

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

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a regular meeting on Thursday, March 2, 2023, in the New Fairfield Community Room, 33 Route 37, New Fairfield, CT.

MINUTES – March 2, 2023

PRESENT: Dominic Cipollone (Chairman), Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza (arrived 7:20 p.m.)

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kenneth Craw, Director of Business and Operations Carrie DePuy, Pupil Personnel Director Katherine Matz, New Fairfield High School Principal James D’Amico, New Fairfield Middle School Principal Karen Gruetzner, and Elementary School Principal Allyson Story

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. February 16, 2023 - Regular meeting - approved by consensus

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA - Dominic Cipollone spoke of the addition of Action Item B. “Capital and Non-Recurring - Emergency Purchase of Replacement Vehicle”- approved by consensus

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Diane Persis DeSanto spoke of the Behavioral Survey for the High School and her concerns that it is socially engineered and that answers given by the students may cause a breach of privacy. She encouraged parents to opt out of this survey.

John McCartney reminded residents that the BOS and BOE will present their budgets to the BOF this Saturday, March 4th beginning at 9 a.m. He encouraged members of the public to come out and give comments in support of the budget.

VI. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. Chairman’s Report - Dominic Cipollone spoke of the following:

- Encouraged everyone to work together to teach young people that there are rules and breaking the rules will have consequences.
- Mr. Cipollone, along with Superintendent Craw and Samantha Mannion, will be participating in a social media discussion with elected officials. It is hopeful that this meeting will give them some tools on how to help students use technology responsibly.
- Spoke of concerns regarding the block schedule and specifically that certain classes are only held twice a week. This can be problematic if there is a snow day on one of the days.

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

- The students and faculty enjoyed a snow day on Tuesday, February 28th.

- The BOE will present their budget to the BOF this Saturday, March 4th at 10:45 a.m. Everyone is encouraged to get involved in the budget process.

- Professional Development days held on February 21st and 22nd were very successful.

C. Student Representatives' Report

Senior Representative Grace DeMarco spoke of the following:

- Juniors will have an SAT Boot Camp on March 6th.
- There will be a Junior College Planning Night on March 7th.
- The National Honor Society will hold a Blood Drive on March 8th.
- Parent/Teacher Conferences will begin on March 9th.

Junior Representative Brennan Hearty spoke of the following:

- The Washington, DC trip for Juniors will be held soon.

D. Committee Reports

1. Curriculum - Greg Flanagan noted that this subcommittee met on Feb. 27th and discussed a waiver that the district will send to the State regarding the Reading Curriculum. The two professional days held on Feb. 21st and 22nd were very successful.

2. Policy - Samantha Mannion noted that the Policy subcommittee met on Feb. 22nd and were presented with four policies for review. Policy 5118.11 - (Tuition for students of staff members) is on tonight's agenda for first reading.

3. New Fairfield High School Start and End Time Ad Hoc - Kathy Baker noted that this subcommittee met on March 2nd and reviewed some of the benefits of a later start time. A survey for parents, staff and students was discussed. The next meeting will be held on March 15th.

E. Liaison Reports

1. Board of Finance - Ed Sbordone noted that the BOF met on February 27th to discuss a possible revision to the Debt Service Policy. The BOF voted to indefinitely postpone these revisions by a vote of 5-1. The BOS will present their budget to the BOF at 9:00 a.m. and the BOE will present at 10:45 a.m. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

VII. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. New Fairfield High School Healthier Start Time Update

An update will be given at the next regular BOE meeting on March 16th.

B. Fiscal Year 2024 Adopted Budget

Dr. Craw gave a brief update of the adopted budget that will be presented to the BOF this Saturday. He noted that enrollment has been stable and spoke of increased needs for students due to the pandemic. He noted that over 5% of the budget increase is due to the staffing plan.

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

Carrie DePuy noted that there is still a punch list at Consolidated School but it is looking better. The playground is up and running with a temporary fix. There was a brief conversation about the leak at Consolidated School. The high school is looking good. Carrie DePuy will show some pictures of the high school at the next BOE meeting.

D. Board of Education Policy (First Reading)

1. Policy 5118.11-Tuition for Students of Staff members

E. Food Services Update

Carrie DePuy noted that one free breakfast and lunch will be served to all students daily. A la carte items and second meals must be paid for.

VIII. ACTION ITEMS

A. Personnel Report

MOTION: Kathy Baker made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the Personnel Report for March 1, 2023. as recommended by the administration. Stephanie Strazza seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

B. Capital and Non-Recurring Fund - Emergency Purchase of Replacement Vehicle

Carrie DePuy gave a brief description of the reason for the need for a replacement.

MOTION: Ed Sbordone made a motion to recommend to the full Board the emergency purchase of a rack body truck from the Capital & Non-Recurring Fund for an amount not to exceed \$70,000. Samantha Mannion seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

C. New Course Proposals

1. ECE French: Global Culture
2. ECE English: Maritime Culture
3. ECE Physics II

MOTION: Stephanie Strazza made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the following courses to be offered at New Fairfield High School: 1. ECE French: Global Culture 2. ECE English: Maritime Culture 3. ECE Physics II. Kathy Baker seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

D. New Textbook Adoption

1. *College Physics: A Strategic Approach*, 4th edition-Pearson 2023

MOTION: Stephanie Strazza made a motion to recommend to the full Board the adoption of the following new textbook: *College Physics: A Strategic Approach*, 4th edition-Pearson 2023. Kathy Baker seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

E. Retirement Settlement

MOTION: Kathy Baker made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the retirement settlement bonus per Article 48 for those eligible teachers who, by Monday, April 3, 2023, tender their resignation to be effective at the end of this school year. Kimberly LaTourette seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

F. Continuation of Health Benefits

MOTION: Ed Sbordone made a motion to recommend to the full Board approval to authorize the Superintendent to offer continuation of health insurance benefits for teachers who notify the intent to resign by Friday, April 28, 2023. Kimberly LaTourette seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

IX. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - Emily Gibbs thanked the administration and staff of Meeting House Hill School for their compassion and kindness following the death of MHHS School Psychologist Sarah Gelish.

Kevin Holick inquired about Diane Persis DeSanto's question being addressed regarding the school survey. In the process of making this comment, Mr. Holick dropped his firearm. As a result, the BOE adjourned the meeting.

X. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS - None

XI. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS - None

XII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Ed Sbordone made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:38 p.m. Kathy Baker seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne Kloos