

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

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a regular meeting on Thursday, June 1, 2023, at 7:00 pm in the New Fairfield Community Room 33 Route 37, New Fairfield, CT.

**MINUTES – June 1, 2023**

**PRESENT:** Dominic Cipollone (Chairman), Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

**ABSENT:** Stephanie Strazza

**ALSO PRESENT:** Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kenneth Craw, Assistant Superintendent of Schools Julie Luby, Director of Business and Operations Carrie DePuy, Pupil Personnel Director Katherine Matz, and High School Principal James D’Amico

**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. May 18, 2023 - Regular meeting - approved by consensus

**IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA** - approved by consensus

**V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Rick Regan encouraged everyone to vote for the budget at the second referendum despite the recent cuts.

**VI. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS**

A. Chairman’s Report - Dominic Cipollone reported on the following:

- Spoke of his frustration with the BOF meeting of May 31<sup>st</sup>. He noted that the BOF voted to take \$100,000 from the BOS Police overtime budget and put it towards the BOE operating budget. He spoke of how this could affect the SROs in the schools. He assured everyone that the district will continue to strive to give students the best education possible.

B. Superintendent’s Report - Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kenneth Craw

- Acknowledged the many teachers that were honored at the Celebration of Excellence.
- Congratulated Teacher of the Year Casey Aiezza and Paraprofessional of the Year Tony DiNardo.
- Recognized seven retirees from the district and noted that they had a combined 157 years of service to New Fairfield.
- The Spirit of New Fairfield Award has been renamed the “Sarah Gelish Spirit of New Fairfield Award.” This year’s recipients are the bus drivers.
- Band and Chorus received awards recently.
- Boys and Girls Lacrosse are in the State Quarter finals.
- Art Shows are being held at all schools.

C. Student Representatives’ Report

Junior Representative Brennan Hearty spoke of the following:

- Congratulated Band and Chorus.

- Final exams begin on June 14<sup>th</sup>.
  - Senior Portraits for the Class of 2024 are being scheduled.
  - High School Graduation will be held on Friday, June 16<sup>th</sup>.
- D. Committee Reports
1. Curriculum - No report
  2. Special Education - No report
- E. Liaison Reports
1. Board of Finance - Ed Sbordone gave a summary of the BOF meeting on May 31<sup>st</sup>.
- Public Comment lasted approximately 46 minutes.
  - The BOF voted to take \$100,000 from the BOS budget from the Police Overtime line and put it towards the BOE Operating budget.
  - The BOF also voted to remove \$300,000 from the Bond Premium.
  - These votes result in a proposed increase of 6.25% instead of the previous 5.7%.
  - The BOS are expected to meet on June 8<sup>th</sup> to set the date for the Town Meeting that will be adjourned to a referendum.

## VII. INFORMATION ITEMS

### A. New Fairfield High School Schedule Update

High School Principal James D'Amico gave an update on the progress of the potential schedule change at the high school. This includes information regarding surveys from students, teachers and parents. The key areas discussed in the survey included questions about time spent preparing for school, time spent with after school activities, optimal length of classes and time spent on homework each night. It was noted that the Rebel Block was considered very valuable. The survey showed both benefits and challenges with the current schedule and potential changed schedule. There was a brief discussion of the possibility of a hybrid block schedule. Mr. D'Amico noted that there will be a trial hybrid schedule early in the next school year and a presentation will be given to the BOE at the November 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

### B. District Priority Progress

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ken Crow presented a District Priority Progress Report that shows goals and accomplishments for the year. He spoke of five main areas for achievement. The first three are specific to the system and include: teaching and learning, healthy learning environment and resources to support learning. The final two are specific to the Superintendent and include his entry plan and strategic planning.

## VIII. INFORMATION/ACTION ITEM

### A. FY24 Budget

Dr. Crow spoke of the effects of the delay in passing a budget. He spoke specifically of the challenges of hiring staff and scheduling classes without knowing the specifics budget amounts. Ordering of supplies and facilities projects may also be affected by the delay. Dr. Crow noted that he asked for an extension from the June 1<sup>st</sup> deadline with the Teacher's Union to give teaching assignments.

## IX. ACTION ITEMS

### A. Personnel Report

**MOTION:** Kathy Baker made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the Personnel Report for May 31 2023, as recommended by the administration. Ed Sbordone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

### B. Healthy Food Certification

**MOTION:** Kathy Baker made a motion to recommend to the full Board that pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, the Board of Education or governing authority certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, culinary programs, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or non-school organizations and groups. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

**MOTION:** Greg Flanagan made a motion to recommend to the full Board of Education or governing authority that the Board will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the food and beverage items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays, and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. The "regular school day" is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. "Location" means where the event is being held and must be the same place as the food and beverage sales. Kathy Baker seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

### C. New Textbook Adoption

#### 1. Mosa Mack Science - Middle School

**MOTION:** Kimberly LaTourette made a motion to suspend the rules referring to new textbook adoption of Mosa Mack Science - Middle School. Samantha Mannion seconded the motion.

**IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

**MOTION:** Kimberly LaTourette made a motion to recommend to the full Board the adoption of the following new textbook: Mosa Mack Science - Middle School. Tim Blair seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

### D. Paraprofessional Leave of Absence Request - Executive Session

### E. Custodian Leave of Absence Request - Executive Session

## X. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Terra Volpe spoke of the potential change in schedules for the high school and supported the later school time. She spoke of her disappointment with the BOF meeting of May 31<sup>st</sup>. She thanked the BOE members for all their hard work.

John McCartney announced that the Girls' Lacrosse Team won their game today. He encouraged residents to get to know the teachers and administrators in the schools.

#### **XI. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

There will be a BOE meeting on Thursday, June 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. in Executive Session to discuss the Superintendent's evaluation.

#### **XII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Greg Flanagan thanked the teachers and administrators in the district.

#### **XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING A PARAPROFESSIONAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST**

**MOTION:** Ed Sbordone made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:17 p.m. to discuss a paraprofessional leave of absence request and a custodian leave of absence request and to invite Dr. Craw into the Executive Session. Kimberly LaTourette seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone

**MOTION:** Dominic Cipollone made a motion to come out of Executive Session at 8:25 p.m. Ed Sbordone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone

**MOTION:** Ed Sbordone made a motion to recommend to the full Board of Education the approval of Pamela McNally's request for an unpaid leave of absence beginning on April 10, 2023, through the end of the 2022-23 school year, with a return to work at the beginning of the 2023-24 school year. Samantha Mannion seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone

#### **XIV. EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING A CUSTODIAN LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST**

**MOTION:** Kimberly LaTourette made a motion to recommend to the full Board of Education the approval of Anthony Capobianco's unpaid leave of absence request, commencing May 22, 2023, with a return-to-work date or evaluation by the Superintendent in six weeks. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone

#### **XV. EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING THE SUPERINTENDENT'S EVALUATION**

**MOTION:** Greg Flanagan made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:27 p.m. to discuss the Superintendent's evaluation and to invite Dr. Craw into the Executive Session. Ed Sbordone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone

**MOTION:** Ed Sbordone made a motion to come out of Executive Session at 8:53 p.m. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone

**XVI. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Dominic Cipollone made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:54 p.m. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Tim Blair, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone

Respectfully submitted,  
Suzanne Kloos