

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

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a regular meeting on Thursday, May 16, 2019,  
at 7:00 p.m. in the New Fairfield Community Room, 33 Route 37, New Fairfield, CT.

**MINUTES – May 16, 2019**

**PRESENT:** Peggy Katkocin (Chairman), Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

**ABSENT:** Kathy Baker

**ALSO PRESENT:** Superintendent of Schools Dr. Pat Cosentino, Chief Academic Officer Dr. Jason McKinnon, Director of Business and Operations Dr. Richard Sanzo, High School Interim Principal Michael Clarke, Middle School Principal Christine Baldelli, Consolidated School Principal Rob Spino, Consolidated School Assistant Principal Karen Gruetzner, Reading Teacher and Instructional Coach Roseann Petruso, Special Education Supervisor Katherine Matz, Middle School Teacher Susan McNamara, Middle School Teacher Debra Parker and Selectman Khris Hall.

**I. CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Peggy Katkocin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

- A. May 2, 2019 - Special Meeting - approved by consensus
- B. May 2, 2019 - Regular Meeting - approved by consensus
- C. May 7, 2019 - Special Meeting - approved by consensus

**IV. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**MOTION:** Peggy Katkocin made a motion to approve the agenda for tonight's meeting with moving Information Item A "Senior Buddies" to after Item V "Recognition of the CABE Student Leadership Awards". Kimberly LaTourette seconded the motion.

**IN FAVOR:** Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

**V. RECOGNITION**

**CABE STUDENT LEADERSHIP AWARDS**

Middle School teachers Susan McNamara and Debra Parker presented the CABE Student Leadership award to two 8<sup>th</sup> graders.

High School Interim Principal Michael Clarke presented the CABE Student Leadership award to two high school students.

## **SENIOR BUDDIES**

Reading Teacher and Instructional Coach Roseann Petruso thanked the Senior Citizen volunteers (Senior Buddies) that come into the classrooms at Consolidated School to help with the students. She showed a brief video of the Senior Buddies with the students. Consolidated School Principal Rob Spino thanked Ms. Petruso for all her hard work in coordinating this program. Kathy Hull spoke on behalf of the Senior Buddies and noted that it was a wonderful program for both the seniors and the students.

## **VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Amanda Lombard, Katie Williams and Jennifer Anabile spoke of their concerns about the proposal of reducing the number of second grade classes for next year and larger class sizes. These concerns include the need to prepare these students to move up to MHHS the following year. Consolidated School Principal Rob Spino addressed the concerns and clarified that the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade class sizes for next year will be approximately 19-20 students.

## **VII. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS**

- A. Chairman's Report - Peggy Katkocin spoke of the following:
  - Noted that the BOF voted unanimously to support the BOE grant application and referendum for the proposed school projects. The BOS will discuss this at their May 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting. She reminded everyone that the proposed projects are in very preliminary stages. The community tours of both Consolidated School and the High School have been successful and encouraged all residents to take a tour.
- B. Superintendent's Report - Dr. Pat Cosentino spoke of the following:
  - She publically thanked the BOE, BOF and BOS for their support with the proposed building projects.
  - Spoke of the need to make sure the proposed buildings are “right sized” and noted that the State guidelines for square footage is determined by enrollment. Dr. Cosentino noted that she met with the teachers of Consolidated School to discuss the proposed projects. She encouraged everyone to go on a tour of both schools and offered to meet with anyone with any questions regarding the proposed projects.
  - Many town leaders will be going to the State on Monday, May 20<sup>th</sup> to discuss the project.
  - Spoke of her background in elementary schools and will address the schedule at Consolidated School to avoid the students moving to many different classrooms. She noted that she has listened to all sides of the issue regarding the number of 2<sup>nd</sup> grade classrooms and have weighed the needs of everyone.
  - Thanked the Consolidated PTO for a wonderful Silent Auction.
  - Attended the CAPSS Leadership Award Night. Students from the High School and Middle School were honored.
  - A Director of Curriculum was hired and will be introduced at the next BOE meeting.

- Spoke of the importance of the NEASC letter that gave the district many commendations but also spoke of areas that caused concern regarding curriculum and the facilities. As a result, the high school has been placed on “Warning” due to the conditions of the building.
- Dr. Cosentino will have Community Conversations to address the buildings projects. She encouraged everyone with connections to groups in town to get involved.
- The BOE will have a Board Retreat on May 30<sup>th</sup> for self evaluation.
- The Middle School is introducing a new schedule. Middle School Principal Christine Baldelli gave a brief description of this schedule and noted that Physical Education/Wellness will be every day. Kim LaTourette spoke in support of this new schedule.

C. Student Representatives’ Report

Senior Representative Hannah Rigoglioso reported on the following:

- The Girls Lacrosse team won the SWC game against Stratford.
- The last day of classes before the SEE Projects will be May 17<sup>th</sup>.
- Senior Prom will be held Saturday, May 18<sup>th</sup> at the Ethan Allen Inn.
- Underclassmen Awards Night will be held on Tuesday, May 21<sup>st</sup>
- SINGAMIGJIG will be held on June 5<sup>th</sup>.
- High School Graduation will be held on Saturday, June 15<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m.
- Noted that it was her last meeting as Student Representative and thanked the BOE for the opportunity. The BOE thanked Hannah for all her hard work.

D. Committee Reports

1. Business Operations/Resource Management - Ed Sbordone noted that this subcommittee met on May 16<sup>th</sup> and discussed budget transfers and the Healthy Foods Certification that are on tonight’s agenda as action items. They discussed budget vs. actual and everything is within the budget.
2. Curriculum - Dominic Cipollone noted that he met with Dr. Sanzo, Dr. McKinnon and Dr. Fildes and discussed curriculum and the Next Gen Report. They decided that the website should contain more information about curriculum.

E. Liaison Reports

1. Board of Finance - Ed Sbordone noted that this committee met on May 15<sup>th</sup> and unanimously voted to endorse the referendum for the school construction projects.
2. Parks and Recreation - Kimberly LaTourette noted that Parks and Rec discussed the following at their May 13<sup>th</sup> meeting:
  - Discussed the softball fields and boat docks.
  - The Sip and Stroll will be held this Saturday, May 18<sup>th</sup>.
  - There will be concerts on Memorial Field this summer.
  - The boat parade on Candlewood Lake will be held on July 12<sup>th</sup>.
  - New Fairfield Fair Days will be held on Saturday, September 7<sup>th</sup>.
  - There is a need for an Outdoor Adventure Camp Director and lifeguards for the summer.

3. Safety - Ed Sbordone noted that the BOE Safety Committee met on May 8<sup>th</sup>. He gave a brief description of the role of this committee. Some discussions included the School Safety update, concussion update, food service update and the SROs. This committee meets once a quarter. Minutes from future meetings will be posted on the website.
4. School Security and Safety Committee - Samantha Mannion noted that the School Security and Safety Committee met on May 8<sup>th</sup> and got an update on the Say Something Anonymous Reporting initiative. There was a successful launch of this program. Spoke of possible grant opportunities for safety and security initiatives.

## VIII. INFORMATION ITEMS

- A. New Textbook Adoption (Second Review) - Will be voted on at the next BOE meeting.
  1. *Chemistry in the Earth System*
  2. *SRA Essentials for Algebra*
  
- B. New Course Proposal (Second Review) - Will be voted on at the next BOE meeting.
  1. Pre-Algebra
  
- C. New Fairfield Public Schools 2020-2021 Draft Calendar - Dr. Cosentino spoke of the calendar and noted that the committee tried to get as many full weeks as possible and there will be fewer early dismissals. This will be voted on at a BOE meeting in the near future.
  
- D. New Fairfield High School/Consolidated School Building Project Update - Dr. Sanzo noted that additional tours have been scheduled for the public to view both the high school and Consolidated School. The next three tours will be on May 30<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m., June 8<sup>th</sup> at 9 a.m. and June 19<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m. All three tours will begin at Consolidated School. Special tours for the staff will be held in June. There will be a tour for seniors from the Senior Center on June 4<sup>th</sup>.

## 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 9, 2019, as recommended by the administration. Dominic Cipollone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza
  
- B. Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Budget Transfers  
**MOTION:** Ed Sbordone made a motion to recommend to the full Board of Education the requested FY 2018-19 budget transfers as presented. Kimberly LaTourette seconded the

motion. **IN FAVOR:** Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

C. Healthy Food Certification

**MOTION:** Ed Sbordone made a motion to recommend to the full Board that pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, the Board of Education 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, 2019, through June 30, 2020. 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, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or by non-school organizations and groups. Dominic Cipollone seconded the motion. **OPPOSED:** Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

Dr. Sanzo spoke of this reimbursement and noted all food served at all the schools meet the FDA standards and that there is no financial incentive to pass this certification but it does impose restrictions therefore this program is not beneficial to the district.

**MOTION:** Dominic Cipollone made a motion to the full Board that the Board of Education will allow the sale to students of 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 beverages 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. The “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 beverage sales. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

**X. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Katie Williams asked about the building projects and “right-sizing” the buildings and asked the Board to be forward thinking about the projects.

Amanda Lombard thanked Mr. Spino for his clarification of points regarding the structure of the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade for next year. She thanked Dr. Cosentino for listening to everyone regarding this issue. She asked the administrators to come up with creative solutions for this issue.

**XI. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS** - Members of the Board discussed the following:

Kim LaTourette:

- Thanked PTOs from each of the schools for Teacher Appreciation week.
- Thanked Mr. Akter and Ms. Rivers for the wonderful band concert at MHHS.
- Thanked Mrs. Baldelli for changing the schedule at the Middle School.
- Spoke in support of the Senior Buddies program.
- This week is Police Officer Memorial week. She was glad that the flags were at half staff to honor police officers.
- Thanked Senior Representative Hannah Rigoglioso and wished her well in the future.

Ed Sbordone:

- Encouraged everyone to take the building tours.
- Encouraged residents to attend the BOS meeting on May 23<sup>rd</sup> where they will discuss the school projects.

Stephanie Strazza:

- Thanked teachers for their hard work with the SBAC testing.
- Looking forward to the MHHS Concert and the SINGAMJIG.
- Thanked members of the public that spoke tonight.

Greg Flanagan:

- Thanked the community for supporting the budget.
- Congratulated everyone that received awards tonight.
- Thanked Senior Buddies.
- Spoke of the issue with the number of 2<sup>nd</sup> grade classes for next year. He thanked everyone who voiced concerns and assured them that the board was listening. He asked everyone to trust the administration that they would make the right decision.

Dominic Cipollone:

- Thanked the Senior Buddies.
- Noted that everyone is listening to the public in regards to the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade class configuration.
- Spoke of the wonderful MHHS concert.
- Thanked Middle School Principal Mrs. Baldelli for a wonderful orientation.

Peggy Katkocin:

- Thanked Senior Buddies.
- Spoke of difficult decisions with the budget and noted that no decisions are made lightly.
- Spoke of a meeting that she attended with First Selectman Pat Del Monaco, and BOF Chairman Wes Marsh with seniors at the Senior Center to explain the budget and the proposed school building projects.
- Offered to speak at any PTO meetings regarding the projects.

## **XII. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Peggy Katkocin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:51 p.m. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, Rick Regan, Ed Sbordone and Stephanie Strazza

Respectfully submitted,      Suzanne Kloos