

NEW FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION NEW FAIRFIELD, CT

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a regular meeting on Thursday, June 4, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. in the New Fairfield Community Room, 33 Route 37, New Fairfield, CT.

MINUTES – June 4, 2026

PRESENT: Dominic Cipollone (Chairman), Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

ABSENT: Kathy Baker and Amy Johnson

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kenneth Craw, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Dr. Kristine Woleck, High School Principal James D’Amico, Middle School Principal Karen Gruetzner, Elementary School Principal Allyson Story, Elementary School Assistant Principal Jennifer Hilderbrand, Director of Pupil Personnel Services Monika Krepsztul, Director of Business and Operations Carrie DePuy, Director of Technology Paul Gouveia, Facilities Director Joe Lombardozzi, and BOF member Rick Regan

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Dominic Cipollone called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. May 21, 2026 - Regular meeting - Approved by consensus.

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA - Approved by consensus

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Erica Rome noted that her youngest child was about to enter Middle School and she spoke of the wonderful memories that her family had at Consolidated School and Meeting House Hill School. She praised the administrators, teachers and staff for giving her children a wonderful education in New Fairfield thus far.

VI. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. Chairman’s Report

Dominic Cipollone noted that he attended the Top Decile Awards and Scholars night at the high school on June 3rd and thanked everyone who helped make it happen.

B. Superintendent’s Report - Dr. Kenneth Craw spoke of the following:

- Spoke of all the celebrations at this time of year and especially the Celebration of Excellence that will be held on June 19th.
- Elementary School Step Up will be held on June 5th
- Middle School Step Up will be held on June 19th.
- High School Graduation will be held on June 12th.
- Congratulated Senior Representative Ella Skogstrom on her graduation and thanked her for representing the student body for the last two years.

C. Student Representative Report

Senior Representative Ella Skogstrom spoke of the following:

- Senior Prom was held on May 16th.

- The Senior trip to Six Flags was on May 28th.
- Top Decile and Scholars Night was held on June 3rd.
- Yard signs have been distributed for Seniors
- Incoming Freshmen visited the High School on June 4th.
- The Senior Breakfast will be held on June 10th.
- High School Graduation will be on June 12th.
- Thanked High School Principal James D'Amico and the BOE members and administrators for giving her the opportunity to be the Student Representative.

Junior Representative Hailey Lafaro spoke of the following:

- The Halo awards were held on May 26th.
- The Boys Baseball and the Boys Lacrosse both won the Southwest Conference Championships.
- Junior Jump Start was held on May 27th.
- The Sophomore picnic was held on June 2nd.
- Junior Awards will be held on June 11th.
- The schedule for Senior Portraits is now open.
- Thanked Ella Skogstrom for all her help as the Senior Representative

D. Committee Reports

1. Curriculum - Greg Flanagan noted that this committee met on May 26th. They discussed "The Language of Medicine" textbook that will be up for a vote later in the meeting. They discussed the Summer Reading and Math programs. Dr. Woleck spoke of plans for curriculum work over the summer. The Middle School students are working on a time capsule for the 250th Anniversary of the United States. This time capsule will be opened in 2076.

2. Policy - Samantha Mannion noted that the Policy subcommittee met on May 27th and discussed the Electronic Device policy. Policy 5141.4 - Child Abuse and Neglect was revised and will be voted on later in tonight's meeting. The Policy subcommittee also had a lengthy discussion of the plans for the Rebel Hall of Honor.

3. Special Education - Kimberly LaTourette noted that this subcommittee met on June 4th. Director of Pupil Personnel Services Monika Krepsztul thanked everyone for a good year. All of this year's goals for Special Education were met. The subcommittee discussed goals for next year. The subcommittee discussed PPS restructuring, the BRIDGE program, and 8th grade transitions to high school.

E. Liaison Reports

1. Board of Finance - Ed Sbordone noted that the BOF met on May 27th via zoom and discussed the following:

- They approved the Suspense List from the Tax Collector.
- They accepted the fiscal year 2024/2025 audit.
- They voted to engage PKF O'Connor Davies as the auditors for the 2025/2026 audit. The BOF will go out to bid for new auditors for the 2026/2027 fiscal year.
- The approval of the Individual Stop Loss and Aggregate Stop Loss for the Medical Plan were tabled until a future meeting.
- The BOF discussed the Medical Fund for this fiscal year.

VII. **INFORMATION ITEMS**

A. New Fairfield High School/Consolidated School Building Project Update

Director of Business and Operations Carrie DePuy noted that the bid documents on the Bus Lot will go to the Permanent Building Committee on Tuesday, June 9th for approval. She spoke of a possible start time for the fall for the Bus Lot. There is no update on the propane issue at the high school.

B. 2025-2026 District Priorities and Goals Update

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kenneth Craw gave a brief presentation on the progress of goals in the district. Three main topics discussed included Special Education, Staff and Student Attendance, and Resources for Learning.

Special Education goals that were met included enhanced parent communication and the restructuring of the PPS Department, restructured specialized programs, and improved IEP quality.

Resources for Learning included the management of the budget with tight controls, improved facilities, and the relocation of the district offices.

Staff Attendance exceeded the goal of 95% with an attendance rate of 95.3%. Student attendance had a goal of reducing chronic absenteeism to 8%. To date, Grades K-8 have met the goal of 8% but the district is trending higher at 10% due to a higher rate at the high school.

VIII. ACTION ITEMS

A. Personnel Report

MOTION: Kimberly LaTourette made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the Personnel Report for May 29, 2026, as recommended by the administration. Peggy Katkocin seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

B. Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Fund 19 Closeout

Carrie DePuy spoke of the process for Fund 19 Closeout.

MOTION: Ed Sbordone made a motion to recommend that the Board of Education approval the transfer of fiscal year 2024-25 Fund 19 Closeout, in the amount of \$25,408.83, to the Board of Education non-lapsing account for the purpose of covering unanticipated special education expenses. Samantha Mannion seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

C. Fiscal Year 2027 Proposed Budget Reduction List

Director of Technology Paul Gouveia explained the HR software.

MOTION: Greg Flanagan made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the proposed budget reduction list as recommended by the administration. Ed Sbordone seconded the motion.

IN FAVOR: Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

D. New Textbook Adoption

Suspension of the Rules

1. *The Language of Medicine, 13th Edition*

MOTION: Ed Sbordone made a motion to suspend the rules referring to the following new textbook: 1. *The Language of Medicine, 13th Edition*. Kimberly LaTourette seconded the motion.

IN FAVOR: Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

MOTION: Ed Sbordone made a motion to recommend to the full Board the adoption of the following new textbook: 1. *The Language of Medicine, 13th Edition*. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion.

IN FAVOR: Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

E. Board of Education Policy

Samantha Mannion noted that Policy 5141.4 is being revised at the request of CABA.

Suspension of the Rules

1. Policy 5141.4 - Child Abuse and Neglect

MOTION: Samantha Mannion made a motion to recommend to the full Board suspension of the rules referring to Policy 5141.4 - Child Abuse and Neglect. Kimberly LaTourette seconded the motion.

IN FAVOR: Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

MOTION: Ed Sbordone made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of Board of Education Policy 5141.4 - Child Abuse and Neglect. Kimberly LaTourette seconded the motion.

IN FAVOR: Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

F. Bridge Program Enhancements

Dr. Craw spoke of the Bridge Program that allows the district to potentially avoid outplacements, thus realizing a cost savings.

MOTION: Kimberly LaTourette made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the BRIDGE Program financial plan and staffing structure as presented. Peggy Katkocin seconded the motion.

IN FAVOR: Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

G. Fund 306 Transfer Request

Carrie DePuy spoke of the uses for the 306 Fund.

MOTION: Greg Flanagan made a motion to recommend to the full Board the requested Fund 306 transfer in the amount of \$32,896 as presented. Kimberly LaTourette seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

H. Partial Allocation of DRIP Funds - Infrastructure

Carrie DePuy spoke of the uses for the DRIP (District Repair and Improvement Projects) Funds. She identified the projects that will be completed with these funds.

MOTION: Ed Sbordone made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of partial allocation of DRIP funds in the amount of \$33,880 for NFPS infrastructure as presented. Kimberly LaTourette seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

I. Partial Allocation of DRIP Funds - School Security - Executive Session

J. Non-Union Salaries and Benefits and Contracts - Executive Session

K. Superintendent Evaluation - Executive Session

IX. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Senior Representative Ella Skogstrom wished Student Representative Hailey Lafaro and next year's Representative good luck in the future.

X. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS - None

XI. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Peggy Katkocin noted that she is pleased that the Bus Lot at the old Consolidated Lot is going forward and thanked all the bus drivers for their expertise and patience with the temporary lot.

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION: Dominic Cipollone made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:01p.m. for the purpose of discussing School Safety and Security and to invite Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ken Craw, Director of Business and Operations Carrie DePuy, Middle School Principal Karen Gruetzner, Director of Technology Paul Gouveia, and Facilities Director Joe Lombardozzi into the Executive Session. Samantha Mannion seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone **ABSTAINED:** Sue Huwer

MOTION: Dominic Cipollone made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:01 p.m. for the purpose of discussing Non-Union Contract Negotiations and the Superintendent Evaluation and to invite Director of Business and Operations Carrie DePuy into the first and second parts and Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ken Craw for the entire Executive Session. Samantha Mannion seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

MOTION: Dominic Cipollone made a motion to come out of Executive Session at 9:03 p.m. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

MOTION: Kim LaTourette made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of partial allocation of DRIP funds in the amount of \$72,359.19 from DRIP funds for NFPS school security enhancements as presented. Samantha Mannion seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone **ABSTAINED:** Sue Huwer

MOTION: Kim LaTourette made a motion to recommend to the full Board approval of the non-union salaries and benefits, as amended by the board, for the 2026-2027 school year. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

MOTION: Kim LaTourette made a motion to recommend to the full Board approval of the Assistant Superintendent's contract for the 2026-2027 school year as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

MOTION: Kim LaTourette made a motion to recommend to the full Board approval of the Director of Business and Operations' contract for the 2026-2027 school year as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools. Dominic Cipollone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Kimberly LaTourette made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:06 p.m. Samantha Mannion seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

Respectfully submitted, Suzanne Kloos