

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

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a special meeting on Tuesday, January 21, 2025, at 7:00 pm at the New Fairfield Community Room, 33 Route 37, New Fairfield, CT.

MINUTES – January 21, 2025

PRESENT: Dominic Cipollone (Chairman), Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Kimberly LaTourette, Ed Sbordone

ABSENT: Amy Johnson and Samantha Mannion

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, and Elementary Principal Allyson Story

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 budget for 2025-2026 that was presented on January 16th. He noted that this is a “needs based” budget and compared the percentage increase for the operating budget of 3.81% to requests from other districts in the surrounding area.

Elementary Principal Allyson Story gave a presentation regarding New Fairfield Elementary School. She spoke of highlights and accomplishments for the year, including unification of Consolidated School and Meeting House Hill School to form New Fairfield Elementary School, a new reading resource, implementation of reading and math in ELC, creation of a Mindfulness Room accessible to all students and the continuation of opportunities for school-family connections.

Ms. Story spoke of Cost Containment and Efficiencies, including sharing of secretarial support with PPS, restructuring of intervention support, reduction of general supplies, and deferred staffing requests.

Middle School Principal Karen Gruetzner spoke of the many accomplishments in the Middle School, specifically the new STEAM room, redevelopment of the Library Media Center, the Chorus concert, the musical *Annie Jr.*, World Language enhancements and the Strings program.

Staffing and enrollment for the Middle School are expected to increase by approximately 14 students. A Strings teacher is requested to be added to the Middle School. There was a discussion of the need to add classroom space to the Middle School.

Ms. Gruetzner spoke of Cost Containment and Efficiencies, including a 20% cut in the supply line, a reduction of \$2,100 of equipment and a reduction of \$4,200 for library books.

High School Principal James D’Amico spoke of the many accomplishments for New Fairfield High School, including 2024 Advanced Placement Honor Roll, NMSQT National Recognition Awards, 32 new National Honor Society Inductees, 2024 Halo Winners, Scholastic Yearbook Award, students selected to

Western Regional Honor Ensembles, and DECA Chapter National Conference Selection. He spoke of Student Engagement in Academics and Leadership.

Staffing and enrollment are expected to remain stable for the next year. Mr. D'Amico noted that there is a higher than normal interest in New Fairfield High School from Sherman students.

Mr. D'Amico gave a presentation about the Athletic Department in the absence of Athletic Director Mark Ottusch. He spoke of the many accomplishments of the Athletic Department including Michael's Jewelers Achievement Cup, Colonial Football Officials Sportsmanship Award, 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. There was a brief discussion of the "Pay to Play" fee.

Members of the BOE asked questions of the respective principals. 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 22nd 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 - None

V. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Dominic Cipollone made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:26 p.m. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Kimberly LaTourette, Ed Sbordone

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne Kloos