, World Language, 4<sup>th</sup> grade orchestra and the Aquatics Program).

Ms. Karnal, is August too late to begin the summer curriculum work? Dr. Jones said yes. The summer work scheduled was Music and pacing guides, not Science.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack confirmed with Dr. Jones that the orange highlighted items still exist.

Mr. Dwyer summarized that a hold has been placed on some items, rather than a cut – the only change is the \$33K, a cut that can be made at the 2<sup>nd</sup> May meeting or the June meeting.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly and Ms. Pytko preferred to do this at the June meeting.

Mrs. Gerber – since these items are in the approved budget – is there any technical reason that the Board would have to approve these reductions?

Mr. Dwyer said he did not think so – ‘holds’ have been used before, such as with hiring personnel.

Mr. Patten – why wouldn’t the Board cut the line items based on the reduction amount?

Mr. Dwyer said this is a conversation that we could have after the state acts with an official budget.

Ms. Pytko agreed with Mr. Patten – a discussion is needed on what might be cut.

Mr. Llewellyn said the state could make cuts in August, so cuts could be made by default based on timelines.

Dr. Jones said the DDS Residential placement is more like a \$1M invoice.

*Committee/Liaison Reports*

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said the PTAC is accepting nominations for awards.

Mrs. Gerber reported that funds are lacking to build the OHS connector; the committee is now looking at fencing. FLHS is on track for the windows project.

*Open Board Committee*

Mr. Dwyer said he is in receipt of the official letter from the state regarding FEA negotiations, which will begin in the fall.

*Adjournment*

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

Motion Passed: 8-0

Meeting adjourned at 10:56PM

*Jessica Gerber  
Fairfield Board of Education  
Secretary*