Board of Education Regular Meeting

Thursday, December 18, 2025 7:00 PM
BOE Meeting Access: BOE (12/18/25 at 7 p.m.) Web: https://zoom.us/j/92110632117 Dial In: (929) 205-6099 Meeting ID: 921 1063 2117, 3 Brush Hill Road, New Fairfield, CT 06812

I. **CALL TO ORDER**

II. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

III. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

III.A. December 1, 2025 - Special

III.B. December 4, 2025 - Regular

IV. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

V. **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]***

VI. **BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS**

VI.A. Chairman's Report - BOE Subcommittee and Liaison Assignments

VI.B. Superintendent's Report

VI.C. Student Representatives' Report

VI.D. Committee Reports

VI.D.1. Business Operations/Resource Management *(Greg Flanagan)*

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

VI.E. Liaison Reports

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

VI.E.2. Parks and Recreation Committee *(K. LaTourette, G. Flanagan)*

VII. **INFORMATION ITEMS**

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

VII.B. Special Education Program and Funding Overview

VII.C. Board of Education Policies *(Second Reading)*

VII.C.1. Bylaw 9311 – Formulation, Adoption, Amendment of Policies

VII.C.2. Bylaw 9312 – Formulation, Adoption, Amendment of Bylaws

VII.C.3. Bylaw 9313 – Formulation, Adoption, Amendment of Administrative Regulations

VIII. **ACTION ITEMS**

VIII.A. Personnel Report

VIII.B. Discussion and Possible Action on Facilities and Property Naming

VIII.C. New Fairfield High School Graduation 2026

VIII.D. Board of Education Policy

VIII.D.1. Policy 1321.2 – Public Videotaping of Educational Activity

VIII.E. ELC Tuition

VIII.F. Central Office Relocation Update

IX. **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]***

X. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

XI. **BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

XII. **ADJOURNMENT**

NEW FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING
December 1, 2025

Board Members Present: Kathy Baker, Amy Johnson, Kim LaTourette, Samantha Mannion

Time Meeting Called to Order: 4:09 p.m.

Motion for Executive Session: Motion to convene in executive session at 4:09 p.m. for the purpose of discussing a confidential student matter made by Samantha Mannion, seconded by Amy Johnson. Approved 4-0.

> Move that the Board enter executive session to discuss a confidential student matter. Only those invited by the Board to attend may be present in the executive session. The Board invites the following individuals into the executive session:
>
> Dr. Kenneth G. Craw, Superintendent;
> Dr. Kristine Woleck, Assistant Superintendent of Schools
> Allyson Story, New Fairfield Elementary School Principal;
> Joseph McQuade, Attorney;
> Elisa Bartlett, Attorney;
> Parent/Guardian of the student who is the subject of the hearing;
> Any witnesses whose testimony is necessary for this matter.

Motion to Exit Executive Session: Motion to exit executive session made at 5:47 p.m. by Samantha Mannion, seconded by Amy Johnson. Approved 4-0.

At 5:47 p.m., Samantha Mannion made the following motion in open session:

> Move that pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-186, the New Fairfield Board of Education finds that the student discussed in executive session is not a resident in the Town of New Fairfield and, as such, is not entitled to school accommodations as provided by the New Fairfield Board of Education.
>
> The Board authorizes the Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent and Attorney Joseph McQuade to communicate in writing the Board's decision and the reasons therefore, consistent with the Board's executive session discussion, to the parent/guardian who requested this hearing.

Amy Johnson seconded. Approved 4-0.

Samantha Mannion moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:48 p.m., seconded by Amy Johnson. Motion approved 4-0.

NEW FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION
NEW FAIRFIELD, CT

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a regular meeting on Thursday, December 4, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. in the New Fairfield Community Room, 33 Route 37, New Fairfield, CT.

MINUTES – December 4, 2025

PRESENT: Dominic Cipollone (Chairman), Kathy Baker, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Peggy Katkocin, and Samantha Mannion

ABSENT: Sue Huwer, Kimberly LaTourette, and Ed Sbordone

ALSO PRESENT: Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Dr. Kristine Woleck, High School Principal James D'Amico, Middle School Principal Karen Gruetzner, Elementary School Principal Allyson Story, Director of Business and Operations Carrie DePuy, Director of Pupil Personnel Services Monika Krepsztul and BOF member Rick Regan

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Dominic Cipollone called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ELECTION OF NEW BOARD OF EDUCATION OFFICERS

Amy Johnson nominated Dominic Cipollone to serve as Chairman of the Board of Education.
MOTION: Samantha Mannion made a motion to close the nominations for Chairman of the BOE. Peggy Katkocin seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR OF CLOSING THE NOMINATIONS:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Peggy Katkocin, and Samantha Mannion. **IN FAVOR OF DOMINIC CIPOLLONE AS CHAIRMAN:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Peggy Katkocin, and Samantha Mannion

Kathy Baker nominated Samantha Mannion to serve as Vice Chairman of the Board of Education.
MOTION: Greg Flanagan made a motion to close the nominations for Vice Chairman of the BOE. Kathy Baker seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR OF CLOSING THE NOMINATIONS:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Peggy Katkocin, and Samantha Mannion. **IN FAVOR OF SAMANTHA MANNION AS VICE CHAIRMAN:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Peggy Katkocin, and Samantha Mannion

Samantha Mannion nominated Kimberly LaTourette to serve as Secretary of the Board of Education.
MOTION: Peggy Katkocin made a motion to close the nominations for Secretary of the BOE. Dominic Cipollone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR OF CLOSING THE NOMINATIONS:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Peggy Katkocin, and Samantha Mannion. **IN FAVOR OF KIMBERLY LaTOURETTE AS SECRETARY:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Peggy Katkocin, and Samantha Mannion

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. November 6, 2025 - regular meeting - Approved by consensus.

V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA - Approved by consensus.

VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Eric Alviti, Frank Rizzo, Larry Roccamo, and Pat Toth all spoke in support of renaming the baseball field at New Fairfield High School "Garbowski Field" in honor of Michael and Joe Garbowski. Eric Alviti gave some examples of the amount of time the Garbowski family has volunteered for the baseball program. He spoke of the pride that players have when a field is named in honor of someone.

Chairman Dominic Cipollone read an email from New Fairfield Baseball President Ken Bennett also in support of renaming the baseball field Garbowski field.

VII. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. Chairman's Report - Dominic Cipollone thanked the rest of the Board for their support in reelecting him Chairman.

B. Superintendent's Report - Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Dr. Kristine Woleck gave a report in Dr. Craw's absence. She spoke of the following upcoming events:

- Many Holiday concerts are coming up at the schools.
- Kindergarten registration began on December 1st.
- There have been two discussion sessions for the book *The Anxious Generation*. The next one will be held on Monday, December 8th at 6:30 p.m. and is open to all families of PreK- Grade 12 students.

C. Student Representative Report

Senior Representative Ella Skogstrom spoke of the following:

- Western Connecticut State University held an onsite admission day on November 21st. There will be an onsite admission day for Naugatuck Valley Connecticut Community College on December 9th.
- The National Honor Society held a Blood Drive on December 3rd.
- The yearbook is on sale until January 1st. The deadline for advertisements is January 9th.
- The Post Grad committee is creating a gratitude wall. Messages can be purchased for a price of $3 for one and $5 for two. Proceeds will help defray the cost of Post Grad activities.
- There will be an upcoming Model UN Conference in Hartford.
- Mid-terms will be held from January 15th to 21st. The second quarter will end on January 23rd.
- The National Honor Society is offering peer tutoring.

Junior Representative Hailey Lofaro spoke of the following:

- The Veterans' Day ceremony was held on November 11th.
- The DECA Powder Puff game was held on November 21st.
- Over 600 food and personal care items were collected at the DECA Food Drive.
- All Payments for the Junior Class trip to Washington DC are due by February 2nd.
- There will be a Chamber Singers, Wind Ensemble and Jazz Band concert on December 10th. The Strings concert will be held on December 18th.

D. Committee Reports

1. Curriculum - Dominic Cipollone noted that this subcommittee met and discussed new State Standards for Social Studies. There is a 5-year plan for curriculum.

2. Policy - Samantha Mannion noted that this subcommittee met on November 17th and discussed the policy regarding the facilities and specifically the fields. A new draft of this policy will be discussed at the next meeting. They further discussed the process for approving policies and will amend bylaws so that three readings will no longer be required for approving a policy.

3. Special Education Ad Hoc - Kathy Baker noted that this committee met tonight and discussed literacy, and a requirement by the State that mandates the district to evaluate all children to see if they are in need of services. There will be an Information Night for families on February 18th about transitions from one school to the next and the transition beyond high school. There will be a Parent Meeting on January 28th to help families understand the IEP Process and another meeting on May 21st to discuss technology that supports students in the district.

E. Liaison Reports

1. Board of Finance - Greg Flanagan noted the BOF met on November 19th and elected Wes Marsh to serve as the Chairman. They adopted a Medical Fund Reserve policy and approved the calendar of meetings for 2026. A BOE liaison will be appointed at the next regular meeting.

2. Parks and Rec Commission - Greg Flanagan noted that the Parks and Rec Commission met on November 10th and discussed the process for demolition for the Snack Shack at the Town Beach. They will decide on price increases for Day Camp and boat slips at the next regular meeting on December 8th.

VIII. INFORMATION ITEMS

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

Director of Business and Operations Carrie DePuy noted that the propane issue is ongoing. Colliers and the PBC are working on next steps for this. The Bus Lot issue will be discussed at the Planning Commission meeting and will go to a public meeting in January. It is hopeful that this will go out to bid in the spring. The sunshades are installed at the playground at the Elementary School. She thanked the PTO for this donation.

B. EduPlant Launch

Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Dr. Kristine Woleck gave a presentation on EduPlant and how it helps define the vision of a learner and give a blueprint for curriculum. This program gives a detailed map of the standards and allows users to view the specifics of what is taught in various subjects.

C. Baseball Field Recognition

Dominic Cipollone thanked all the residents who made comments about renaming the Baseball Field. He spoke of the options available to honor individuals. He noted that a decision will be made at the next regular BOE meeting.

D. Board of Education Policy *(Second Reading)*

1. Policy 1321.2 - Public Videotaping of Educational activity

E. Board of Education Policies (*First Reading*)

1. Bylaw 9311 - Formulation, Adoption, Amendment of Policies
2. Bylaw 9312 - Formulation, Adoption, Amendment of Bylaws
3. Bylaw 9313 - Formulation, Adoption, Amendment of Administrative Regulations

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 December 1, 2025, as recommended by the administration. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion.
IN FAVOR: Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Peggy Katkocin, and Samantha Mannion.

B. BOE 2026 Regular Meeting Dates

MOTION: Kathy Baker made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the 2026 Board of Education Regular and BOE Subcommittee meeting dates as presented. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion.
IN FAVOR: Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Peggy Katkocin, and Samantha Mannion.

C. NFEA Retirement Incentive

MOTION: Kathy Baker made a motion to recommend to the full Board approval to award the retirement settlement bonus per Article 48 for those eligible teachers who, by Monday, February 2, 2026, tender their resignation to be effective at the end of the school year. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion.
IN FAVOR: Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Peggy Katkocin, and Samantha Mannion.

X. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - None

XI. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

There was a discussion of possibly having Special Education Ad Hoc meetings via Zoom to allow for more families to attend. This will be discussed further at a future meeting.

XII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Greg Flanagan spoke in support of renaming the Baseball Field Garbowski Field and spoke of the positive impact this would have on the players.
Peggy Katkocin spoke in support of renaming the Baseball Field Garbowski Field.
Dominic Cipollone welcomed Peggy Katkocin back to the Board of Education.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Dominic Cipollone made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:04 p.m. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Peggy Katkocin, and Samantha Mannion.

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne Kloos

Special Education Update:

Mandated Services and Budget Implications

December 18, 2025

Agenda

- Special education legal obligations
- Enrollment trends
- Out-of-district placement trends
- FY 26 budget status update
- Excess Cost reimbursement overview
- FY 27 planning considerations

Legal Obligations Under IDEA

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

Free, appropriate special education and related services designed to provide **meaningful educational benefit** for every eligible student.

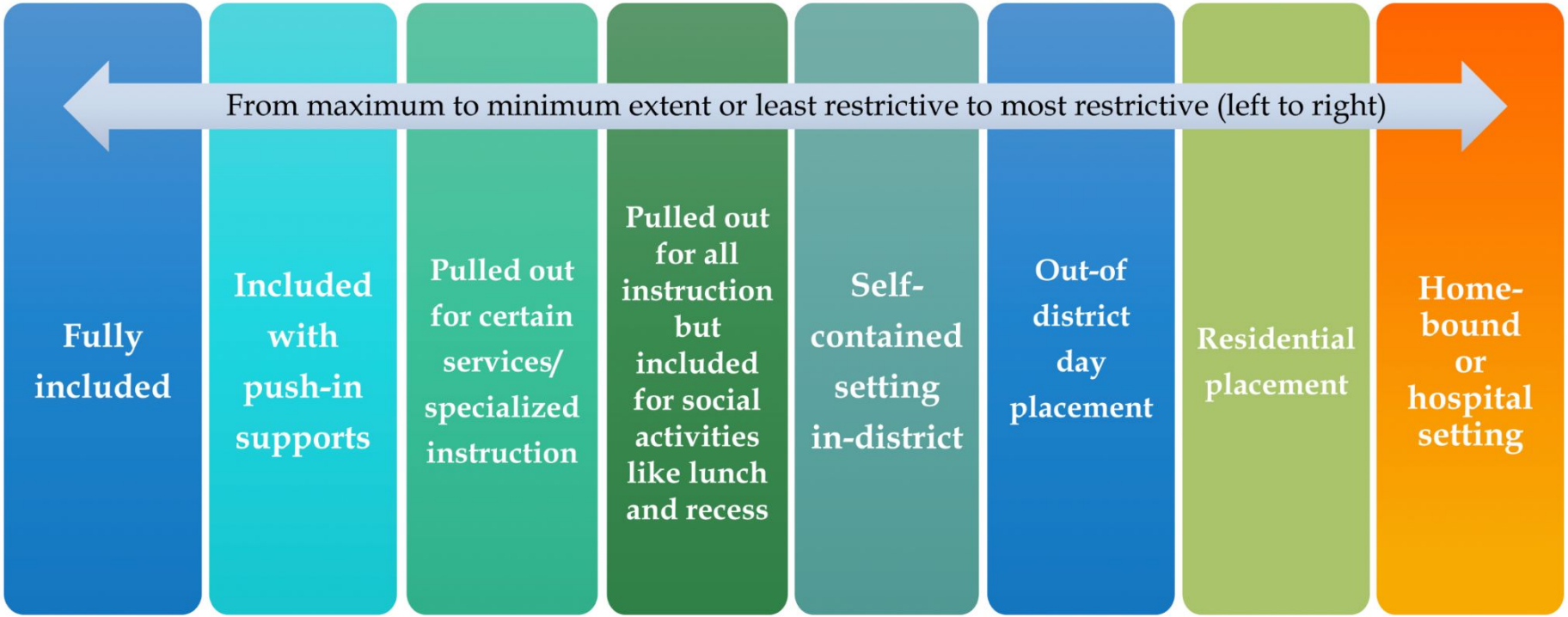
Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Educate students with non-disabled peers to the **maximum extent appropriate** for that individual student.

Continuum of Services

A full range of placements and supports to meet individualized student needs

Continuum of Services



In-District Capacity

- In-district programs provide **appropriate supports within the district**
    a. Integrated Life Skills (ILS) Program
    b. Behavioral Emotional Support Team (BEST) Services
    c. STRIDES transition program (ages 18-22)

- Educating students in-district aligns with **family preference** and **student stability**

- In-district options may reduce the need for **out-of-district placements** when appropriate

NFPS Special Education Trends

School Year	K-12 Enrollment (Oct.1)	PK-12 SPED	K-12 SPED	NF K-12 Prevalence Rate	CT K-12 Prevalence Rate	Total Outplacements
2021-22	2,014	350	309	15.3%	16.3%	21
2022-23	2,039	378	321	15.7%	16.7%	18
2023-24	2,070	395	338	16.3%	17.3%	12
2024-25	2,039	402	349	17.1%	17.8%	14
2025-26	2,014	403	370	18.4%	N/A	19

Outplacement Considerations

An outplacement is considered only when a student's needs **cannot be met within the larger school environment**, after exploring the full range of in-district services

<u>Primary factors for consideration:</u>

- **Behavioral Needs**

  Intensive supports required to maintain safety and meaningful learning

- **Clinical Needs**

  Mental health, medical, or specialized therapeutic requirements

Current Outplacement Exceptionality Categories

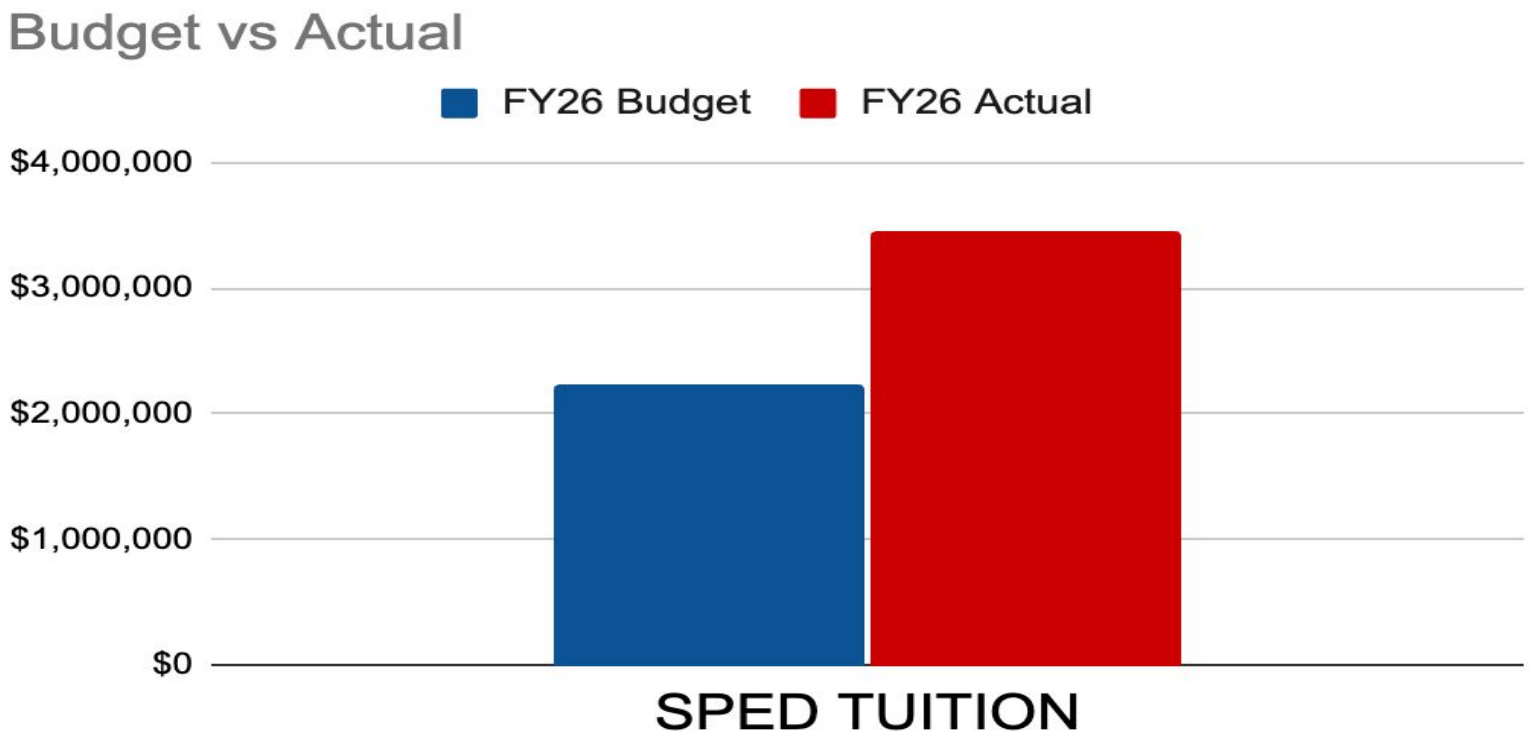
New Fairfield Public Schools
Total Outplacements: 19 Students

New Fairfield students educated in specialized out-of-district programs are identified with the following disabilities:

- Autism
- Emotional Disability
- Intellectual Disability
- Multiple Disabilities

FY 26 Special Education Budget Status

($1,224,885)



Unanticipated Budget Needs

Contributing factors include:

- Unanticipated outplacements
- Complexity of needs for students requiring outplacements
- Rising costs of outplacements and services

Excess Cost Eligible Expenses

Definition:

Excess Cost = special education expenses beyond 4.5x Per Pupil Expenditure

Examples of Excess Cost Expenses:

- Special education tuition
- Transportation
- 1:1 paraeducators
- Related services (speech, OT/PT)

Excess Cost Reimbursement

How Reimbursement is Determined

Example:
Total Special Education Cost……**$200,000**
(1 outplacement - tuition & transportation)

Only applies to costs exceeding:
4.5× Per Pupil Expenditure…..……..**($106,670)**

Eligible Excess Cost:.....$93,330

Reimbursement prorated based on state ranking and available funding.

NF Reimbursement rate (68%)
(rate dependent on available state funding)

NF State Rank = 51st (Wealthiest Tier 1-58)

Reimbursements processed in February & May

Eligible Excess Cost:.....$93,330

NF Reimbursement (68%).....$63,464

Net District Cost

District Cost Beyond Excess Cost Reimbursement

Total Special Education Cost: ……$200,000

Less State Reimbursement:.....;.....($63,464)

Net District Cost:.....$136,536

Excess Cost reimbursement covers only a fraction of total special education costs.

Estimated FY 26
Special Education Budget Shortfall

Total Unanticipated Special Education Costs:.....$1,224,885

Less Estimated State Reimbursement:.....$768,747

Estimated Shortfall:.....$456,138

Mitigation Strategies

- Ongoing monitoring of special education budget and Excess Cost reimbursement
- Continued implementation of FY 26 budget controls
- Explore and pilot programmatic enhancements to expand in-district options

FY 27 Budget Outlook

- FY 26 reflects a **$1.2M special education overage**, driven largely by increased outplacements and services.
- Many outplacement and service costs are **ongoing and multi-year**, not one-time expenses**.**
- State Excess Cost reimbursement will offset only a **portion** of these costs.
- If current trends continue, the **FY 27 budget** will reflect a continuation of these costs.

Questions & Discussion

Bylaws of the Board

Formulation, Adoption, Amendment of Policies

The New Fairfield Board of Education considers policy development its chief function, along with periodic review through its policies. It is through the development and adoption of written policies that the Board shall exercise its leadership in the operation of the school system; and it is through study and evaluation of reports concerning the execution of its written policies that the Board shall exercise its control over school operations.

It is the intent of the Board to develop policies and put them in writing so that they serve as guidelines and goals for the successful and efficient functioning of the public schools.

Written policies serve as guidelines for the discretionary actions of all district employees and as a source of information and guidance for all persons who are interested in, and affected by, the district schools.

Changes in needs, conditions, purposes, and objectives will require revisions, deletions, and additions to the policies of present and future Boards. Thus policy development is an ongoing process.

Policy Adoption

Adoption of new policies and changing existing policies are solely the responsibility of the Board.

Policies will, barring emergencies, be adopted or amended after consideration ~~for at least thirty days~~ for not less than three (3) weeks by the Board of Education. The time between Board meetings shall permit further study, and also provide an opportunity for interested parties to be heard on the matter. Regarding matters of unusual urgency, the Board may waive the above procedures and take immediate action to adopt or revise existing policies. When such immediate action is necessary, the Superintendent shall inform interested groups or individuals as to the reasons for the waiver for this procedure.

The agenda and minutes shall be marked to indicate policy matters. The formal adoption of policies shall be by majority vote of the Board of Education in attendance and the action shall be recorded in the minutes of the Board of Education. Only those written statements so adopted and so recorded shall be regarded as official policy.

Bylaws of the Board

Formulation, Adoption, Amendment of Policies (continued)

Policy Dissemination

The Superintendent is directed to establish and maintain an orderly plan for making pertinent policies of the Board known to staff members, students, and others affected by them.

The Superintendent shall arrange to disseminate to staff members all new policies that affect them and their work and shall also provide easy access to an up-to-date policy collection for all employees of the school system and members of the Board.

The Board's policy manual shall be considered a public record and shall be open for inspection at the Board offices.

Reference: Robert's Rules of Order, Revised

Bylaw adopted by the Board: June 23, 1999
Bylaw readopted: May 3, 2007
Bylaw revised: April 1, 2021
Bylaw revised:

NEW FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Fairfield, Connecticut

Bylaws of the Board

Formulation, Adoption, Amendment of Bylaws

Proposed new bylaws and suggested amendments to or revision of existing bylaws must be adopted by a majority vote of all members of the Board of Education. This adoption will usually occur during the second of two regularly scheduled meetings of the Board of Education, not less than three (3) weeks apart ~~that four (4) weeks apart~~ in the calls for which meeting the proposed additions, amendments, or revisions shall have been described in writing.

Reference: Robert's Rules of Order

Bylaw adopted by the Board: June 23, 1999
Bylaw readopted: May 3, 2007
Bylaw revised: April 1, 2021
Bylaw revised:

NEW FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Fairfield, Connecticut

Bylaws of the Board

Formulation, Adoption, Amendment of Administrative Regulations

The Board of Education does not adopt administrative regulations unless specifically required to do so by law, or unless requested to do so by the Superintendent. Adoption and amendment of such Board of Education-adopted regulations shall be by the same procedure as that specified for policies in 9311.

The Board of Education reserves the right to review and direct revisions of administrative regulations should they, in the Board of Education's judgment, be inconsistent with the policies adopted by the Board of Education.

Bylaw adopted by the Board: June 23, 1999
Bylaw readopted: May 3, 2007
Bylaw reviewed: April 1, 2021
Bylaw reviewed:

NEW FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Fairfield, Connecticut

NEW FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
3 Brush Hill Road, New Fairfield, CT 06812
Fax: 203-312-5609 www.newfairfieldschools.org

Kenneth G. Craw, Ed.D., Superintendent
203-312-5770

December 17, 2025

Dear New Fairfield Board of Education Members,

Re: Framework for Determining Appropriate Levels of Athletic Recognition

This document has been developed to establish benchmarks for evaluating whether an individual's contributions to New Fairfield High School warrant recognition through a facility naming. Its purpose is to align such decisions with Board of Education Policy 7000 and the district's past practice, ensuring that recognition is applied thoughtfully, consistently and with respect for precedent.

For your reference, the criteria for the Hall of Honor have already been clearly defined in the New Fairfield Rebels Hall of Honor Bylaws.

Included in this letter are:

- Key criteria for evaluating athletic recognition requests;
- An athletic recognition rubric comparing plaque vs. field naming;
- Summaries of historical examples of past recognitions;
- Summaries of the Garbowski family contributions;
- Application of criteria and rubric to the current request; and
- Appendix A: Full résumés for Marty Morgan, John Zinser, Mike Garbowski, and Joe Garbowski.

Over the years, the Board and administration have considered several forms of honors, such as field namings, plaques and Hall of Honor inductions, and each pathway reflects a different level of impact and visibility. By compiling examples of past recognitions, this document is intended to serve as a practical guide to help the Board distinguish when a request rises to the level of naming a school facility and when a plaque or alternate form of recognition may be more appropriate in special circumstances.

The accomplishments of individuals such as Coach Marty Morgan and Coach John Zinser demonstrate the types of significant contributions that have historically supported field naming or plaque recognition. Marty Morgan's decades-long record of competitive success and community impact provides precedent for naming an outdoor athletic facility, while the commemorative plaque honoring Coach Zinser illustrates how the district has recognized significant contributions short of naming a field. These examples provide a benchmark against which future requests, including the current proposal regarding the NFHS Baseball Field, can be evaluated.

By grounding its decisions in Policy 7000(d)(3) and established patterns of past practice, the Board can ensure that all naming and recognition requests are considered equitably and in a

manner that reflects the district's values. Ultimately, this document is intended to support that process by offering a clear, consistent framework for determining the level of recognition warranted in each case.

Key Criteria Reflected in Prior NFHS Recognitions

Coaching Longevity
- Decades of strong leadership aligned with the district's mission
- Consistent high-level winning seasons
- Builds lasting, exemplary program culture

Team Accomplishments
- Competitive success (e.g., conference championships, state championships)
- Sustained program excellence over multiple seasons
- Notable milestones or historic team achievements

Player Development
- Demonstrated impact on athlete growth over time
- Number of athletes advancing to college programs
- Development of All-State, All-American or Academic All-American players

Coaching Accomplishments
- Local, state or regional coaching awards
- Significant influence on the sport at the district/state/national level
- Contributions to the broader athletic community or sport

Community Involvement
- Founding or growing youth programs
- Volunteer work supporting NFPS athletic facilities or school initiatives
- Engagement that positively influences the school community

NFHS Playing Accomplishments (if applicable)
- Significant athletic achievements as a NFHS student-athlete
- Records, awards or leadership roles earned while playing at NFHS
- Contributions to the legacy, culture or tradition of the program as a former player

Athletic Recognition Rubric

Criterion	Plaque Recognition	Field Naming
Coaching Longevity/ Program Success	Consistently active in the program over multiple seasons; good record of success; positive team environment	Decades of leadership with sustained winning; program stability; consistent high-level performance across many years; lasting, exemplary team culture
Team Accomplishments	Some championships or notable achievements; competitive seasons of moderate success	Long-term dominance; multiple conference/state championships; historic team milestones; undefeated or perfect seasons
Player Development	Some All-State, All-American, or college-level players developed	Significant development of athletes; many All-State/All-American players; strong record of athletes advancing to college programs or professional levels
Coaching Accomplishments	Local or regional awards; meaningful contributions to program culture	State/national awards; firsts in program history; long-term leadership and innovation; significant influence on the sport at the district/state/national level
Community Involvement	Consistent leadership and contributions; supportive presence; volunteer contributions that positively influence the program	Transformative leadership and significant contributions; founding programs; leading major volunteer initiatives or creating lasting enhancements to the school community
NFHS Playing Accomplishments (if applicable)	Notable achievements; local or regional awards	Exceptional achievements; state or national recognition; leadership as a player; significant contributions to program culture

Summary of Historical Precedents

Field Naming Recognition - Marty Morgan Turf Field (2021)

- Boys Lacrosse Coach, 1993 - present
- 406-202 record
- .670 winning percentage
- Inducted NFHS Hall of Honor 2019
- Multiple conference and state championships, perfect seasons and notable player development
- Significant community involvement, founding youth programs and improving athletic facilities

Plaque Recognition - John Zinser, NFHS Football Coach

- Founder and first varsity football head coach, 1974-1982
- Led team to first football title, developed athletes who advanced to college and coaching
- Recognized for exemplary leadership, mentoring and long-term impact on program culture

Summary of Current Request - NFHS Baseball Field

Mike Garbowski - Volunteer Assistant Coach (1993–2005; 2009–2024)

- Supported SWC Champions 1998 & 2016
- 20 All-State players coached
- CHSCA Assistant Coach of the Year 2023

Joe Garbowski - Varsity Head Coach (2002; 2009–Present)

- Record: 185 Wins and 154 Losses
- Winning Percentage .546
- SWC Champions 2016
- Inducted into the NFHS Hall of Fame 1998
- 13 All-State players; multiple collegiate athletes; two MLB draftees
- Labor and enhancements to athletic facilities
- Significant involvement in New Fairfield Youth Baseball as a Board Member
- As a player himself, multiple All-State selections; All-American Honorable Mention

Application of Key Criteria to the Garbowski Supporters' Request

When applying the district's established criteria and historical precedents to the current request, it is important for the Board to distinguish between the types of contributions that have traditionally supported field naming and those that are better aligned with plaque recognition. The central question before the Board is whether they have reached the historic benchmarks that have previously justified naming an athletic field.

Additionally, supporters of the request are advocating for the field to be named after the **Garbowski Family**. This raises an additional question for the Board:

If the Board determines that field naming is warranted, would the recognition honor the Garbowski family as a whole, or should it specifically reflect the accomplishments of the varsity head coach, Joe Garbowski, whose work currently drives the program?

This distinction is important because past precedents have focused recognition on individuals whose professional careers and achievements reached the highest levels of program impact over many decades.

Benchmarking against precedent:

- **Field Naming:** Reserved for varsity head coaches with decades of leadership, multiple state championships, high-level player development, and extensive community impact (e.g., Marty Morgan).

- **Plaque Recognition:** Honors substantial contributions without naming a facility (e.g., John Zinser, volunteer or foundational coaches).

Potential recognition pathways (in no particular order):

- **Plaque for Mike Garbowski:** Honors decades of volunteer service and mentorship.

- **Combined Family Recognition Plaque:** Could recognize past contributions (Mike) and ongoing contributions (Joe), leading to enhancements to the baseball program.

- **Field Naming:** The Board may choose to (1) recognize the Garbowski family with a field naming, or (2) solely recognize Joe Garbowski's accomplishments with a field naming, or (3) he could be eligible for a field naming in the future after further historic achievements as the varsity head coach.

Final Note

I hope this information provides the Board, in its governance role, with a clear framework for evaluating the current request and for maintaining consistency with past practice and Policy 7000. Please feel free to reach out with any questions or if further clarification would be helpful.

Sincerely,

Kenneth G. Craw

Kenneth G. Craw, Ed. D.

Appendix A - Full Résumés

Field Naming Recognition
Location: Marty Morgan Turf Field
Date: 2021

Marty Morgan, NFHS Boys Lacrosse Coach

- 1993 to present
- Record: 406 Wins and 202 Losses
- .670% winning percentage
- NFHS Athletics Hall of Honor, Inducted 2019

Team Accomplishments

- 8 SWC Champions: 2004, 2008, 2010, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021*, 2025*
- 5 State Champions
    - Class S - 2008, 2024* & 2025*
    - Class M - 2018 & 2019
- 5 SWC Sportsmanship Awards: 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015
- Achieved 2 Perfect Seasons:
    - 23-0 in 2008
    - 22-0 in 2018
- Connecticut High School Team of the Year 2018

Player Development

- 71 All-State First Team Players
- 12 All-American Players
- 3 Academic All-Americans
- 1 Connecticut High School Coaches Association (CHSCA) Player of the Year

Coaching Accomplishments

- First and Only Boys Varsity Lacrosse Coach in NFHS History
- Class S Coach of the Year - 2008
- Western Connecticut Lacrosse Officials Association; Coach of the Year - 2008
- US Lacrosse Growing the Game Award - 2009
- CHSCA; Coach of the Year - 2015
- Class M Coach of the Year - 2018
- CHSCA Class S/M Coach of the Year - 2025*

Community Involvement

- Founder and President of New Fairfield Youth Lacrosse: 1992 - present
- Donating labor, time and equipment to create and enhance the athletic facilities at New Fairfield High School

*Denotes earned after field naming

Plaque Recognition
Location: Stadium Field
Date: 2000

John Zinser, NFHS Football Coach

- Founder and first Varsity Head Coach of the NFHS Football Program
- Coached from 1974 - 1982

Team Accomplishments

- Led the Rebels to their first football title
- Western Connecticut Conference; Wild Division Champions - 1981

Player Development

- John was instrumental in guiding many student athletes into playing college football.
- Some of these athletes eventually became coaches as well, most notably Richard Bisaccia of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.
- All of John's sons had outstanding college football careers - John and Douglas at the University of Pennsylvania, and Scott at Western Connecticut State University.

Coaching Accomplishments

- John Zinser served as a positive role model for his players as well as other coaches in New Fairfield.
- John truly loved the game of football and he coached with exuberance and passion. He inspired his players to have great pride in being "New Fairfield Rebels."
- After John's coaching career at New Fairfield, he served as an Assistant Football Coach at Wesleyan University and Western Connecticut State University.

Naming Request
NFHS Baseball Field
Date Proposed - December 2025

Proposed Recognition for Mike Garbowski, Volunteer

- Volunteer Assistant Baseball Coach
    - 1993-2005
    - 2009-2024
    - (Took a hiatus from 2005-2008 for medical reasons)

Team Accomplishments

- SWC Champions 1998 & 2016

Player Development

- Coached 20 All-State Players 1993-2024

Coaching Accomplishments

- CHSCA Assistant Coach of the Year - 2023

Naming Request
NFHS Baseball Field
Date Proposed - December 2025

Proposed Recognition for Joe Garbowski, Current NFHS Baseball Coach

- Inducted NFHS Athletic Hall of Honor - 1998
- Varsity Baseball Coach
    - 2002
    - 2009 - Present
- Record: 185 Wins and 154 Losses
- Winning Percentage .546

Team Accomplishments

- SWC Champions 2016

Player Development

- Has coached 13 All-State Players.
- Numerous players have gone on to play at all collegiate levels. This includes multiple Division 1 players.
- Coached two players selected in the MLB Draft. (Hickey ‘02 & Quinn ‘21)

Community Involvement

- Donated countless hours of labor to the maintenance of the New Fairfield HIgh School Baseball Field.
- Has been instrumental in countless upgrades to the facilities over the last 25 years.
- Board Member heavily involved in New Fairfield Youth Baseball (Travel Commissioner).

Playing Accomplishments

- **Sophomore (1993)**
    - All-WCC Utility Player
    - All-State Class L Catcher
- **Junior (1994)**
    - All-WCC Catcher
    - All-State Class M Catcher
- **Senior (1995)**
    - All-State Catcher
    - All-Area News Times 1st Team Catcher
    - All-American U.S.A. Today Honorable Mention

Community Relations

Public Videotaping ~~of Educational Activity~~

The Board of Education (Board) hereby establishes limits on the use of recording equipment in order to minimize disruption and protect instructional time essential to improving student achievement. Any recording activity, even activity permitted under this policy, will be prohibited if the activity creates a disruption to the education process, or creates a safety and security risk. If an individual is unsure whether videotaping is permitted in a particular situation, they are encouraged to consult with a building administrator in advance.

Definitions

Visual Recording*:* Registering visual images on film, tape, digitally or by other mechanical or electronic means.

Audio Recording*:* Registering sounds on tape, digitally or by other mechanical or electronic means.

Outside Entity: Any individual, group, organization or corporation other than the administration, officers, staff or students of the District or individuals authorized to act on behalf of the District.

Recording by Outside Entities

The Board prohibits the use of video or audio recording equipment on District property or at District activities by outside entities without permission from the Superintendent or his/her designee unless authorized by law.

This prohibition shall not apply to:

1. Performances or activities to which the general public is invited, such as athletic competitions, concerts and plays.
2. Recording of staff for the sole purpose of professional training or development.
3. Open meetings of the Board or committees appointed by or at the direction of the Board.
4. Outside entities, including student-initiated groups, using or renting District facilities in accordance with Board policies and established administrative procedures.

Recording by District Personnel

The District may make audio or visual recordings to provide security, to maintain order, for professional staff development use or for other purposes related to furthering the educational mission of the District. This may include the use of video equipment in school buildings and on District transportation. No recording equipment will be placed in areas of the building where the occupant would have a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as restroom facilities or locker rooms. Recordings by and on behalf of District personnel that include students and are considered student records will be maintained in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and other applicable laws.

Community Relations

Public Videotaping ~~of Educational Activity~~ (continued)

Recording by Students

The District limits the use of video or audio recording equipment on District property or at District activities by students unless:

1. Required by a school-sponsored class or activity.
2. At performances or activities to which the general public is invited such as athletic competitions, concerts and plays.
3. At open meetings of the Board of Education or committees appointed by or at the direction of the Board.
4. As otherwise permitted by the Building Principal or classroom teacher.

Recording of Meetings

The Board of Education recognizes a parent's/guardian's right to record a PPT meeting held pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

The Board prohibits the use of audio, video, or other recording devices at other meetings held between District employees and parents/guardians. Exceptions to this prohibition will be made only in accordance with Board policy and law. Requests for such exceptions must be made within a reasonable period of time prior to the scheduled meetings. This prohibition does not apply to conversations held within view of District security cameras or devices.

(cf. 1112 – News/Media Relationships)
(cf. 1112.6 – Video Taping of Staff/Students)
(cf. 5125 – Student Records; Confidentiality)
(cf. 5131.11 – Video Cameras on School Buses)
(cf. 5131.111 – Video Surveillance)
(cf. 9320 – Board Meetings)
(cf. 9322 – Public and Executive Sessions)
(cf. 9326 – Taping of Meetings)

Legal Reference: The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. §§1400-1487, 34 C.F.R. Part 300

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. §1232g 34 C.F.R. Part 99

Policy adopted: November 17, 2011
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Policy revised:

NEW FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Fairfield, Connecticut