

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

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a regular meeting on Thursday, April 4, 2019,  
at 7:00 p.m. in the New Fairfield Community Room, 33 Route 37, New Fairfield, CT.

**MINUTES – April 4, 2019**

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

**ABSENT:** None

**ALSO PRESENT:** Superintendent of Schools Dr. Pat Cosentino, Chief Academic Officer Dr. Jason McKinnon, Director of Business and Operations Dr. Richard Sanzo, High School Interim Principal Michael Clarke, Middle School Principal Christine Baldelli, Meeting House Hill School Principal James Mandracchia, STEAM Director and Intervention Coordinator Keegan Finlayson, Pupil Personnel Director Andrea Einhorn, Secondary Special Education Supervisor Katherine Matz and BOF Chairman Wes Marsh

**I. CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Peggy Katkocin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

- A. March 21, 2019 - Regular Meeting - All in favor
- B. March 26, 2019 - Special Meeting - All in favor

**IV. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**MOTION:** Peggy Katkocin made a motion to approve the agenda with the addition of Action Item F “Owner’s Representative for Consolidated School/New Fairfield High School Building Study.” Dominic Cipollone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

**MOTION:** Rick Regan made a motion to table Information Item B “Next Generation Accountability Presentation” until after the Curriculum subcommittee review on April 29<sup>th</sup>. Kimberly LaTourette seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

**V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Consolidated School Second Grade teacher Kathy Curran spoke of her concerns regarding the proposed increase in class sizes for next year for the Consolidated School classes.

Nikolas Karloutsos noted that he and his wife have been very happy with the quality of education that his children have received so far and the wonderful strides that his daughter has made in the ELC program, but spoke of his concerns of the possible increase in class sizes for next year.

Jim Mellett spoke of the proposed high school textbook *The Living Earth: Integrating Biology and Earth Science*. He further gave an update of the Association of Retired Scholars and noted that they would like to help students with understanding climate change in the early grades.

Brian Eglinton gave his opinion regarding emails that he received from administrators.

Amanda Lombard noted her concerns about the possible increase in class sizes at Consolidated School.

BOE member Kathy Baker spoke as a parent in the school system regarding her concerns with vaping in the high school.

## **VI. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS**

### **A. Chairman's Report - Peggy Katkocin spoke of the following:**

- The BOF voted to send a proposed tax increase of 1.05% to a Town Meeting which will then go to a referendum. She commended the BOF, BOS and BOE for their ability to work so well together. She noted that voter turnout has been low in recent years and encouraged residents to vote.

### **B. Superintendent's Report - Dr. Pat Cosentino spoke of the following:**

- Mini K Parent Night was held at Consolidated School on April 3<sup>rd</sup>. She thanked the Consolidated School staff for all their work with this night.
- Math Night at the high school was held on April 4<sup>th</sup>.
- Paraprofessionals were honored yesterday on Paraprofessionals Day.
- There will be a "Dollar Dip Dinner" on April 5<sup>th</sup> at the high school cafeteria to support the Academic Decathlon.
- Flyers have gone out for the Summer Enrichment Camp in New Fairfield that will run from June 24<sup>th</sup> to July 25<sup>th</sup>.
- Kara Mehler, Karen Fildes and Keegan Finlayson went to UConn to recruit upcoming UConn graduates to join the New Fairfield staff.
- Dr. Cosentino will be going to Finland in August with CCSU to learn about Educational practices in Finland. She gave a brief description of her itinerary.
- Dr. Cosentino along with Peggy Katkocin, Ed Sbordone, Phil Ross, James D'Amico and Rich Sanzo attended a meeting with DAS (Department of Administrative Services) in Hartford. Dr. Cosentino spoke of the possibility of making the June 30<sup>th</sup> deadline for grants. It was noted that applications can only be sent once a year by June 30<sup>th</sup>. She spoke of the possibility of state reimbursements for the rebuilding of Consolidated School and New Fairfield High School. She spoke of the many building issues with both schools and the facilities study done by architects QA&M. Different options for these projects include renovation of the schools, repairing various issues or rebuilding new schools.

Dr. Cosentino noted that the State was very clear that they will not give reimbursements to renovate the schools as they are now. Instead, Dr.

Cosentino spoke of the possibility rebuilding a new high school and Elementary school. She gave preliminary ideas for both schools. Dr. Sanzo spoke of the timeline for this and important information that should be considered. He noted that this will be discussed at the April 9<sup>th</sup> and April 23<sup>rd</sup> meetings.

C. Student Representatives' Report

Senior Representative Hannah Rigoglioso reported on the following:

- Incoming Principal James D'Amico was introduced to the staff today.
- The PSAT/SAT will be given on April 9<sup>th</sup> for 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> graders.
- Spring sports have started and there will be a Pep Rally on April 12<sup>th</sup>.
- Academic Decathlon will go to Nationals in Minnesota. There will be a "Dollar Dip Dinner" on April 5<sup>th</sup> at the high school as a fundraiser to help send the students to Nationals.
- The Girls' Lacrosse team was on the front page of the *Danbury News Times*.

D. Committee Reports

1. Curriculum - Kim LaTourette noted that the Curriculum subcommittee met on March 25<sup>th</sup>. High School teachers Keegan Finlayson and Jean Gephart presented a new Biology textbook, *The Living Earth: Integrating Biology and Earth Science*.
2. Policy - Samantha Mannion noted that there are two new policies on tonight's agenda for first reading.
3. School Start Time Ad Hoc Subcommittee - Rick Regan noted that this subcommittee met on April 4<sup>th</sup> and decided to start by getting feedback from students at the high school. They also spoke of metrics that they will use to determine if the new start time generates benefits.

E. Liaison Reports

1. Board of Finance - Ed Sbordone encouraged residents to cast their vote on the budget. The referendum will most likely be in the first Saturday in May.
2. Calendar Committee - Will discuss further on the agenda.
3. School Security and Safety Committee - Samantha Mannion noted that the School Security and Safety Committee will meet next on Wednesday, April 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m.

## VII. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Culinary Program - Culinary Arts teacher Andrea Barkley thanked everyone involved with the new culinary arts area in the high school. She noted that it was completed in time for the NEASC visit and were able to use the facility to cook meals for the NEASC visitors. She spoke of the many ways that the new facility has enriched the culinary program and provided everyone with desserts made by the culinary students.

B. New Textbook Adoption (First Review)

1. High School Biology-*The Living Earth: Integrating Biology and Earth Science*

C. BOE Policies (First Review)

1. Policy 4112.52- Criminal History Record Information
2. Policy 5132- Dress and Grooming

**VIII. INFORMATION/ACTION ITEMS**

A. 2019-2020 Budget

There was a lengthy discussion of the proposed budget and cuts that were presented to the Board of Finance. Main topics of this discussion included how cuts will impact students especially cuts to professional development and staff reductions. Other topics included a discussion of administrator salaries and their respective roles and responsibilities. The Board further discussed support staff, capital and nonrecurring projects and security upgrades. There was a brief discussion of the proposed building projects and whether they would affect the amount needed for Capital and Nonrecurring projects.

**MOTION:** Ed Sbordone made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the 2019-20 FY budget reductions as recommended by the administration. Kathy Baker seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza  
**OPPOSED:** Samantha Mannion

**IX. ACTION ITEMS**

A. Appointment of Director of Pupil Personnel Services

Dr. Cosentino welcomed Katherine Matz as the new Director of Pupil Personnel Services and gave a brief description of her background.

**MOTION:** Dominic Cipollone made a motion to recommend to the full Board the appointment of Katherine Matz as Director of Pupil Personnel Services, effective July 1, 2019. Kimberly LaTourette seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

B. Personnel Report

**MOTION:** Kathy Baker made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the Personnel Report for March 28, 2019, as recommended by the administration. Samantha Mannion seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

C. 2018-2019 Revised Calendar

Dr. Costentino noted that April 9<sup>th</sup> will be an early dismissal day for the high school.

**MOTION:** Kimberly LaTourette made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the revised 2018-19 school calendar as presented. Ed Sbordone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

D. Non-Resident Student Requests - Executive Session

1. Student #1
2. Student #2

E. Reduction in Force - Executive Session

F. Owner's Representative for Consolidated School/New Fairfield High School Building Study

Director of Business and Operations Dr. Richard Sanzo gave a brief overall of the projects and the role of the owner's representative.

**MOTION:** Peggy Katkocin made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of pre-referendum owner's representation as presented by the administration with Colliers International with expenditure not to exceed \$5,000.00. Kimberly LaTourette seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

**X. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Brian Eglinton gave his opinion regarding the proposed school project.

Stephanie Marlow spoke in favor of the proposed building project and thanked Dr. Cosentino for all the information she gave regarding the project.

Laura Consiglio spoke of the proposed building project and encouraged everyone to not be short sighted and to make sure all the educational needs of the students are met first. She specifically spoke of reading interventions and early diagnosis of dyslexia.

Nikolas Karloutsos thanked the Board of Education for all their hard work and congratulated them on being forward thinkers.

**XI. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS** - Members of the Board discussed the following:

- Kathy Baker congratulated Katherine Matz on being appointed as Director of Pupil Personnel Services. She was encouraged by the amount of public participation at tonight's meeting. She further asked about the vaping issue and asked for statistics regarding the incidents.
- Stephanie Strazza congratulated Katherine Matz. She also spoke of the investment of early intervention for special education students.
- Greg Flanagan congratulated Katherine Matz. He also congratulated the cast of Cinderella on a wonderful show.
- Dominic Cipollone spoke of the dangers of vaping as well as other drugs and spoke of the zero tolerance consequence. He spoke of the responsibility of making decisions for the building project. He further congratulated Katherine Matz.
- Rick Regan congratulated the cast of Cinderella and spoke of the opportunity for students outside of sports.

- Kim LaTourette was also impressed with the play. She thanked Paul Laedke for raising over \$2500 for Run Ranger Run. Looking forward to the Dollar Dip Dinner. She congratulated Katherine Matz. She also spoke of the issues and consequences with vaping.
- Ed Sbordone congratulated Katherine Matz. He also encouraged residents to vote for the budget referendum.
- Samantha Mannion congratulated Katherine Matz.
- Peggy Katkocin congratulated Katherine Matz. She spoke of the budget cycle and the cooperation with the BOE, BOS and BOF.

## **XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING NON-RESIDENT STUDENT REQUESTS**

## **XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING REDUCTION IN FORCE**

**MOTION:** Peggy Katkocin made a motion to go into Executive Session at 9:31 p.m. to discuss a non-resident student request and a reduction in force and to invite Superintendent of Schools Dr. Pat Cosentino into the Executive Session. Dominic Cipollone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

**MOTION:** Peggy Katkocin made a motion to come out of Executive Session at 9:43 p.m. Dominic Cipollone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

**MOTION:** Peggy Katkocin made a motion to approve the request of the Superintendent to allow two non-resident students to remain in New Fairfield for the rest of the school year without tuition. Kathy Baker seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

**MOTION:** Peggy Katkocin made a motion to go forward with the Superintendent's request for reduction in force for two employees. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

**MOTION:** Peggy Katkocin made a motion to approve the Superintendent's request to enforce a non-renewal of an employee. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

#### **XIV. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Peggy Katkocin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 p.m. Dominic Cipollone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

Respectfully submitted,  
Suzanne Kloos