

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

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a regular meeting on Thursday, October 17, 2019,  
at 7:00 p.m. in the New Fairfield Community Room, 33 Route 37, New Fairfield, CT.

**MINUTES – October 17, 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, Assistant Superintendent of Schools Julie Luby, Director of Business and Operations Dr. Richard Sanzo, Director of Curriculum Lori Ferreira, Director of Instructional Technology and Communications Dr. Karen Fildes, Pupil Personnel Director Katherine Matz, Special Education Supervisor Melissa Busnel, High School Principal James D’Amico, High School Assistant Principal Michael Chapleau, High School Assistant Principal Scott Rohwedder, Middle School Principal Christine Baldelli, Middle School Assistant Principal Cheryl Milo, Meeting House Hill School Principal James Mandracchia, Meeting House Hill School Assistant Principal Allyson Story, Consolidated School Principal Rob Spino, Consolidated School Assistant Principal Karen Gruetzner 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. October 3, 2019 – Regular Meeting – approved by consensus.

**IV. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**MOTION:** Peggy Katkocin made a motion to add Agenda Item C “Acceptance of Grant - UConn Early College Experience Course Enhancement Grant.” 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

**V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** - None

**VI. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS**

A. Chairman’s Report - Peggy Katkocin noted that:

- The building projects for both schools passed on October 5<sup>th</sup>. She thanked everyone involved in the process. She further spoke of how this project will affect the senior citizens in town and thanked them for their support.

- Governor Lamont visited New Fairfield on Tuesday, October 15<sup>th</sup> and met with public officials and members of some boards and commissions in town. He spoke of ways to generate business in New Fairfield.
- B. Superintendent's Report - Dr. Pat Cosentino spoke of the following:
- Happy that the referendum for the building projects passed on October 5<sup>th</sup> and assured everyone that she and her staff take the responsibility of building new schools very seriously.
  - Thanked the High School staff for the awesome job with administrating the PSATs.
  - Congratulated Paul Gouveia and Julie Gorman and noted that the district won the CABA award for Excellence for the district calendar.
  - The district is looking for substitutes. Anyone interested should contact HR.
  - Congratulated High School teacher Rosanne Main and her students on the *Aporia* literary magazine.
- "Superintendent for the Day" Charlotte Lombard gave a report:
- There will be a Monster Run at Consolidated School.
  - Gave drawings for the new Consolidated Early Learning Center.
- C. Student Representatives' Report
- Junior Representative Nicholas Thiel-Hudson noted that:
- There will be a club fair on Monday, October 21<sup>st</sup>.
  - The NFHS Peace Project hosted a "Positivity Photo Shoot and Fundraiser" for the Women's Center of Greater Danbury.
  - The juniors received information about applying for a position on the State Board of Education. More information can be obtained in the main office.
- Senior Representatives Sophia Liguori noted that:
- The induction for the World Language Honor Society was held last week.
  - The Homecoming Football game will be held on November 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - The Homecoming Dance will be held on November 2<sup>nd</sup>.
  - The Theme for Spirit Week is decades.
  - Asked if students would have the opportunity to give input regarding the school building project. Dr. Cosentino replied that once architects are in place, different groups will be invited to be involved with the design. She encouraged everyone to do some research.
- D. Committee Reports
1. Business Operations/Resource Management - Ed Sbordone noted that this subcommittee met on Oct. 17<sup>th</sup> and unanimously voted to bring the budget transfers to the full board. They reviewed the budget and it is in line with last year but there are few issues. Dr. Sanzo explained that there are some pressures in the budget for this year specifically with payroll and attrition and special education. As a result, a cap will be instituted on discretionary budget lines to make sure that all needs are met.

E. Liaison Report

1. Board of Finance - Ed Sbordone noted that the BOF met on October 16<sup>th</sup> and gave an update on the building projects. The vote on the BOE budget surplus was tabled. They gave an update on the School Safety and Security committee.
2. Permanent Building Committee - Met on Oct. 8<sup>th</sup> and discussed the building project and the RFQ and RFP review.
3. School Security and Safety Committee - The next meeting will be held on Monday, Oct. 21 at 7:30 p.m.

**VII. INFORMATION ITEMS**

A. New Fairfield High School/Consolidated School Building Projects Update -

Dr. Sanzo thanked the community for all the efforts involved with the building project to this point. Since the referendum was approved, the project now becomes the purview of the Permanent Building Committee. He noted that the PBC meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays and encouraged anyone interested to attend. There will be a special meeting on Tuesday, Oct. 29<sup>th</sup> to narrow down the list of architect firms. The PBC is also working on finalizing the RFQ for the Owner's Representative. A Construction Manager will be hired in the new year. The design phase is expected to last about 16 months and noted it would be during that time that the public can be involved.

Rick Regan thanked Dr. Sanzo for all his hard work with the project.

B. State Assessment Testing Report - Assistant Superintendent of Schools Julie

Luby gave a presentation regarding test scores including State Assessment tests, PSATs, SATs and AP testing. She spoke of the scores compared to the DRG and specific cohorts for Science, Math and English/Language Arts and Special Education. There was a lengthy discussion of test scores, specific standards and curriculum including action plans for the near future. The administrators and Board specifically discussed Math scores and debated the pros and cons of having the block schedule. There was a brief discussion of whether or not Math should be taught every day.

Pupil Personnel Director Katherine Matz spoke of specific goals to improve scores regarding Special Education.

Consolidated School Principal Rob Spino spoke of goals of Consolidated School and the formative years for learners.

Meeting House Hill School Principal James Mandracchia spoke of anchor tasks and goals for MHHS.

Middle School Principal Christine Baldelli along with Assistant Principal Cheryl Milo spoke of using data to determine which standards students have mastered and which ones need improvement.

High School Principal James D'Amico spoke of curriculum for the high school and professional development. He spoke of the block schedule and advantages of Rebel 33 time.

Julie Luby thanked everyone involved with the presentation.

C. Board of Education Policy (First Reading)

1. Policy 5118 - Nonresident students

D. Board of Education 2020 Regular Meeting Dates - The Board reviewed meeting dates for regular meetings and subcommittees and will vote on them in November.

**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 October 10, 2019, as recommended by the administration. 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

B. Fiscal Year 2019-2020 Budget Transfers

**MOTION:** Ed Sbordone made a motion to recommend to the full Board of Education the requested FY 2019-20 budget transfers as presented. 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

C. Acceptance of Grant

1. UConn Early College Experience Course Enhancement Grant

**MOTION:** Greg Flanagan made a motion to recommend to the full Board the acceptance of the UConn Early College Experience Course Enhancement Grant in the amount of \$1973 to help nurture a community of tolerance in our school and our community. 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

**IX. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - None**

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

- All members spoke of their frustration with receiving anonymous letters especially the ones that were put in their home mailboxes.
- Rick Regan encouraged everyone to stay involved in the building project process.
- Kimberly LaTourette thanked everyone involved in the Spread Your Wings presentation at the Middle School.
- Dominic Cipollone thanked administrators for the presentation and encouraged everyone to continue to fight for the students.
- Greg Flanagan thanked PACK at the Middle School for the Spread Your Wings presentation. He also thanked High School Principal James D'Amico for sending an inspirational email to students before the PSATs.
- Stephanie Strazza thanked administrators for the presentation and noted that she feels very confident about test scores after hearing from the building principals.

- Peggy Katkocin thanked everyone on the Board of Education and noted that she would like to see everyone remain on the Board after the election.

**XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING A PERSONNEL ISSUE CONCERNING EMPLOYMENT OF A TEACHER**

**MOTION:** Peggy Katkocin made a motion to go into Executive Session at 9:28 p.m. to discuss a personnel issue concerning employment of a teacher and to invite Dr. 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 9:59 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

**XII. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Peggy Katkocin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 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