

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

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a special meeting on Tuesday, January 20, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. in the New Fairfield Community Room, 33 Route 37, New Fairfield, CT.

### **MINUTES – January 20, 2026**

**PRESENT:** Dominic Cipollone (Chairman), Kathy Baker, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Sue Huwer, Kimberly LaTourette, and Ed Sbordone

**ABSENT:** Samantha Mannion and Peggy Katkocin

**ALSO PRESENT:** Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kenneth Craw, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Kristine Woleck, Director of Business and Operations Carrie DePuy, New Fairfield High School Principal James D'Amico, New Fairfield Middle School Principal Karen Gruetzner, Elementary Principal Allyson Story, Athletic Director Mark Ottush, and BOF member Rick Regan

**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 2026-2027 BUDGET**

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ken Craw spoke of the budget for 2026-2027 that was presented on January 15<sup>th</sup>. The requested budget is \$53,591,293 which represents an increase of \$2,279,374 or 4.44% over the 2025-2026 budget. This increase consists of a baseline budget of \$1,619,264 (3.15%) and Special Education mandates of \$660,110 (1.29%).

Elementary Principal Allyson Story gave a presentation regarding New Fairfield Elementary School. She spoke of highlights and accomplishments for the year and what it means to be an engaged learner. Major accomplishments of the year include a Science and Social Studies instructional block, continuation of Open-up resources for literacy, implementation of K-5 Mathematics tools, high quality instructional tools, introduction of REBELS core values (Respectful, Empathetic, Brave, Engaged, Learners, Strong), and integration of bilingual instruction and family support. She spoke of core values and next steps. Members of the BOE asked questions regarding the budget for the Elementary School. There was a brief discussion of enrollment for the Elementary School.

Middle School Principal Karen Gruetzner spoke of the many accomplishments in the Middle School, specifically the addition of flexible spaces, strengthening curriculum and assessment design, additional clubs and extracurricular offerings, and strengthening of staff support. She spoke of the Teaming Model at the Middle School. There was a discussion of the classroom needs for the Performing Arts and World Language program. There was a brief discussion of the non-payroll budget.

High School Principal James D'Amico spoke of the many accomplishments for New Fairfield High School including 2025 Advanced Placement Honor Roll, NMSQT National Recognition Awards, 33 new National Honor Society Inductees, 38 Seal of Biliteracy Recipients, 14 Halo Nominations, and Special Olympics/Unified Sports awards. He spoke of Student Engagement in Academics and Leadership. There was a brief discussion of the potential number of Sherman students and the tuition paid.

Athletic Director Mark Ottusch spoke of the many accomplishments of the Athletic Department, including Michael's Jewelers Achievement Cup, SWC Sportsmanship Awards, Student Leadership and enhancements to the Unified Sports program. He spoke of the components of the Athletic Department, including supplies and equipment, membership fees, costs for bus trips and officials for home games.

It was noted that approximately \$181,451 of budget requests were not included in the budget. Members of the Board and Administrators spoke of the specifics needs that were cut from the budget.

Chairman Dominic Cipollone thanked all the administrators for their hard work on this budget. The next budget meeting of the BOE will be held on Wednesday, January 21st at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room. Main topics that will be discussed include the budget for Curriculum, Technology, and Central Office.

#### **IV. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Jennifer Pappas asked about costs for the Central Office and HVAC.

#### **V. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Dominic Cipollone made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:24 p.m. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Sue Huwer, Kimberly LaTourette, and Ed Sbordone

Respectfully submitted,  
Suzanne Kloos