NEW FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION
NEW FAIRFIELD, CT

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a regular meeting on Thursday, November 5, 2026 at the New Fairfield Community Room at 33 Route 37

MINUTES – November 5, 2026

PRESENT: Dominic Cipollone (Chairman), Kathy Baker, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone, and Joanne Tolles

ABSENT: Greg Flanagan and Peggy Katkocin

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kenneth Craw, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Dr. Kristine Woleck, High School Principal Dr. Katherine Blore, Middle School Principal Karen Gruetzner, Elementary School Principal Dr. Jennifer Hildebrand, Director of Pupil Personnel Services Monika Krepsztul, Director of Guidance Kim Laughlin, Director of Business and Operations Carrie DePuy, Director of Buildings and Grounds Joseph Lombardozzi, BOF member Rick Regan, PBC Chairman Don Kellogg, Scott Pellman (Colliers Project Leaders), Mark Schweitzer (Colliers Project Leaders), Mike Bouchard (Consulting Engineering Services), Christine O'Hare (JCJ Architects), and Joe Vetro (O & G)

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

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. BOARD OF EDUCATION

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
A. October 15, 2026- Regular meeting- Approved by consensus

V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA-
Approved by consensus

VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION-
None

VII. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS
A. Chairman's Report- Chairman Dominic Cipollone spoke of starting the 2nd quarter on the right foot and the positive impact of limiting cell phone use.

B. Superintendent's Report- Dr. Kenneth Craw thanked the faculty and staff for their hard work in preparing for Parent/Teacher conferences. He noted that the Veteran's Day Breakfast will be held on Wednesday, November 11th at 8:15am. He wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

C. Student Representative Report
Senior Representative Hailey Lafaro spoke of the following:

- A Financial Aid workshop will be held on November 9th for 11th and 12th graders
- A Connecticut State Community College Field Trip will be held on November 16th.
- All students must fill out a FASFA form or a waiver
- The Powder Puff Football game will be held on November 20th

Junior Representative Khloe Seiferth spoke of the following:

- The Fall Play was held on October 23rd, 24th and 25th.
- National Honor Society Inductions were held on October 28th
- First Quarter grades closed on November 2nd.
- Yearbooks for 2027 are currently on sale.

D. Committee Reports

1. Business Operations/Resource Management

Ed Sbordone noted that this subcommittee met on November 5th and discussed the following:

- Budget vs. Actual as of October 30th shows that everything is on track.
- Fuel oil, gas, and diesel have been locked in for the year. He thanked Carrie DePuy for her hard work in securing these rates.
- There was a discussion of facilities specifically the gym floor in the high school that was damaged during the October 15th water main break.
- There was a discussion of the Middle School facilities.
- The Bus Lot project will start this Spring and will hopefully be completed by the start of the 2027-2028 school year.

2. Curriculum

Amy Johnson noted that this subcommittee met on October 26th and discussed Development and Design for Summer Curriculum. They further discussed AI Boot Camp and the Academic Integrity policy.

2. Policy

Samantha Mannion noted that this subcommittee met on October 28th and discussed different ways to review policies.

E. Liaison Reports

1. Board of Finance

Ed Sbordone noted that the BOF met on October 28th and discussed:

- The BOS budget workshops will be held on January 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, and 13th.
- The BOF discussed the hiring of an audit firm and decided to continue to retain O'Connor Davies as the Town's auditor for 2027, 2028, and 2029 with an option to renew for two additional years
- Town Treasurer Terry Friedman spoke of concerns with leasing of capital equipment.
- There was a discussion of fire equipment needs and John Arizzi was appointed as a BOF liaison to the Fire Department.
- Finance Director Adam Lawrence noted that the surplus for 2025-2026 is slightly under $700,000. The available funds for use is approximately $249,000. He reminded everyone that $64,000 was appropriated to the Fire Department in October 2026 leaving an available balance of $184,000.
- The BOF voted to delete the current Public Comment policy.
- Medical claims for July and August were over $700,000. September claims were slightly better.
- The next meeting of the BOF will be on Wednesday, November 18th.

2. Parks and Recreation Commission- The Parks and Rec Commission met on October 26th and discussed the following:

- Bocce Court- Sean Loughran noted he received information about the Bocce courts by the high school and noted that they don't fall under the purview of the Parks and Rec Commission.
- Boat Docks- There was a discussion of repairing of the Boat Docks and which company to use. They discussed the procedure for spending money from the Boat Dock lock box. Boats need to be out of the water by this weekend.
- Town Beach- Sean Loughran noted that one tree was taken down at the Town Beach.
- Director's Report- Linda Lull noted that the Water Ski Show held in July was very successful. She spoke of the possibility of doing it again next year and will inquire about the price.
- The Trick or Treat Fest was held on October 29th.
- The Turkey Run will be held on November 22nd.
- Santa's Workshop will be held on November 29th.

VIII. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Water Incident update

Director of Business and Operations Carrie DePuy spoke of the insurance claim for the water main break at the high school on October 15th. The biggest damage was to the gym floor. It is hopeful that it will be fully repaired by January 1st.

Various employees from Colliers Project Leaders, O&G, Consulting Engineering Services, and JCJ Architects spoke of the causes of the water main break, the control systems and ways to remediate the damage.

B. Student Outcomes Report Class of 2026

High School Principal Dr. Katherine Blore and Director of Guidance Kim Laughlin spoke of post secondary work for the Class of 2026 and gave statistics about how many graduates have gone to 4 year colleges, 2 year colleges, trade schools or military and employment. They spoke of exit surveys done through Navance and noted that more students have a plan than ever before. They spoke of the district's schedule to support post secondary plans.

C. Budget Assumptions

Superintendent of School Dr. Ken Craw spoke of budget assumptions for fiscal year 2027-2028 and how it fits into the Strategic Plan. He noted that staffing is the biggest component of the budget and the challenges with budgeting for attrition. He spoke of Federal and State mandates that affect the budget.

D. Board Calendars

The Board reviewed the calendars for regular BOE meetings and subcommittee meetings for January 2027 through June 2028.

E. Policy 5114 Suspension and Expulsion- First Reading

IX. ACTION ITEMS

A. Personnel Report

MOTION: Kathy Baker made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the Personnel Report for October 29, 2026, as recommended by the administration. Kimberly LaTourette seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Dominic Cipollone, Kathy Baker, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone, and Joanne Tolles

B. Fiscal Year 2028 District Calendar

MOTION: Kimberly LaTourette made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the 2027-28 school calendar as presented. Samantha Mannion seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Dominic Cipollone, Kathy Baker, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone, and Joanne Tolles

C. Policies
1. Policy 5142 School Safety; Preparation, Response and After Action
2. Policy 3231 Medical Reimbursement for Special Education Students

MOTION: Samantha Mannion made a motion to approve Policy 5142 and Policy 3231 as presented. Ed Sbordone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Dominic Cipollone, Kathy Baker, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone, and Joanne Tolles

X. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION- None

XI. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS-None

XII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS
Samantha Mannion spoke of concerns with the water main break and noted that it is important to hold anyone that was negligent responsible.

Joanne Tolles spoke of safety concerns with both the water main break and the propane issue.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Dominic Cipollone made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 pm. Kathy Baker seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Dominic Cipollone, Kathy Baker, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone, and Joanne Tolles

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne Kloos