Board of Education Regular Meeting

Tuesday, September 30, 2025 7:00 PM
BOE Meeting Access: BOE (9/30/25 at 7 p.m.) Web: https://zoom.us/j/97141784523 Dial In: (929) 205-6099 Meeting ID: 971 4178 4523 , 3 Brush Hill Road, New Fairfield, CT 06812

I. **CALL TO ORDER**

II. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

III. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

III.A. September 16, 2025 - Special

III.B. September 18, 2025 - Regular

IV. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION -** ***The Board welcomes public participation. Pursuant to our Board Policy, public participation is limited to no more than three (3) minutes per speaker and a total of no more than thirty (30) minutes total for the entire meeting. Individuals who wish to speak longer are encouraged to attend any and all related subcommittee meetings where most of the board's groundwork is done. We value your input, but due to these time limitations, we ask you to be concise and to observe the rules of common courtesy. [9320(a) of Board Bylaws]***

V. **BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS**

V.A. Chairman's Report

V.B. Superintendent's Report

V.C. Student Representatives' Report

V.D. Committee Reports

V.D.1. Curriculum

V.D.2. Policy *(Samantha Mannion)*

V.D.3. Special Education Ad Hoc *(Kim LaTourette)*

V.E. Liaison Reports

V.E.1. Board of Finance *(Ed Sbordone)*

V.E.2. Calendar Committee *(Ed Sbordone)*

VI. **INFORMATION ITEMS**

VI.A. New Fairfield High School/Consolidated School Building Project Update

VI.B. FY27 Budget Calendar

VI.C. Board of Education Policies *(First Reading)*

VI.C.1. Policy 5135.1 - Bus Conduct

VI.C.2. Policy 5118.2 – Educational Opportunities for Military Children

VI.C.3. Policy 5144.12 – Challenging Behavior Response Policy

VII. **ACTION ITEMS**

VII.A. Personnel Report

VII.B. District Goals

VII.C. Ratification of the Agreement between the New Fairfield Board of Education and the New Fairfield Paraeducators of CSEA, Chapter 141 SEIU Local 2001, CTW - July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2029 *(To be voted on after Executive Session)*

VIII. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION -** ***The Board welcomes public participation. Pursuant to our Board Policy, public participation is limited to no more than three (3) minutes per speaker and a total of no more than thirty (30) minutes total for the entire meeting. Individuals who wish to speak longer are encouraged to attend any and all related subcommittee meetings where most of the board's groundwork is done. We value your input, but due to these time limitations, we ask you to be concise and to observe the rules of common courtesy. [9320(a) of Board Bylaws]***

IX. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

X. **BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

XI. **EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING DOCUMENTS RELATED TO PARAEDUCATORS CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS**

XII. **ADJOURNMENT**

NEW FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION
NEW FAIRFIELD, CT

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a special meeting on Tuesday, September 16, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. in the New Fairfield Middle School, 56 Gillotti Road, New Fairfield, CT.

MINUTES – September 16, 2025

PRESENT: Dominic Cipollone (Chairman), Kathy Baker, Kimberly LaTourette, Sue Huwer, Amy Johnson

ABSENT: Greg Flanagan, Samantha Mannion, Ed Sbordone, Stephanie Strazza

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kenneth Craw**,** Director of Business and Operations Carrie DePuy**,** New Fairfield Middle School Principal Karen Gruetzner, New Fairfield Middle School Assistant Principal Steven Groccia, Director of Technology Paul Gouveia, Director of Facilities Joe Lombardozzi and members of the public

I. CALL TO ORDER:
Chairman Dominic Cipollone called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

II. NEW FAIRFIELD MIDDLE SCHOOL WALK THROUGH
Karen Gruetzner took us for a tour of the new orchestra room (previously in a hallway), lesson room shared with OT & PT, the Project Reach classroom (moved from a cart), and the Intervention Room. These have all been used for offices and are now back to being classrooms.

We then visited the STEAM room, redone by our in-house crew previously, and the Media Center which is now fully staffed again.

Then we entered the old MS cafeteria that is now the chorus and general music room. This will become three rooms in the near future (orchestra, chorus, general music and provide storage as well).

Last visit was the servery and the old high school cafeteria that now serves Grades 6 through 8. Members of the tour were also able to view the possible space and design for the district offices. Ken spoke of the benefits for the district, as well as the possible town benefits with opening up space at the Annex.

III. ADJOURNMENT
MOTION: Dom Cipollone made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:57 p.m. Kathy Baker seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Dominic Cipollone, Kathy Baker, Sue Huwer, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette,

Respectfully submitted,
Kimberly LaTourette

NEW FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION
NEW FAIRFIELD, CT

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a regular meeting on Thursday, September 18, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. in the New Fairfield Community Room, 33 Route 37, New Fairfield, CT.

MINUTES – September 18, 2025

PRESENT: Dominic Cipollone (Chairman), Kathy Baker, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, and Ed Sbordone

ABSENT: Samantha Mannion and Stephanie Strazza

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kenneth Craw, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Dr. Kristine Woleck, Elementary School Principal Allyson Story, Director of Pupil Personnel Services Monika Krepsztul, Director of Business and Operations Carrie DePuy, Facilities Director Joe Lombardozzi, and Scott Pellman (Colliers Project Leaders)

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. August 20, 2025 - Special meeting - Approved by consensus.
B. August 21, 2025 - Regular meeting - Approved by consensus.

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA - Approved by consensus

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - Jennifer Pappas spoke of concerns with the funding for school projects. She spoke of a post she put on social media regarding the "walk-thru" for the Middle School.

VI. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. Chairman's Report - Dominic Cipollone spoke of the following:

- Encouraged everyone to respect the views and opinions of others.
- Spoke of national data regarding student proficiency in Language, Math, and Science and commended the district for recent test scores.
- He attended the recent Open House at the high school and thanked Principal D'Amico and the entire staff for giving valuable information.

B. Superintendent's Report - Dr. Kenneth Craw spoke of the following:

- Spoke of the wonderful start to the new school year.
- Thanked everyone that attended the Open Houses at the respective schools.
- Spoke of the results from the Student Outcome Report and noted that Dr. Woleck will be giving a presentation later in tonight's meeting.
- Welcomed Hailey Lafaro as the new Junior Student Representative.

C. Student Representative Report

Senior Representative Ella Skogstrom spoke of the following:

- College visits are currently happening at the College and Career Center. Juniors and Seniors are welcome to make appointments to meet with representatives from various colleges, trade schools and military branches.

- Students who will be 18 by November 4th are welcome to register to vote at the school on Sept. 22nd. A driver's license and social security number are required.
- DECA is hosting the "Walk for Nicole" on Sunday, September 28th to benefit the Nicole Vengalli Foundation.
- A Club Fair hosted by DECA will be held on September 30th and October 1st during lunch waves.
- The NEACAC College Fair Field Trip will be held on October 9th. Juniors and Seniors that wish to attend should speak to their Guidance Counselor.
- Yearbook pictures and bios are due by October 11th.
- PSATs and Senior Kick Start will be held on October 23rd.

Junior Representative Hailey Lofaro spoke of the following:

- Introduced herself and thanked everyone for the opportunity to be the Student Representative.
- There will be no school on September 23rd in observance of Rosh Hashanah and no school on October 2nd in observance of Yom Kippur. A professional development day will be held on Oct.3rd.
- A Paint Game will be held on September 30th at 6 p.m. to support Breast Cancer Awareness.
- College Financial Aid night will be held on October 14th.

D. Committee Reports

1. Business Operations/Resource Management - Greg Flanagan noted that this subcommittee met on Sept. 18th and reviewed expenditures for the first month of the fiscal year. The subcommittee is keeping a close eye on copiers and electricity. Last year's budget came in at 99.9% of the voter approved budget. There is a surplus of $59,285. The Google vault reconciliation was fine. The subcommittee approved two budget transfers that will be voted on by the full Board.

E. Liaison Reports - None

VII. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. New Fairfield High School/Consolidated School Building Project Update

Scott Pellman from Colliers Project Leaders gave an update on the following projects:

Bus Lot - The current as-built survey was received today. The engineer has begun working on the concept plan and it is expected by next Tuesday. The 50% construction documents should be completed by the middle of October and should be finalized by mid-November. It is anticipated that the documents be sent to the State of CT in mid-February 2026 and will hopefully be bid by March 2026. It is hopeful that construction will be begin in Spring or Summer 2026.

Propane - Scott Pellman noted that the final report from Amtech with the detailed synopsis was received. A letter was written on behalf of the town regarding the language of the contract concerning repairs. It is currently with the Town Attorney.

Playground - Scott Pellman noted that Colliers staff has been to the playground a lot over the last few weeks. They are putting together a summary of steps regarding the installation of additional drainage. It is expected that the playground surface should be installed beginning on Monday, September 22nd. After a waiting period and testing, it will be opened to the students. It is expected that it will be completed by mid-October. It was noted that the new warranty starts once the project is completed.

Director of Business and Operations Carrie DePuy spoke of a final audit from the 2010 project of the High School Science Labs and MHHS classroom renovation. She noted that the town will receive a refund of $1.5 million to Town Fund 314.

B. Student Outcomes Report

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Dr. Kristine Woleck spoke of standardized testing reports from 2024-2025 and multiple measures including External Summative Assessments, Benchmark

Assessments/ Universal Screenings, and Classroom Based Formative Assessments. She spoke of AP Tests, SATs, Smarter Balance Tests and Next Generation Science Standards. She spoke of scores from individual cohorts and noted that New Fairfield continues to make incredible improvements in test scores.

C. District Goals

Superintendent of School Dr. Ken Craw spoke of six goals for the district and thanked administrators of each school for their continued commitment and hard work in continuing to make improvements in each of the following areas. They include curriculum, instruction, special education, wellness, student and staff attendance and resources for learning.

D. Anxious Generation

Dr. Woleck spoke of a Community Read of *The Anxious Generation* by Jonathan Haidt and how everyone in the community can see how recent shifts and social media have affected the younger generation. She spoke of upcoming resources for community members to benefit students.

VIII. ACTION ITEMS

A. Personnel Report

MOTION: Kathy Baker made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the Personnel Report for September 11, 2025 as recommended by the administration. Kimberly LaTourette seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, and Ed Sbordone

B. Fiscal Year 2024 Unexpended Funds

MOTION: Kathy Baker made a motion to recommend to the full Board of Education the allocation of FY 23-24 unexpended funds as presented. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, and Ed Sbordone
OPPOSED: Sue Huwer

C. Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Transfers

MOTION: Kathy Baker made a motion to recommend to the full Board of Education the requested FY 25 budget transfers as presented. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, and Ed Sbordone

D. District Offices Phase II Approval

Dr. Craw spoke of the possibility of centralizing all the BOE offices into one location. Half of the project has been completed. He spoke of the benefits of space optimization and the timeline for the project. Funding sources for this project include: FY 2024 Unexpended funds of $65,000, STRIDES transfer of $46,000, and project savings of $19,500. The total cost of this project is anticipated to be $130,500.

MOTION: Kathy Baker made a motion to recommend to the full Board of Education approval of the District Offices Phase II plan as presented. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, and Ed Sbordone

E. Ratification of the Agreement between the New Fairfield Board of Education and the New Fairfield Paraeducators of CSEA, Chapter 141 SEIU Local 2001, CTW- July 1, 2025-June 30, 2029

Dr. Craw noted that there was a mediation with the paraeducators on August 13th regarding the next contract. A tentative agreement was reached that will now go to the association members for their agreement. It is hopeful that this will be received by the next BOE meeting on September 30th.

IX. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - None

X. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS - The Board will discuss the request regarding the renaming of the Baseball Fields at a future meeting. They will also discuss Field Fees.

XI. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Members of the Board welcomed the new Student Representatives and encouraged them to participate in future meetings.

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING DOCUMENTS RELATED TO PARAEDUCATORS CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS - No Executive Session was necessary.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Dominic Cipollone made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:21 p.m. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Amy Johnson, Kimberly LaTourette, and Ed Sbordone

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne Kloos

NEW FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION
FY 2026-2027 -- Budget Calendar (TENTATIVE DATES)

Wednesday, October 1, 2025	Distribution of digital budget documents from Central Office
Monday, October 27, 2025	Building administrators to finalize electronic budget proposal on Google Drive by 9:30 a.m. for review prior to individual meetings
Wednesday, November 12, 2025	Central office administrators to finalize electronic budget proposal on Google Drive by 9:30 a.m. for review prior to individual meetings
Wednesday, November 5 to Friday, November 14, 2025	Building/District department meetings with Ken and Carrie Note: Meetings will be pre-scheduled by central office
Wednesday, December 3, 2025	Admin Council meets to refine budget development at 9:30 a.m.
Wednesday, January 7, 2026	Admin Council meets to review total budget at 9:30 a.m.
Thursday, January 8, 2026	Superintendent's Recommended FY 27 Budget Distributed to BOE.
Thursday, January 15, 2026	Presentation of Superintendent's Budget at BOE regular meeting at 7:00 p.m. (in person)
Tuesday, January 20, 2026	BOE budget workshop (in person) at 7:00 p.m. with focus on NFES; NFMS; NFHS; and, Athletics
Wednesday, January 21, 2026	BOE budget workshop (in person) at 7:00 p.m. with focus on Instructional Program; District-Wide; Central Office; and, Technology
Tuesday, January 27, 2026	BOE budget workshop (in person) at 7:00 p.m. with focus on Facilities; SPED; and, PPS
Thursday, February 5, 2026	BOE regular meeting at 7:00 p.m. to include finalizing and approving BOE budget for FY27
Friday, February 20, 2026	Submission of BOE requested budget to Board of Finance

Tentative Dates:

Saturday, March 7, 2026	Public Hearing and BOF review of BOE and BOS requested budgets BOE review at TBD
Wednesdays in March TBD	Board of Finance budget discussions: 7:30 p.m.
Wednesday, April 1, 2026	Final budget markup by Board of Finance
Thursday, April 16, 2026	Publish Final Budget in *Town Tribune*
Week of April 20-24, 2026	Annual Town Meeting & adjournment of BOF rec'd budget to referendum

Students

Bus Conduct

School transportation is a student privilege conditional upon satisfactory behavior on buses and at bus stops.

Students will be advised that, while awaiting or receiving transportation to and from school, they may be suspended from transportation services for unsatisfactory conduct which endangers persons or property or violates a Board policy or administrative regulation. Principals shall follow procedures in Policy 5114 Suspension/Expulsion/Exclusion/Removal when suspending student bus privileges.

(cf. 5114 Suspension/Expulsion/Exclusion/Removal)
(cf. 5131.5 Vandalism)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-186 Duties of local and regional Boards of education re school attendance.

10-220 Duties of boards of education.

10-221 boards of education to prescribe rules.

10-233c Suspension of students.

Policy adopted: December 4, 2008
Policy reviewed:

NEW FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Fairfield, Connecticut

Students

Conduct on School Bus

The New Fairfield Board of Education is committed to maintaining and improving the safety and well-being of students and employees. The Board of Education adopts the following policy:

1. Passengers riding in vehicles owned and/or operated by the Board of Education must wear seat belts when vehicles are so equipped.
2. Passengers must remain seated while any such vehicle is in motion.
3. Students shall treat bus equipment properly. All damage will be paid for by the offenders or their parents.
4. Students shall behave in an orderly manner while waiting, boarding, riding on, and leaving busses. They shall obey the instructions of the driver at all times.
5. If a student is unruly on the bus and refuses to obey the driver, the driver will take the student to his destination and report him/her in writing to the building administrator.

   Unless there is a reasonable doubt with respect to the safety and welfare of a student or students, no child shall be denied the privilege of riding a school bus to and from school on the same day of an infraction of the rules established by the Superintendent of Schools.

   The administrator will discuss the situation as soon as possible with the parent and student. If the administrator decides to revoke bus privileges the parent will be notified promptly that the child may not ride the bus. It will be the responsibility of the parent to transport the child to school during the period that the privilege of bus transportation is withdrawn. If a parent cannot provide transportation, in-school or out-of-school suspension may be substituted.
6. The Board is responsible for student safety only while the students are in the Board's custody, that is, from the time the child boards the bus and until he/she is safely discharged and across the street. Parents are responsible for the safety of the child at all other times, including the time when the student is waiting for the bus at the bus stop.
7. ~~Consolidated students~~ New Fairfield Elementary School students K-3 will be dropped off at bus stops if there is an adult or student (aged 12 or older)~~,~~ to meet the child. If there is no adult or appropriately aged student present, the child will be returned to school.

The exception to this regulation will be a child whose parent has completed a signed agreement with the building principal and Superintendent.

A mandated policy for your consideration.

Students

Educational Opportunities for Military Children

To facilitate the placement, enrollment, graduation, data collection, and provision of special services for students transferring into or out of the District because of their parents being on active duty in the U.S. Armed Services, the District supports and will implement its responsibilities as outlined in the ***Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children***. The Board of Education believes it is appropriate to remove barriers to educational success imposed on children of military families because of their parents' frequent moves and deployment.

Definitions

Children of military families means school-aged children, enrolled in kindergarten through 12th grade, in the household of an active-duty member of the uniformed service of the United States, including members of the National Guard and Reserve.

Deployment means the period one month before the service members depart from their home station on military orders, six months after return to their home station.

Education(al) records means official records, files, and data directly related to a student and maintained by the school, including, but not limited to, records encompassing all the material kept in the student's cumulative folder.

The requirements applicable to eligible students, which must be fulfilled, are listed below. Eligible students are those who are children of active-duty personnel, active-duty personnel or veterans who have been severely injured and medically discharged, and active-duty personnel who die on active duty within one year of service. Students are not eligible for the provisions of the ***Compact*** if they are children of inactive Guard or Reserves, retired personnel, veterans not included above, or U.S. Department of Defense personnel and other federal civil service employees and contract employees.

The District's responsibilities to eligible children include the following:

- Sending schools must send either official or unofficial records with the moving students, and District receiving schools must use those records for immediate enrollment and educational placement.

- Simultaneously, the receiving school must request official records, and the sending schools shall respond within 10 days with the records.

- Immunization requirements of the District may be met within 30 days from the date of enrollment (or be in progress).

Students

Educational Opportunities for Military Children (continued)

- Receiving schools must honor placement of students in all courses from the sending school. These include, but are not limited to, Honors, International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement, vocational-technical, and career pathway courses if those courses are offered in the receiving school.

- In compliance with federal law, special education students must be placed by the existing IEP with reasonable accommodations in the receiving school.

- If a child of a member of the armed forces is enrolled in a school under the jurisdiction the district, and such member has received military orders directing them from such town, or any other documents from the armed forces indicating a change of residency from such town during the school year, the child may continue to be enrolled in the school until the end of the school year while such member remains a member of the armed forces, except that any such child in grade eleven may continue to be enrolled in the school for an additional school year while such member remains a member of the armed forces

- The District will exercise, as deemed appropriate, the right to waive prerequisites for all courses and programs, while also maintaining its right to re-evaluate the student to ensure continued enrollment, as deemed appropriate.

- Students of active-duty personnel shall have additional excused absences at the discretion of the District for visitations relative to leave or deployment.

(cf. 5111 – Admission)
(cf. 5113 – Attendance and Excuses)
(cf. 5123 – Promotion/Retention)
(cf. 5125 – Student Records; Confidentiality)
(cf. 5141.3 – Health Assessments and Immunizations)
(cf. 6146 – Graduation Requirements)
(cf. 6171 – Special Education)

Students

Educational Opportunities for Military Children

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-15f Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

Public Act 25-15 An Act Concerning Various Measures Recognizing and Honoring the Military Service of the Armed Forces in Connecticut. (Section 7)

Policy adopted: NEW FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Fairfield, Connecticut

rev 11/11
rev 7/25

Sample policies are distributed for demonstration purposes only. Unless so noted, contents do not necessarily reflect official policies of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, Inc.

Students

Challenging Behavior Response Policy

The New Fairfield Board of Education (the "Board") is committed to identifying strategies to improve school climate, including, but not limited to, by responding to challenging behavior and implementing evidence and research-based interventions, including restorative practices. Restorative practices may be implemented by school employees for incidents of challenging behavior, bullying, and/or harassment in the school environment, or other forms of student conflict that is nonviolent and does not constitute a crime. Restorative practices shall not include the involvement of a school resource officer or other law enforcement official unless such challenging behavior or other conflict escalates to violence and/or constitutes a crime. In addition, the New Fairfield Public Schools (the "District") shall address challenging behavior, bullying, and harassment in accordance with the Board's Student Discipline policy and any other applicable Board policy, administrative regulations, and/or school rules.

For purposes of this policy:

- "Restorative practices" means evidence and research-based system-level practices that focus on (A) building high-quality, constructive relationships among the school community, (B) holding each student accountable for any challenging behavior, and (C) ensuring each such student has a role in repairing relationships and reintegrating into the school community.

- "Challenging behavior" means behavior that negatively impacts school climate or interferes, or is at risk of interfering, with the learning or safety of a student or the safety of a school employee.

- "Bullying" means unwanted and aggressive behavior among children in grades kindergarten to twelve, inclusive, that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. "Bullying" includes "cyberbullying", which means any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any other electronic communication.

- "School climate" means the quality and character of the school life, with a particular focus on the quality of the relationships within the school community, and which is based on patterns of people's experiences of school life and that reflects the norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching, learning, leadership practices and organizational structures within the school community.

Students

Challenging Behavior Response Policy

- "School climate improvement plan" means a building-specific plan developed by the school climate committee, in collaboration with the school climate specialist, using school climate survey data and any other relevant information, through a process that engages all members of the school community and involves such members in a series of overlapping systemic improvements, school-wide instructional practices and relational practices that prevent, identify and respond to challenging behavior, including, but not limited to, alleged bullying and harassment in the school environment.

- "School environment" means a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program, whether on or off school grounds, including at a school bus stop or on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the Board, and may include other activities, functions or programs that occur outside of a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program if bullying at or during such other activities, functions or programs negatively impacts the school environment.

District administration will implement a continuum of tiered strategies aligned to Connecticut School Climate Standards to prevent, identify, and respond to challenging behavior, bullying, and harassment. Such strategies shall include research-based interventions, including restorative practices, and may be included in each school's school climate improvement plan. These strategies and tiered responses will be reviewed annually and updated as needed by the district administrative team and district school climate coordinator.

(cf. 1110.1 – Parent Involvement)
(cf. 4131 – Staff Development)
(cf. 5114 – Suspension/Expulsion; Student Due Process)
(cf. 5131 – Conduct)
(cf. 5131.1 – Bus Conduct)
(cf. 5131.6 – Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco)
(cf. 5131.7 – Weapons and Dangerous Instruments)
(cf. 5131.8 – Out of School Grounds Misconduct)
(cf. 5131.911 – Connecticut School Climate Policy)
(cf. 5131.913 – Cyberbullying)
(cf. 5141.4 – Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect)
(cf. 5145.4 – Nondiscrimination)
(cf. 5145.5 – Sexual Harassment)

Students

Challenging Behavior Response Policy

Legal References:

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-222aa

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-222dd

Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-222jj

Policy adopted:

NEW FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Fairfield, Connecticut

New Fairfield Public Schools
District Priorities
2025-2026

September 18, 2025 DRAFT

Completed	In Process	Early Development	Anticipated / Not Yet Begun

1. Curriculum Goal		
	1.1 Continue a comprehensive curriculum review and design process, to include K-12 social studies, K-12 digital literacy, and 6-12 world language design, as well as 6-12 English Language Arts curriculum research.	
	1.2 Launch Eduplanet curriculum platform internally and externally to ensure consistency, fidelity, and sustainability of NFPS curriculum as well as communication to families and the community.	
2. Instruction Goal		
	2.1 Expand development of internal assessments and use of data protocols with internal and external assessment data to monitor student learning progress and inform differentiated instruction in the classroom.	
	2.2 Expand instructional practices that foster students' engagement, critical thinking, and inquiry, evidenced through learning walks undertaken in all schools.	

	2.3 Expand professional learning experiences that foster staff understanding of AI tools and enhance instructional opportunities with AI that deepen student critical thinking skills.	
	2.4 Build models of instructional and assessment experiences that are aligned to specific NFPS Vision of the Learner indicators to promote student goal-setting, reflection, and feedback.	
3. Special Education		
	3.1 Enhance Parent Communication & Engagement: Strengthen partnerships with families through regular communication, parent workshops, and informational sessions designed to build understanding of special education processes, IEP development, and available supports.	
	3.2 Redefine PPS Roles & Responsibilities: Clarify and realign the roles of PPS staff and leadership to ensure a cohesive, collaborative, and student-centered system of support.	
	3.3 Restructure Specialized Programs: Increase opportunities for inclusion by redesigning specialized programs and master schedules to support equitable access to rigorous, standards-based instruction in general education classrooms.	
	3.4 Improve IEP Quality & Instructional Alignment: Strengthen the development of high-quality IEPs by connecting goals to standards, expanding diagnostic tools for progress monitoring, and providing targeted professional development.	
4. Wellness Goal		
	4.1 Articulate a PreK-12 skills map to support students' social-emotional growth, as well as a vertically-aligned K-12 digital literacy skills progression that supports student wellness in a digital world.	
	4.2 Continue to enhance community and family partnerships in support of student wellness and balanced use of technology, through the NFPS Community Read, *The Anxious Generation*.	
5. Attendance		
	5.1 Continue efforts to reduce the student chronic absenteeism rate to 8% or under.	
	5.2 Partner with collective bargaining units to achieve at least a 95% staff attendance rate.	

6. Resources to Support Learning		
Finance	6.1 Develop and present a FY 27 Operational and Capital Budget request to the community that is transparent, fiscally responsible and ensures continuous improvement.	
	6.2 Manage the FY 26 Operational and Capital Budget to provide resources as planned and to address unanticipated expenses.	
	6.3 Respond to the recommendations in the Shared Financial Services Report (May 2025) to enhance the operational efficiency of the District's financial services. This work entails collaborating with the town to develop and revise Memorandum of Understanding that reflects the current operation of the shared finance department.	
Transportation	6.4 Continue to provide leadership for the design and construction of the permanent bus lot at the Consolidated site.	
Facilities	6.5 Close out the New Fairfield Elementary and High School building projects and continue to monitor large punch list items such as the elementary playground and lack of propane at the high school.	
	6.6 Construct appropriate classroom space for middle school programs: chorus, orchestra, general music and world language expansion.	
	6.7 Consolidate district offices into one location at the middle school for improved communication and support for the schools. Funding for this project will come from savings realized from capital projects and unexpended funds.	
	6.8 Upgrade the NFMS cafeteria and servery by using our food service fund.	
Human Resources	6.9 Develop a consistent filing and retrieval system for personnel records that aligns with Connecticut State retention guidelines to maximize storage space, reduce reliance on physical files, and improve accessibility of retained records through the district's Papervision software.	
	6.10 Optimize the use of Frontline Absence Management software to monitor attendance patterns, support district goals for employee attendance, and ensure compliance with evolving Connecticut leave laws incorporating mandated changes to CT Paid Sick Leave, CT FMLA and providing administrators with data as needed.	

	6.11 Revamp the district's mandatory training systems for new hires and current employees to eliminate redundancy, ensure clarity, and improve compliance tracking via centralized training modules, enhance efficiency, and strengthen oversight of required certifications and training.	
Technology	6.12 Further the streamlining of access to digital tools across the district, with a focus on the middle school and upper elementary buildings, bringing them further into alignment. Smartboard, document cams, speakers replacement plan.	
	6.13 Support curricular alignment in STEAM initiatives, with a focus on Robotics and Digital Media synergies.	