

**Regular Meeting Minutes  
Fairfield BoE, June 25, 2019**

**NOTICE:** This meeting was not recorded.

## Voting Summary

### Call to order of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education and Roll Call

Chairman Christine Vitale called the Regular meeting to order at 7:34 PM. Present were members Trisha Pytko, Jennifer Leeper, Philip Dwyer, Jessica Gerber, Christine Vitale, Nick Aysseh, Jennifer Jacobsen, Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly and Jeff Peterson. Others present were Chief Academic Officer Mike Cummings, members of the central office leadership team, and approximately 10 members of the public.

### Old Business

#### *Approval of ECC Timeline*

Mr. Dwyer moved/Mrs. Gerber seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve the ECC Site Timeline as presented at the May 7 Board of Education meeting. Per the timeline, the ECC will be located at ECC Warde and Stratfield for the 2019-2020 school year; North Stratfield, Holland Hill and Stratfield for the 2020-2021 school year, and Holland Hill and North Stratfield for the 2021-2022 school year.”

Mr. Aysseh moved/Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded to amend the motion to read:

“That the FPS ECC will remain at Fairfield Warde and Stratfield campuses through the 2020-2021 school year with a future elementary school(s) coming online to handle increased enrollment and/or to phase out the Stratfield campus in the future.”

Amendment passed 9-0.

Main motion as amended passed 9-0.

#### *Approval of Charge to Milone and MacBroom*

Mrs. Gerber moved/Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve the Charge to Milone and MacBroom.”

### **Amendment #1**

Ms. Pytko moved/Mr. Dwyer seconded to amend the Charge as follows:

Amend #2 to read “Consider impact of three possible scenarios:

- 1) Repurposing an elementary school or other facility
- 2) Using Warde ECC and one elementary school
- 3) Vacating Warde ECC and using two elementary schools – Holland Hill and North Stratfield”

### **Amendment to Amendment #1**

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved/Mrs. Jacobsen seconded to amend the amendment to the Charge as follows:

Amend #2 to read “Consider impact of four possible scenarios ***for the ECC***:

- 1) Repurposing an elementary school or other facility

- 2) Using Warde ECC and one elementary school
- 3) Vacating Warde ECC and using two elementary schools – Holland Hill and North Stratfield
- 4) **Using Warde ECC and two elementary schools – Holland Hill and North Stratfield**

Amendment to amendment #1 passed 8-1 (Ms. Pytko, Ms. Leeper, Mr. Dwyer, Mrs. Gerber, Mrs. Vitale, Mr. Aysseh, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Peterson in favor; Mrs. Jacobsen against).

Amendment #1 as amended passed 8-1 (Ms. Pytko, Ms. Leeper, Mr. Dwyer, Mrs. Gerber, Mrs. Vitale, Mr. Aysseh, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Peterson in favor; Mrs. Jacobsen against).

#### **Amendment #2**

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved/Mr. Dwyer seconded to amend the charge as follows:

Amend the first sentence in #1 to read “Target 90% operational utilization rate for elementary schools and 85% operational utilization at secondary schools, **including possibly reconsidering secondary school feeder plans.**” Motion passed 7-2 (Ms. Pytko, Ms. Leeper, Mr. Dwyer, Mrs. Vitale, Mr. Aysseh, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Peterson in favor; Mrs. Gerber, Mrs. Jacobsen against).

#### **Amendment #3**

Ms. Leeper moved/Mrs. Jacobsen seconded to amend the charge as follows:

Amend the final sentence in the charge to read “Existing Redistricting Guiding Principles, ~~and~~ Facilities Planning Principles, **and the 2010 MS Feeder Pattern Criteria** should be considered and aspired to in developing redistricting models.” Motion failed 2-7 (Ms. Leeper, Mrs. Jacobsen in favor; Ms. Pytko, Mr. Dwyer, Mrs. Gerber, Mrs. Vitale, Mr. Aysseh, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Peterson against).

#### **Amendment #4**

Mrs. Jacobsen moved/Mrs. Gerber seconded to amend the Charge as follows:

Add at the end of the Charge:

**“4. Provide updated 10-year enrollment projections and school utilizations.”** Motion passed 9-0.

The Main Motion as amended passed 7-2 (Ms. Pytko, Ms. Leeper, Mr. Dwyer, Mrs. Vitale, Mr. Aysseh, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Peterson in favor; Mrs. Gerber, Mrs. Jacobsen against).

#### **Adoption of Policy 6154, Instruction/Homework**

Mrs. Gerber moved/Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education adopt Policy 6154, Instruction/Homework.” Motion passed 9-0.

#### **New Business**

##### ***Financial Report and Approval of Budget Transfers for the 2018-2019 School Year***

Mr. Aysseh moved/Mrs. Gerber seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve the line item transfers for the 2018-2019 fiscal year as detailed in the enclosed Financial Statement.” Motion passed 9-0.

##### ***Approval of the CSDE Authorized Signature Change Form for the Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family***

### *Services and Adult Education*

Mrs. Gerber moved/Mr. Dwyer seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve the Signature Change Form for the Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education per the enclosure.” Motion passed 9-0.

### *Approval of Minutes*

Mrs. Gerber moved/Ms. Pytko seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve the June 11, 2019 *Regular Minutes*.” Motion passed 9-0

### *Adjournment*

Mr. Aysseh moved/Mrs. Jacobsen seconded the recommended motion “that this Regular Meeting of the Board of Education adjourn.” Motion passed 9-0. Meeting adjourned at 10:35PM.

## **Detailed Minutes**

### **Public Comment**

*Frank Sahagian*, FPS Teacher and Resident: Thanked the Board for the changes to the Homework Policy. On the issue of redistricting and feeder patterns, asked that specific direction be given to Milone and MacBroom.

### **Old Business**

#### *Approval of ECC Site Timeline*

Mr. Dwyer moved, Mrs. Gerber seconded that the Board of Education approve the ECC Site Timeline as presented at the May 7 Board of Education meeting. Per the timeline, the ECC will be located at ECC Warde and Stratfield for the 2019-2020 school year; North Stratfield, Holland Hill and Stratfield for the 2020-2021 school year, and Holland Hill and North Stratfield for the 2021-2022 school year.

Mr. Dwyer said the Board has been addressing facility issues all year long but understands that some may have been caught off guard. There are many capital issues, and each has an impact on the next; at some point a decision must be made.

Mr. Aysseh moved, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded to amend the motion to read:

“That the FPS ECC will remain at Fairfield Warde and Stratfield campuses through the 2020-2021 school year with a future elementary school(s) coming online to handle increased enrollment and/or to phase out the Stratfield campus in the future.”

Mrs. Jacobsen asked if the new language is intended to phase out Stratfield. Mr. Aysseh said the motion provides extra time and opportunity to review 2 years’ worth of ECC/Stratfield student data, and leaves Stratfield as an ECC option for the Board to decide at a later time. Ms. Leeper worried that the new language punts a decision that would help to focus on the work that needs to get done. Mrs. Vitale was comfortable with the new language, but struggled with inconsistencies of having one program at its own site. Mr. Peterson supported the amended motion and said the new language necessitates a change to the Charge for Milone and MacBroom.

**Public Comment**

Katie Flynn, Grandview Road: Thanked the Board for taking a pause. Supports long-term vision.

**Amendment Passed: 9-0**

**Main Motion as Amended Passed: 9-0**

*Approval of Charge to Milone and MacBroom (MM)*

Mrs. Gerber moved, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded that the Board of Education approve the Charge to Milone and MacBroom.

Ms. Leeper, Mrs. Jacobsen, Mrs. Gerber and Mrs. Vitale said item #2 should be reconsidered. Mrs. Vitale liked the reasoning of the ECC rubric for Holland Hill (HH) and North Stratfield (NSS), and being specific about those schools could save time and money. Ms. Pytko reiterated her preference that ECC remain a single site, and Mr. Dwyer agreed that exploring other sites gives MM flexibility if a non-school site somehow became available. Mrs. Gerber disagreed, saying this will be a current charge for MM; there are no other available sites for ECC at this moment, and adding that to the charge may muddy the waters.

**Amendment #1**

Ms. Pytko moved, Mr. Dwyer seconded to amend the Charge as follows:

Amend #2 to read “Consider impact of three possible scenarios:

- 1) Repurposing an elementary school or other facility
- 2) Using Warde ECC and one elementary school
- 3) Vacating Warde ECC and using two elementary schools – Holland Hill and North Stratfield”

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly offered a 4<sup>th</sup> option – using Warde and 2 elementary sites. Mr. Aysseh added that ECC should be in the first sentence. Ms. Leeper was not clear on why there should be a charge to rehash all the work that has been done.

Ms. Pytko said she made the amendment to see all options on paper; which classrooms and students will be affected? Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said the single-site option goes against previous conversations on the issue. Mr. Peterson and Mr. Aysseh said they would like the professional demographers to present facts on the options.

Mrs. Vitale reminded the Board that running scenarios and projections costs money. She is concerned that there aren't enough current PK students to fill a repurposed school, and it will be very disruptive to investigate that option. Mrs. Gerber said ECC is growing and could be on its way to filling either Jennings or Dwight; this needs to be shown definitively that it is or is not possible.

Mrs. Jacobsen said a previous scenario did show that closing Jennings was a possibility even without Mill Hill as a 504, but pocket re-districting would have been required. The district now has more CLC's, and there is a need to update the district's building utilization.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked the Board to stop using the term ‘pocket redistricting.’ If not too expensive, she suggested getting the answers and moving on.

**Amendment to Amendment #1**

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Mrs. Jacobsen seconded to amend the amendment to the Charge as follows:

Amend #2 to read “Consider impact of four possible scenarios for the ECC:

- 1) Repurposing an elementary school or other facility
- 2) Using Warde ECC and one elementary school
- 3) Vacating Warde ECC and using two elementary schools – Holland Hill and North Stratfield
- 4) **Using Warde ECC and two elementary schools – Holland Hill and North Stratfield**

Public Comment on Amendment to Amendment

*Jeriann Mitchell*, ECC Staff: Thanked the Board for the powerful amendment and will always support one ECC site.

*Bob Smoler*, FEA President: The amendment makes sense; it is important to get the operational impact of the ECC component in an elementary school. It is a question of space and logistics.

*Kristen Bruno*, ECC Principal: Urged the Board to consider more broad options and not place a limit on 2 elementary schools.

**Amendment to Amendment #1 Passed: 8-1**

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

Oppose: Mrs. Jacobsen

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said perhaps there should be a 5<sup>th</sup> option of placing PK in several schools. She asked Mrs. Bruno to clarify her comments and asked about data points for KDG transitions. Mrs. Bruno said she supports the fewest number of ECC sites as possible; she only wanted to remove the names of the 2 elementary schools from the charge. What is the definition of a successful KDG transition?

Mr. Peterson and Mrs. Vitale said the 2 schools should be identified as much work has already been done to identify those particular schools. Mrs. Jacobsen disagreed; being specific reduces options.

Mr. Cummings said information on the Stratfield ECC will be shared. The first task will be to provide that information to the building administrators.

**Amendment #1 as Amended Passed: 8-1**

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

Oppose: Mrs. Jacobsen

The Board discussed the possible effect or change on secondary feeder patterns, and whether that should be stated in the charge. Mr. Dwyer, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Peterson and Mr. Aysseh said it should. Mrs. Gerber disagreed and said she was fine with leaving the feeder pattern as is. Mr. Jacobsen agreed with Mrs. Gerber and said there was no notice about including the secondary feeder pattern in the charge. Mr. Dwyer said MM will be taking a comprehensive look at the district and Mr. Aysseh agreed; the Board is doing its due diligence.

**Amendment #2**

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Mr. Dwyer seconded to amend the charge as follows:

Amend the first sentence in #1 to read “Target 90% operational utilization rate for elementary schools and 85% operational utilization at secondary schools, including possibly reconsidering secondary school feeder plans.”

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said the Board is better served getting all the data at once and assumed secondary schools were part of the conversation. Mrs. Jacobsen asked whether the 2010 middle school feeder pattern guidelines would be considered and said it wasn’t right to add six more grades into the plan. Several Board members mentioned that they were either not familiar with the 2010 middle school guidelines, or were hesitant to use a document that has not been discussed or mentioned up to now. Ms. Leeper asked for a quick recess, in order to provide copies for the Board before continuing, but the Board was not open to adding this item to the discussion.

Public Comment on Amendment:

*Jill Vergara, RTM District 7:* Not in favor of the amendment. It has not been communicated to the public and will be confusing to constituents.

Mr. Dwyer said it is the Board’s responsibility to make an informed decision and it would be difficult to notify the public every time data is requested. Mr. Peterson and Mr. Aysseh agreed; the scenarios are not a commitment to action. Mrs. Vitale reminded the Board that the development of multiple scenarios could prove costly, but Mr. Aysseh said the investment is needed now to get good long-term returns.

Mrs. Jacobsen said this now expands the scope of the original charge. How will redistricting be rolled out at the high school level? Mr. Cummings said any type of whole-scale redistricting would be softened with a graduated implementation timeline.

**Motion Passed: 7-2**

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

**Amendment #3**

Ms. Leeper moved, Mrs. Jacobsen seconded to amend the charge as follows:

Amend the final sentence in the charge to read “Existing Redistricting Guiding Principles, Facilities Planning Principles, and the 2010 MS Feeder Pattern Criteria should be considered and aspired to in developing redistricting models.”

Ms. Pytko said she can’t support the amendment as she hasn’t read the document.

Public Comment on Amendment:

*Ann Marie Harper, FPS Parent:* Suggested the Board review the 2010 redistricting guidelines which put her children on a bus for 45 minutes, driving past middle schools that were closer to home.

**Motion Failed: 2-7**

Favor: Ms. Leeper, Mrs. Jacobsen

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

**Amendment #4**

Mrs. Jacobsen moved, Mrs. Gerber seconded to amend the Charge as follows:

Add at the end of the Charge:

**"4. Provide updated 10-year enrollment projections and school utilizations."**

Mr. Dwyer wanted the Board to be aware that the cost for enhanced projections may be over \$50K. Mr. Peterson justified the possible additional expenditure, saying other Boards have requested this information.

Public Comment on Amendment:

*Jill Vergara*, RTM District 7: Agrees with the updated 10-year enrollment projections; 8-30g should be factored in.

**Motion Passed: 9-0**

Public Comment on Amended Main Motion

*Jill Vergara*, RTM District 7: The end of June is an unfortunate timing for the approval of the charge and there is a lack of community input. Hopes guidelines will be given to the consultants. Walkers should remain walkers. No scenarios should exacerbate the racial imbalance.

**The Main Motion as Amended Passed: 7-2**

Favor: Ms. Pytko, Ms. Leeper, Mr. Dwyer, Mrs. Vitale, Mr. Aysseh, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Peterson

Oppose: Mrs. Gerber, Mrs. Jacobsen

*Adoption of Policy 6154, Instruction/Homework*

Mrs. Gerber moved, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded that the Board of Education adopt Policy 6154, Instruction/Homework.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said in an effort to be thorough, she reviewed all public comment and emails generated from the review of the policy. The review was brought about by an issue raised by a Board member, and not due to a change in state statute or staff request. Policy is the appropriate vehicle for the Board to direct staff.

Mr. Dwyer thanked the Policy Committee for updating the policy to be less prescriptive; however, the final bullet point is better debated by staff, and he suggested using the term 'aspire to greater consistency' instead of 'ensure greater consistency' in the third to the last paragraph. Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said teaching is an art, and the committee wanted strength behind that phrase. She will be looking for feedback next spring.

Mr. Aysseh thanked Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly for addressing his concerns and he is happy with the changes.

Mr. Hatzis and Mr. Ebling thanked the committee for its responsiveness and diligence with the carefully crafted language. The final bullet point may cause confusion and may also be restrictive to PE, Art and electives in general, which are historically 100% summative; it may force those departments into some practices they have never done before, such as assigning PE homework.

Mr. Dwyer added that any nuances can be spelled out in the administrative regulations. Mr. Cummings clarified that homework is a subset of grading and suggested talking about the issue as a complete package of grading policy. Ms. Leeper confirmed that formative assessments do not need to be accomplished through homework.

#### Public Comment

*Ann Marie Harper, Warde Parent:* Homework should not negatively impact grades, but it should count towards practice. Without academic currency, students will not do homework.

*Bob Smoler, FEA President:* Supports the policy and thanked the committee for considering all the different views.

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

#### **New Business**

##### *Financial Report and 18-19 Budget Transfers*

Mrs. Munsell reported that any expense incurred from July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019 is an 18/19 expense, even if the bill arrives after June 30, 2019. The 18/19 fiscal year was exceptionally challenging, given the deficit in personnel services and subsequent give-backs. The projected balances continue to be estimates until expenditures are finalized. Science texts are not included.

Mr. Aysseh moved, Mrs. Gerber seconded that the Board of Education approve the line item transfers for the 2018-2019 fiscal year as detailed in the enclosed Financial Statement.

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

Mr. Dwyer thanked Mrs. Munsell for coming within \$1M of the budget and Mrs. Munsell said it is actually closer to 7/10 of 1%. Mrs. Vitale also thanked Mrs. Munsell for all of her hard work.

##### *First Reading of Science Texts*

Mr. Cummings thanked the Board for agreeing to hear this item. The science textbooks are: (1) AP Biology, *Campbell: Biology in Focus*, copyright 2019 and resource *Mastering Biology*, copyright 2019; and (2) AP Chemistry, *Chemistry: A Molecular Approach*, copyright 2020. These texts were not figured into next year's budget, so 18/19 funds were used to purchase math materials in order to make room for this purchase.

- The AP Environmental Science text will be reviewed next year and is in next year's budget.
- If approved on 8/27, the order will be rushed and texts can arrive the week of Labor Day. If the Board meets earlier, it is requested that texts be placed on the agenda for approval. Teachers are already preparing to use the texts, in the hopes the Board will approve.
- Teachers strongly support the texts, and the text approval process was followed. Hard copies will be made available to the public.



- Publishers of these texts do not have new texts for introductory courses.

*Preliminary Discussion of Future Agenda Items and Board Goals for the 2019-2020 School Year*

Mrs. Vitale invited the Board to share individual thoughts on future agenda items.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said the district is undergoing a significant transition with a new superintendent and headmaster; it may be a good time to establish evaluative criteria for initiatives that have already been put into place and perform a review; handouts of her idea were given to the Board. Mrs. Gerber agreed with taking a step back, but was not clear on the timeline of a review which was not noticed on the agenda. Mr. Aysseh agreed with the premise and added that Dr. Tracy could begin the work for the new superintendent. Mrs. Jacobsen also agreed that it is time to take stock before launching the next improvement plan. Mr. Dwyer felt this was more of a conversation to have with the new superintendent before creating a new strategic plan. Mr. Cummings said the scope of a review would be very important and the district would be looking to get direction from the Board.

Mr. Aysseh said he would like the Board to examine the current Long-Range Facilities Plan and create a new 10-year plan, perhaps by forming a committee and including Milone and MacBroom in the process. Mrs. Vitale asked for that idea in writing and would consider a facility-based sub-committee.

Mrs. Jacobsen agreed that facilities and the waterfall are also on her list. She wanted to add middle school scheduling options, math academy, PK tuition market analysis and legislative interests.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said she would like to know more about the roll-out of high school cumulative grading. Mr. Cummings said he will provide that information.

Mr. Dwyer said the Board has yet to pass a single definitive vote on the Board Goal that was passed a year ago. That goal should remain in place and he cautioned about taking on too many additional initiatives.

*Approval of the CSDE Authorized Signature Change Form for the Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education*

Mrs. Gerber moved, Mr. Dwyer seconded that the Board of Education approve the Signature Change Form for the Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education per the enclosure.

**Motion Passed: 9-0**

**Approval of Minutes**

Mrs. Gerber moved, Ms. Pytko seconded that the Board of Education approve the June 11, 2019 *Regular Minutes*.

**Motion Passed: 9-0**

### Superintendent Report

Mr. Cummings reported that the Seal of Biliteracy was awarded to 128 graduates, and indicates mastery in both English and a second language. It is a successful program and the number of participants is expected to rise.

### Committee/Liaison Reports

*Mrs. Gerber* reported for MHBC: The RTM approved 441 funding for Mill Hill and the paperwork has been filed with the state.

*Mrs. Gerber* reported for Parks/Rec: Fairfield's fields and beaches are now smoke-free and vape-free.

*Ms. Leeper* reported for the Finance Committee: The Finance and Strategic Planning Committees held a joint workshop for young families with five people in attendance. One of the ideas that resulted was to place daycare facilities near transportation hubs.

*Mrs. Vitale* reported for the RSBC: The project is moving forward.

*Mr. Peterson* reported for the HHBC: The project is moving forward; looking at the best way to utilize space if the ECC program is added.

### Open Board Comment

*Mr. Peterson* said it was a productive year and it has not been difficult working together with other Board members.

*Ms. Leeper* congratulated the 2019 graduates. She very much enjoyed attending graduation and hearing the great student speakers - which was a great testament to the teachers.

*Mrs. Vitale* thanked the Board and for seeing her through the previous six months of hard work, dedication and diligence. She also thanked district staff for all the assistance.

### Adjournment

Mr. Aysseh moved, Mrs. Jacobsen seconded that this Regular Meeting of the Board of Education adjourn.

### Motion Passed: 9-0

Meeting adjourned at 10:35PM.

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