

**NEW FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION
NEW FAIRFIELD, CT**

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a special meeting on Monday, January 7, 2019,
at 7:00 p.m. in the New Fairfield Community Room, 33 Route 37, New Fairfield, CT.

MINUTES – January 7, 2019

PRESENT: Peggy Katkocin (Chairman), Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

ABSENT: Greg Flanagan

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Patricia Cosentino, Chief Academic Officer Dr. Jason McKinnon, Director of Business and Operations Dr. Richard Sanzo, Director of Instructional Technology and Communications Dr. Karen Fildes, STEAM Director and Intervention Coordinator Keegan Finlayson, Middle School Principal Christine Baldelli, Middle School Assistant Principal Cheryl Milo, Meeting House Hill School Principal James Mandracchia, Meeting House Hill School Assistant Principal Allyson Story, Consolidated School Principal Robert Spino, Consolidated School Assistant Principal Karen Gruetzner, Director of Buildings and Grounds Phil Ross, Pupil Personnel Director Andrea Einhorn, Special Education Supervisor Katherine Matz, Athletic Director Mary Stolle, Selectman Khris Hall, BOF Chairman Wes Marsh and BOF Members Erin Badillo, Jane Landers, Cheryl Reedy and Anthony Yorio

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Peggy Katkocin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. WORKSHOP

A. Review of the 2019-2020 Board of Education Budget

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Pat Cosentino spoke of the proposed budget for 2019-2020 and gave a brief background of the process for compiling the budget. She spoke of two outstanding areas, specifically the facilities study for capital projects for the High School and Consolidated School and improvements to security in all the schools.

Members of the Board of Education and Board of Finance sent questions following the Superintendent's proposed budget to a link on the website. The questions were divided into specific categories with responses by respective administrators. Members around the table were given the opportunity to ask follow up questions.

Enrollment

Dr. Jason McKinnon spoke of declining enrollment and the optimal number of students per class. He noted that surrounding school districts were surveyed and suggested that a committee be formed to look into class sizes. There is an incremental increase in class

sizes with this proposed budget and it was noted that there will be extra support in the classroom to compensate for this. There was a discussion of the reallocation of staff.

Curriculum Instruction and Professional Development

Dr. McKinnon spoke of Curriculum Instruction and Professional Development and the optimal amount of money that should be spent on each of these categories. He spoke of the six year curriculum instruction plan that focuses on what needs to be done each year. He spoke of the saturation point and the pace of curriculum development.

Director of Instructional Technology and Communications Dr. Karen Fildes spoke of Project Lead the Way that is a class in the higher grades and a project in the elementary grades. She spoke of the possibility of phasing Project Lead the Way as part of the Library Media Program.

BOF Chairman Wes Marsh asked about the causes for the increase in Special Education students in the district. Better diagnosis and more effective testing were cited as the reasons for more students with IEPs.

Technology

Dr. Karen Fildes spoke of the status of technology in the district and noted that there is an increase to the technology budget for this year. One of the reasons for this increase is a new law regarding student privacy noting that a contract is required for any vendor that works which stipulates how data is handled. She also spoke of the assessment of the infrastructure of the schools and noted that hardware in all of the schools is out of date. As a result, significant upgrades are needed. Due to this need, virtually everything else in tech budget for 2019-2020 has been reduced. There was a brief description of long term supplies and equipment.

Facilities

Director of Buildings and Grounds Phil Ross and Director of Business and Operations Dr. Richard Sanzo spoke of the survey of conditions for Consolidated School and the High School. Preliminary results of this survey will be available in February and will have a dramatic impact in the capital budget. Dr. Sanzo spoke of some projects that can be completed in isolation and noted that other projects have a snowball effect resulting in the need for other projects. Specific projects include the replacement of the elevator, the auditorium and locker rooms in the high school and the roof at Consolidated School. There was a discussion of the many committees that will research the projects that will be presented to the community.

Special Education

Pupil Personnel Director Andrea Einhorn spoke of the factors to consider with the Special Education budget and noted that outplacement is a large portion of the budget. She spoke of the possibility of combining transportation with surrounding districts. There was a brief discussion of the Special Education contingency and the challenge with predicting the number of special education students that may come into the district.

Salaries

Dr. Richard Sanzo spoke of the reallocation of staff and noted that approximately 24% of the payroll budget is allocated to Special Education. There was a brief discussion of providing clarity regarding World Language programs. The budget includes attrition and unappropriated salaries. There was a brief discussion of the increase of a specific position from 10 months to 12 months.

Miscellaneous

There was a brief discussion of increasing the budget for high school graduation instead of using class dues.

The next Budget workshop for the Board of Education will be held on Tuesday, January 29th at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room at 33 Route 37.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

John McCartney and Cheryl Reedy thanked everyone involved in the budget process for their cooperation and hard work.

Board of Finance Chairman Wes Marsh thanked everyone for their hard work with the budget and expressed how pleased he was with the workshop forum.

Chairman Peggy Katkocin thanked the Board of Finance members for coming to the workshop.

V. ADJOURNMENT - Peggy Katkocin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 p.m. Dominic Cipollone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne Kloos