

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

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a special meeting on Tuesday, January 5, 2021,
at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.

MINUTES – January 5, 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, Director of Buildings and Grounds Phil Ross and Selectman Khris Hall

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 7:01 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. WORKSHOP - Review of the 2021-2022 Budget

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Pat Cosentino spoke of the upcoming budget for 2021-2022 and how it is affected by enrollment. She spoke of possible reductions in force. She asked members of the administration to talk about their respective roles and how it effects the budget.

Director of Curriculum Alyce Misuraca spoke of the Math curriculum and specifically, three priorities that include Instruction, Professional Development and Intervention.

Assistant Superintendent of Schools Julie Luby spoke of staffing needs, including physical education and music.

Director of Instructional Technology and Communications Dr. Karen Fildes spoke of STEAM. She noted that COVID has brought the need for extra technology. She further spoke of the redesign of the district website.

Pupil Personnel Director Katherine Matz spoke of the Transition Program that teaches life skills to special needs students 18-21 years old. This program is expected to net a savings of approximately \$300,000 due to no longer having to pay to outsource these students.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Members of the Board of Education expressed their concerns regarding staffing, especially with specials. Math Intervention was discussed, as well as the need to increase classes in coding and robotics. Members briefly discussed the Transition Program and asked for job descriptions for the Transition Program teachers.

Chairman Peggy Katkocin spoke of the budget and reminded everyone that additions cannot be made without making cuts somewhere else. She noted that the Board must be mindful of tax increases and taxpayers' ability to pay. Currently, the operating budget increase as presented is 2.49% but with the construction project. the percentage increase is 6.36%.

Members of the public spoke in support of staff members and against reduction in force. Residents were especially concerned about cuts to Physical Education.

The budget will be discussed further at the January 7, 2021, BOE meeting, and there will be budget workshops in the near future.

V. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Peggy Katkocin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:24 p.m. Dominic Cipollone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne Kloos