

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

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a special meeting on Wednesday, January 13, 2021,
at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.

MINUTES – January 13, 2021

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 Instructional Technology and Communications Dr. Karen Fildes, Pupil Personnel Director Katherine Matz, High School Principal James D’Amico, 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, Director of Curriculum Alyce Misuraca, Special Education Supervisor Melissa Busnel, Athletic Director Mark Ottusch, and Director of Buildings and Grounds Phil Ross

Network Administrator Paul Gouveia explained the procedure for the virtual meeting and noted that this virtual meeting is available to everyone, including members of the public.

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Peggy Katkocin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The purpose of this meeting was to continue the review and discussion of the 2021-22 Budget.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. WORKSHOP - Review of the 2021-2022 Budget

Dr. Cosentino opened the meeting by giving an overview of the following two handouts: a comparison of the 2018-19 FY Per Pupil Expenditures for area school districts and DRG B, and the tuition rate charged non-resident staff members who choose to send their children to the school district where they work. Staff members who do not live in New Fairfield and send their children to district schools do not pay tuition.

Assistant Superintendent of Schools Julie Luby presented a comparison of PE/Health, Art and Music staff and the number of students they service in area and DRG B school districts. Dr. Cosentino recommended restoring back into the budget one elementary PE/Health teacher, a .6 band teacher and .4 strings teacher. James Mandracchia and Christine Baldelli explained how the scheduling of this band/strings shared position would work.

Dr. Karen Fildes explained that the Administrative team reviewed areas for Technology reductions as outlined: elimination of New Fairfield High School Technology lab, defer replacement cycle purchase of Kindergarten chromebooks at Consolidated School, and small reductions of technology purchases to minimize the overall impact of the cut. The pandemic has changed the way education is being delivered and the elimination of 1:1 chromebooks at Consolidated School will impact the

integration of technology within in-person instruction. The Technology reductions would total \$110,000.

Dr. Sanzo reviewed a document outlining budget additions and reductions listed in priority order, resulting in a total operating budget increase of 2.47%. Additional adjustments to the budget resulting in a total operating budget increase of 1.96% were presented and reviewed. Reductions not recommended and listed in alphabetical order were also presented for consideration. The administrative team worked hard to make their best recommendations. Cuts are made to positions, not people, and are based on seniority.

Board of Education members thanked the Administrative team for compiling the requested information, and offered comments and discussed the following topics: Gifted/Talented Program, post-pandemic needs, tuition charge for students of non-resident staff members, potential retirements, distribution of secretary workload, math, technology, Music Program, Physical Education, Health Education in the elementary schools, and adaptive specials.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Members of the public spoke in support of the Gifted/Talented Program, the Music Program, Physical Education, and spoke against the overuse of technology in the younger grades.

V. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Peggy Katkocin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 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,
Gail DeFeo