

NEW FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION NEW FAIRFIELD, CT

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a special meeting on Tuesday, January 27, 2026, at 7:00 pm in the New Fairfield Community Room, 33 Route 37, New Fairfield, CT.

MINUTES – January 27, 2026

PRESENT: Dominic Cipollone (Chairman), Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Amy Johnson, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

ABSENT: Kathy Baker

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kenneth Craw, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Kristine Woleck, Director of Pupil Personnel Services Monika Krepsztul, Director of Business and Operations Carrie DePuy, Facilities Director Joe Lombardozzi, BOF Chairman Wes Marsh, and BOF members Thora Perkins and Rick Regan

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 2026-2027 BUDGET

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ken Craw spoke of the upcoming budget for 2026-2027. Topics reviewed at this meeting included the budget for Special Education, Buildings and Grounds, and the Capital Improvement Plan. The requested budget is \$53,591,293, which represents an increase of \$2,279,374 or 4.44% over the 2025-2026 budget. The two main parts of the budget increase include a 3.15% request for the baseline budget and a request of 1.29% for Special Education PPS/State and Federal Mandates.

Special Education

Curriculum and Instruction

Director of Pupil Personnel Services Monika Krepsztul gave an overview of accomplishments, goals and next steps for Special Education. She noted that there has been an increase in students identified with special needs and an increase in intensity and complexity of the diagnosis that affects the budget. These increases are consistent with statewide trends. It was noted that every effort is made to keep students in district and outplacement is only done if absolutely necessary.

Dr. Craw thanked Ms. Krepsztul and her staff for the significant improvements in inclusion and parent engagement. Members of the BOE asked questions of Ms. Krepsztul and thanked her for all her hard work. The Board reviewed the budget for Special Education and discussed how Excess Cost Reimbursement is calculated.

Accomplishments include:

- Increased family communication and engagement, including Information Nights and a Parent Coffee Series for families;
- Expanding of Inclusive Practices, including Unified Sports, Unified Theater, and the STRIDES program;
- Professional learning for general and special education staff on behavioral interventions;

- Adjusting schedules enabling students to remain in general education for core instruction prior to receiving targeted small-group supports;
- In-district Program and Supports and Bridge program.

Next step and goals include:

- Strengthening of Special Education practices and IEP development;
- Continue to refine PPS Office workflows and the transition to fully digital IEPs;
- Increase Medicaid reimbursement from in-district and out-of-district providers;
- Continue expanding Orton-Gillingham teacher training;
- Improve bilingual evaluation process.

Facilities

Director of Business and Operations Carrie DePuy and Facilities Director Joe Lombardozzi gave a presentation regarding the budget for Buildings and Grounds and thanked the entire Building and Grounds team for their hard work especially during recent storms. The requested budget for 2026/2027 is \$819,696 which represents an increase of \$12,702 (1.57%) over last year's budget.

Capital Improvement Requests

Carrie DePuy spoke of capital improvements done in the district over the past few years. She spoke of a request for 2026-2027 of \$623,000 for capital improvements with the main focus on the Middle School. These requests include the partition for three classrooms in the Middle School cafeteria, an athletic trainer cart, replacement of the Baseball Field scoreboard, annual contribution for the turf field fund, safety and security enhancements, Middle School feasibility study, upgrade of the NFMS locker room, Middle School bathroom repair and upgrade, Middle School exterior door replacement, and ongoing roof repairs for the Middle School.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

BOF Chairman Wes Marsh asked about the cost range for the replacement of the roof at the Middle School. He spoke of the process for going out to bid.

V. EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING SCHOOL SECURITY AND SAFETY

MOTION: Dominic Cipollone made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:31 p.m. to discuss School Security and Safety and to invite Dr. Craw, Carrie DePuy, and Joe Lombardozzi into the Executive Session. Ed Sbordone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Dominic Cipollone. Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Amy Johnson, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

MOTION: Dominic Cipollone made a motion to come out of Executive Session at 8:42 pm. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Dominic Cipollone. Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Amy Johnson, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

VI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Dominic Cipollone made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:43 p.m. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Dominic Cipollone. Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Amy Johnson, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne Kloos