

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

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a special meeting on Tuesday, January 28, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room at 33 Route 37, New Fairfield, CT.

MINUTES – January 28, 2025

PRESENT: Dominic Cipollone (Chairman), Tim Blair (left 8:00 p.m.) Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Sue Huwer, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

ABSENT: Kathy Baker

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kenneth Craw, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Kristine Woleck, Director of Business and Operations Carrie DePuy, and Director of Buildings and Grounds Phil Ross, Interim Director of Pupil Personnel Services Monika Krepsztul, Elementary Special Education Supervisor Alex Lambert and BOF member Wes Marsh

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Dominic Cipollone called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. REVIEW OF THE 2025-2026 BUDGET

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ken Craw spoke of the upcoming budget for 2025-2026. Topics reviewed at this meeting included Facilities; Capital Budget; Pupil Personnel Services; and Special Education.

Facilities

Director of Buildings and Grounds Phil Ross spoke of saving money by working collaboratively and sharing services with the Town. He spoke of efficiencies by using in-house electricians and plumbers. He spoke of accomplishments made throughout the past year. The requested budget for Buildings and Grounds for 2025-2026 is \$802,474 which is an increase of \$42,289 (5.56%) over the 2024-2025 budget.

Capital Improvement Projects

Phil Ross spoke of Capital Improvement projects requested in the 2025-2026 budget which include:

- Remove and replace NFMS Underground Heating Oil Tank;
- Reclaim NFMS lower-level academic classrooms (Phase 1- completion);
- Partition NFMS cafeteria into three Music classrooms (Phase 2 contribution);
- Replace NFMS Pool HVAC & Dehumidification Unit;
- Annual Contribution of Turf replacement (Year 1);
- Replace Buildings and Grounds Rack Truck;
- School Safety and Security Improvements.

He gave a detailed description of each of the projects and noted that the budgeted amount of these projects would equal \$735,000.

Special Education

Interim Director of Pupil Personnel Services Monika Krepsztul spoke of accomplishments with Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services, and spoke specifically of Unified Sports and

Unified Theater. She spoke of the goals of the Unified Sports program and engaging the entire school community.

Other accomplishments include the High School Rebel Paws Bakery, the merger of the STRIDES program with Newtown and expanded Learning opportunities with Naugatuck Valley Community College, and the enhanced Nursing Schedule.

Ms. Krepsztul spoke of New Initiatives which include:

- Aligning IEP goals to State Standards,
- Advancing Orton-Gillingham (OG) Training,
- Clarifying Special Education Course offerings at the Middle School and High School levels,
- Exploring AI Tools.

Members of the BOE asked questions regarding general supplies and furniture and the cost of transportation. There was a brief discussion of Excess Cost Revenue.

Dr. Craw showed a pie chart of the non-payroll increase which equals \$314,423. Of this increase, 82.6% is for Special Education, 13.4% is for Buildings and Grounds and 3.9% is for Curriculum and Technology. He further showed a pie chart that broke down the budget into the following categories: Payroll and Benefits (77.2%), Other non-payroll (5.8%), Facilities (1.6%), Utilities (2%), Transportation (3.5%) and Special Education (9.9%). It was noted that approximately \$480,000 was cut from the budget before it was presented by the Superintendent. The Board will vote on sending this budget to the BOF at their February 6th meeting.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chris McCartney spoke in favor of turning the Middle School cafeteria into Music classrooms.

Amy Tozzo spoke in support of having a part-time transition teacher for Special Education.

V. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Dominic Cipollone made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:22 p.m. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Sue Huwer, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne Kloos