

Board of Education Regular Meeting

Thursday, February 5, 2026 7:00 PM

New Fairfield Community Room, 33 Route 37, New Fairfield, CT. In the event of inclement weather, this meeting will change to remote and a virtual link will be provided on our website and distributed. , 3 Brush Hill Road, New Fairfield, CT 06812

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

III.A. January 15, 2026 - Regular

III.B. January 20, 2026 - Special

III.C. January 21, 2026 – Special

III.D. January 27, 2026 – Special

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. ACTION ITEM

VI.A. Discussion and Possible Action on FY 2026-27
Operating Budget and Capital Budget

VII. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

VII.A. Chairman's Report

VII.B. Superintendent's Report

VII.C. Student Representatives' Report

VII.D. Committee Reports

VII.D.1. Policy (*Samantha Mannion*)

VII.D.2. Special Education Ad Hoc (*Kim LaTourette*)

VII.E. Liaison Reports

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

VIII. **INFORMATION ITEMS**

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

VIII.A.1. Propane Update

VIII.A.2. Bus Lot Update

VIII.B. Board of Education Policy (*First Reading*)

VIII.B.1. Policy 6161.12 – Library Collection Development
and Maintenance, and Library Displays and Programs, and
Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy

IX. **ACTION ITEMS**

IX.A. Personnel Report

IX.B.

Board of Education Policy Suspension of the Rules
[referring to Policy 3542.43]

IX.B.1. Policy 3542.43 – Collection of Unpaid Meal
Charges

X. **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]*

XI. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

XII. **BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

XIII. **ADJOURNMENT**

XIV. **Board of Education Policy (*First Reading*)**

XIV.A. Policy 6161.12 – Library Collection Development
and Maintenance, and Library Displays and Programs, and
Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy

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

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a regular meeting on Thursday, January 15, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. in the New Fairfield Community Room, 33 Route 37, New Fairfield, CT.

MINUTES – January 15, 2026

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

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kenneth Craw, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Dr. Kristine Woleck, High School Principal James D’Amico, High School Assistant Principal Michael Chapleau, High School Assistant Principal Scott Rohwedder, Middle School Principal Karen Gruetzner, Middle School Assistant Principal Steven Groccia, Elementary School Principal Allyson Story, Elementary School Assistant Principal Jennifer Hilderbrand, Elementary School Assistant Principal Alyce Misuraca, Elementary School Assistant Principal Rob Spino. Director of Pupil Personnel Services Monika Krepsztul, Elementary Special Education Supervisor Alex Lambert, Director of Business and Operations Carrie DePuy, Director of Technology Paul Gouveia, Facilities Director Joe Lombardozzi, Athletic Director Mark Ottusch, BOF Chairman Wes Marsh, and BOF members John Arizzi, Brendan Harris, Thora Perkins and Rick Regan

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. December 18, 2025 - Regular meeting - Approved by consensus

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA - Approved by consensus

V. PRESENTATION OF SUPERINTENDENT’S FY 2026-2027 RECOMMENDED BUDGET

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kenneth Craw spoke of the upcoming budget for 2026-2027. He noted this is a “needs based” budget and an investment in the future. He thanked the administration and staff for all their hard work with the preparation of the budget.

Dr. Craw spoke of Points of Pride, Budget Development, and the Staffing Plan. He spoke of enrollment for the future and program enhancements. He noted that the baseline increase that maintains current programs, services and class sized is 3.15%. An increase of 1.29% is due to Special Education requirements.

The Superintendent’s recommended Operating Budget for 2026-2027 is \$53,591,293 which is a percent increase of 4.44% (\$2,279,374) over the 2025-2026 voter approved budget. The proposed Capital Budget equals \$615,000 for year three of the five-year Capital Improvement Plan.

Budget workshops will be held on Tuesday, January 20th, Wednesday, January 21st and Tuesday, January 27th. The budget presentation and documents can be found on the district website.

VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Jennifer Pappas asked about the status of the propane issue at the high school.

VII. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. Chairman's Report - Dominic Cipollone thanked Dr. Craw and staff for all their hard work on putting the budget together.

B. Superintendent's Report - Dr. Kenneth Craw commended Dr. Woleck and staff on their hard work with the Curriculum website. This website is now available to the community.

C. Student Representative Report

Junior Representative Hailey Lafaro spoke of the following:

- The "Alumni Return Day" held recently at the high school was very successful.
- The Choir, Chorus and Symphonic Band concert was held on January 14th.
- Mid-terms will be held between January 15th - to January 21st.
- There is no school on Monday, January 19th in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.
- The second quarter ends on January 23rd.
- The Ski Club will be going to Smuggler's Run from January 23rd to 25th.
- Transition into High School night for 8th graders will be held at the high school on January 29th.
- The Tri-M concert will be held on February 4th.
- Yearbooks are currently on sale.
- Final payment for the Junior trip to Washington, DC is due on February 2nd.
- The Junior Class is selling Rebel blankets.

D. Committee Reports

1. Business Operations/Resource Management - Greg Flanagan noted that this subcommittee met on January 15th. There is a possible deficit due to a nursing shortage earlier in the year. The projected deficit for Special Education expenses is lower than originally expected. The 2025 audit was completed. It was noted that the request for a golf cart for the Athletic department was taken out of last year's budget. This golf cart is still needed.

E. Liaison Reports - None

VIII. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. New Fairfield High School/Consolidated School Building Project Update - No report

B. Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget

Dr. Craw asked BOE members to send any questions for the budget workshops to District office ahead of time. There was a question about budget increase for surrounding towns but there is not enough information available at this time. There was a question about expenses for the bus lot and the propane issue, and it was noted that those projects are still under the purview of the PBC.

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 January 8, 2026, as recommended by the administration. Kimberly LaTourette seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Amy Johnson, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

B. Fiscal Year 2025 Unexpended Funds

MOTION: Ed Sbordone made a motion to recommend that the Board of Education approve the transfer of fiscal year 2024-25 unexpended funds, in the amount of \$65,225, to the Board of Education non-lapsing account for the purpose of covering unanticipated Special Education expenses. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Amy Johnson, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

C. Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Transfers

MOTION: Kimberly LaTourette made a motion to recommend to the full Board of Education the requested FY26 budget transfers as presented. Ed Sbordone seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Amy Johnson, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

D. Acceptance of Donation - Old Timers Athletic Association of Greater Danbury

MOTION: Kathy Baker made a motion to recommend to the full Board to accept with gratitude the Old Timers Athletic Association of Greater Danbury donation of \$3,500 to be put towards the purchase of new athletic equipment. Kimberly LaTourette seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Amy Johnson, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

The Board thanked the Old Timers Athletic Association for their very generous donation.

E. Board of Education Policies

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

MOTION: Samantha Mannion made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of the Board of the Education Bylaws listed below as presented: 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. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Amy Johnson, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

X. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - None

XI. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS - Items for future meetings include an update on the propane issue at the high school, an update on the water tanks at the elementary school and subcommittee assignments.

XII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Kimberly LaTourette encouraged residents to attend the budget meetings and give feedback. She cautioned everyone about getting budget information from social media.

Peggy Katkocin thanked Dr. Craw for a comprehensive budget presentation. She spoke of the new school buildings and the importance of having a budget that reflects the needs of the students.

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

MOTION: Kimberly LaTourette made a motion to go into Executive Session at 7:49 p.m. for the purpose of discussing School Security and Safety issues and to invite Director of Business and Operations Carrie DePuy and Director of Buildings and Grounds Joe Lombardozzi into the Executive Session. Peggy Katkocin seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Amy Johnson, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

MOTION: Dominic Cipollone made a motion to exit Executive Session at 8:13 p.m. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Amy Johnson, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Dominic Cipollone made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:14 p.m. Kathy Baker seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Amy Johnson, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne Kloos

NEW FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION NEW FAIRFIELD, CT

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a special meeting on Tuesday, January 20, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. in the New Fairfield Community Room, 33 Route 37, New Fairfield, CT.

MINUTES – January 20, 2026

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

ABSENT: Samantha Mannion and Peggy Katkocin

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kenneth Craw, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Kristine Woleck, Director of Business and Operations Carrie DePuy, New Fairfield High School Principal James D’Amico, New Fairfield Middle School Principal Karen Gruetzner, Elementary Principal Allyson Story, Athletic Director Mark Ottush, and BOF member Rick Regan

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Dominic Cipollone called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. REVIEW OF THE 2026-2027 BUDGET

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ken Craw spoke of the budget for 2026-2027 that was presented on January 15th. The requested budget is \$53,591,293 which represents an increase of \$2,279,374 or 4.44% over the 2025-2026 budget. This increase consists of a baseline budget of \$1,619.264 (3.15%) and Special Education mandates of \$660,110 (1.29%).

Elementary Principal Allyson Story gave a presentation regarding New Fairfield Elementary School. She spoke of highlights and accomplishments for the year and what it means to be an engaged learner. Major accomplishments of the year include a Science and Social Studies instructional block, continuation of Open-up resources for literacy, implementation of K-5 Mathematics tools, high quality instructional tools, introduction of REBELS core values (Respectful, Empathetic, Brave, Engaged, Learners, Strong), and integration of bilingual instruction and family support. She spoke of core values and next steps. Members of the BOE asked questions regarding the budget for the Elementary School. There was a brief discussion of enrollment for the Elementary School.

Middle School Principal Karen Gruetzner spoke of the many accomplishments in the Middle School, specifically the addition of flexible spaces, strengthening curriculum and assessment design, additional clubs and extracurricular offerings, and strengthening of staff support. She spoke of the Teaming Model at the Middle School. There was a discussion of the classroom needs for the Performing Arts and World Language program. There was a brief discussion of the non-payroll budget.

High School Principal James D’Amico spoke of the many accomplishments for New Fairfield High School including 2025 Advanced Placement Honor Roll, NMSQT National Recognition Awards, 33 new National Honor Society Inductees, 38 Seal of Biliteracy Recipients, 14 Halo Nominations, and Special Olympics/Unified Sports awards. He spoke of Student Engagement in Academics and Leadership. There was a brief discussion of the potential number of Sherman students and the tuition paid.

Athletic Director Mark Ottusch spoke of the many accomplishments of the Athletic Department, including Michael's Jewelers Achievement Cup, SWC Sportsmanship Awards, Student Leadership and enhancements to the Unified Sports program. He spoke of the components of the Athletic Department, including supplies and equipment, membership fees, costs for bus trips and officials for home games.

It was noted that approximately \$181,451 of budget requests were not included in the budget. Members of the Board and Administrators spoke of the specifics needs that were cut from the budget.

Chairman Dominic Cipollone thanked all the administrators for their hard work on this budget. The next budget meeting of the BOE will be held on Wednesday, January 21st at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room. Main topics that will be discussed include the budget for Curriculum, Technology, and Central Office.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Jennifer Pappas asked about costs for the Central Office and HVAC.

V. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Dominic Cipollone made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:24 p.m. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Kathy Baker, Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Amy Johnson, Sue Huwer, Kimberly LaTourette, and Ed Sbordone

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne Kloos

NEW FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION NEW FAIRFIELD, CT

The New Fairfield Board of Education held a special meeting on Wednesday, January 21, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. in the New Fairfield Community Room, 33 Route 37, New Fairfield, CT.

MINUTES – January 21, 2026

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

ABSENT: Kathy Baker and Amy Johnson

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kenneth Craw, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Kristine Woleck, Director of Business and Operations Carrie DePuy, Director of Technology Paul Gouveia, BOF Chairman Wes Marsh, and BOF member Rick Regan

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Dominic Cipollone called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. REVIEW OF THE 2026-2027 BUDGET

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ken Craw spoke of the upcoming budget for 2026-2027. Topics reviewed at this meeting included the budget for Curriculum, Technology, and Central Office. The requested budget is \$53,591,293 which represents an increase of \$2,279,374 or 4.44% over the 2025-2026 budget. He noted that the requested budget is offset by non-tax revenue. He compared this budget to requested budgets for surrounding towns in Fairfield County and noted that the average requested increase is 5% compared to the 4.44% for New Fairfield.

Curriculum and Instruction

Dr. Kris Woleck spoke of Curriculum and Instruction throughout the district and spoke of the many accomplishments throughout the district, noting that this is the third year of the five-year curriculum plan. She spoke of the Pre-K to 12 Curriculum and Instruction Leadership Team.

Curriculum

- Implementation of the K-12 Science curriculum (NFPS model)
- Launch of NFPS Curriculum Blueprint (Eduplanet)
- Mapping of digital literacy learning (AI guiding principles)

Instruction

- Development of K-5 mathematics computation fluency probes
- Expanded Orchestra Program in all schools
- NFPS AI Student Group
- Power School Data portfolio launched
- NFPS AI Work group

Wellness

- Anxious Generation Community Read

Members of the Board of Education asked questions of Dr. Woleck, specifically how students that don't meet goals are supported. There was a brief discussion of interventionists and curriculum coaches.

Technology

Director of Technology Paul Gouveia spoke of the following accomplishments in Technology spanning all of the grade levels:

- Secured over \$891,000 in grant money for technology for both the Town and the Schools;
- Continued to grow and support STEAM Team initiatives;
- Accelerated access to AI for both students and staff;
- Thwarted multiple Cybersecurity threats;
- Upgrading of devices;
- Reclaiming of four Middle School classrooms and outfitting them with technology;
- Modernized the Human Resources process;
- Expanded the One-to-One Student access for technology.

New Initiatives for Technology include growing and supporting the AI Working Group, maintaining the 3/6/9 Grade Chromebook model, and optimizing purchases of ED Tech to support high quality instruction. Mr. Gouveia thanked his team for all their hard work and noted that response times for fixing computers has been drastically reduced. He spoke of cost containment and efficiencies to keep the cost of technology as low as possible.

Members of the Board of Education asked questions of Mr. Gouveia. There was a brief discussion of the small Technology staff compared to other districts. Carrie DePuy spoke of Technology grants that can offset the price of the computers.

Director of Business and Operations Carrie DePuy spoke of the budget for Central Office and noted that it is reduced by \$950 (.16%) due to reduction in Financial and Human Resources software, legal fees, shared financial services and membership dues. She spoke of the accomplishments of the shared services agreement.

There is an increase in the amount requested district wide of \$136,985 for transportation, utilities, and copier rentals. There was a brief discussion of Sherman tuition revenue.

The next budget meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 27th at 7:00 p.m. in the New Fairfield Community Room. The Building and Grounds budget and the Capital Improvement plan will be discussed. Budget information is available on the district website.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

BOF Chairman Wes Marsh spoke of the anticipated Medical costs increase of over 5% that should be reflected in the 2027 budget.

V. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Dominic Cipollone made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:07 p.m. Greg Flanagan seconded the motion. **IN FAVOR:** Dominic Cipollone (Chairman), Greg Flanagan, Sue Huwer, Peggy Katkocin, Kimberly LaTourette, Samantha Mannion, and Ed Sbordone

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne Kloos

NEW FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION NEW FAIRFIELD, CT

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

MINUTES – January 27, 2026

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

ABSENT: Kathy Baker

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

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Dominic Cipollone called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. REVIEW OF THE 2026-2027 BUDGET

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

Special Education

Curriculum and Instruction

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

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

Accomplishments include:

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

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

Next step and goals include:

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

Facilities

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

Capital Improvement Requests

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

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

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

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

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

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

VI. ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne Kloos

Instruction

Library Collection Development and Maintenance, and Library Displays and Programs, and Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy

The New Fairfield Board of Education (the “Board”), having consulted with the Superintendent of Schools for the New Fairfield Public Schools (the “District”), the District’s director of curriculum or a person in an equivalent position, and a librarian employed by the Board, adopts this Policy Regarding Library Collection Development and Maintenance, Library Displays and Programs, and Library Material Review and Reconsideration in accordance with Connecticut law.

It is the policy of the Board to ensure that all District library materials maintained by the District are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in Connecticut law, including, but not limited to, discrimination based on race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability.

Any school library media specialist or school library staff member who, in good faith, implements this policy shall be immune from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed and shall have the same immunity with respect to any judicial proceeding that results from such implementation.

The Board shall review this policy, and update it as necessary, every five years.

I. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

“**Individual with a vested interest**” means any school staff member employed by the Board, the parent or guardian of a student currently enrolled in a school operated by the Board at the time a request for reconsideration is filed, and any student currently enrolled in a school operated by the Board at the time a request for reconsideration is filed.

“**Library and other educational material**” means any material belonging to, on loan to or otherwise in the custody of a District school library media center, including, but not limited to, nonfiction and fiction books, magazines, reference books, supplementary titles, multimedia and digital material, software and other material not required as part of classroom instruction.

“**Remove**” means deliberately taking library material out of a library's collection. The term “**remove**” does not include the process of clearing such collections of any materials that are no longer useful.

Instruction

Library Collection Development and Maintenance, and Library Displays and Programs, and Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy

“**School library staff member**” means a school library media specialist, school librarian, any certificated or noncertificated staff member whose assignment is in the school library, or any individual carrying out or assisting with the functions of a school library media specialist or school librarian.

II. Library Collection Development and Maintenance

The Board recognizes that library and other educational material should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all students and should represent a wide range of viewpoints in the collection as a whole.

The Board requires that students have access to age-appropriate and grade-level-appropriate material and shall provide access to library and other educational material that is relevant to the research, independent reading interests, and educational needs of students based on a student’s age, development, or grade level. The Board also recognizes the importance of the school library media center as a place for voluntary inquiry, the dissemination of information and ideas, and the promotion of free expression and free access to ideas by students.

The Board acknowledges that a school library media specialist is professionally trained to curate and develop a collection that provides students with access to an array of age-appropriate and grade-level-appropriate library and other educational material.

Staff, students, and families may submit verbal, electronic (email), or written requests for book titles or other library materials to the school's library media specialist for consideration in the collection; the library media specialist will give consideration to the request in the context of the Standards and collection development guidelines described in this policy.

The Board directs the Superintendent to establish a procedure by which a certified school library specialist will continually review library and other educational material within a school library media center using professionally accepted standards, which shall include, but need not be limited to, the material’s relevance, the physical condition of the material, the availability of duplicates or copies of the material, the availability of more recent age-appropriate or grade-level-appropriate material, and continued demand for the material (the “Library Review Procedure”). The Library Review Procedure is attached hereto as Appendix A.

Instruction

Library Collection Development and Maintenance, and Library Displays and Programs, and Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy

The Board directs the Superintendent to establish a procedure by which a certified school library specialist will continually review library and other educational material within a school library media center using professionally accepted standards, which shall include, but need not be limited to, the material's relevance, the physical condition of the material, the availability of duplicates or copies of the material, the availability of more recent age-appropriate or grade-level-appropriate material, and continued demand for the material (the "Library Review Procedure"). The Library Review Procedure is attached hereto as Appendix A.

III. Library Displays and Programs

The Board recognizes that displays should be provided for the interest, information and enlightenment of all students; represent a wide range of viewpoints; require student access to age-appropriate and grade-level-appropriate content; and provide access to content that is relevant to the research, independent interests, and educational needs of students.

The Board further recognizes the importance of library displays and student programs as resources for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas and to promote free expression and free access to ideas by students.

The Board acknowledges that a school library media specialist is professionally trained to curate and develop displays and programs that provide students with access to an array of age-appropriate and grade-level-appropriate library and other educational material.

IV. Library Material Review and Reconsideration

The purpose of this policy section regarding library material review and reconsideration is to establish a process for individuals with a vested interest to challenge any District library and other educational material, display, or student program, as well as a process for the District to respond to any such challenges and related parameters. It is recognized that District staff make a good faith effort to provide multiple viewpoints. A collection, display, or some resources may be under development or in circulation at a given moment in time.

Instruction

Library Collection Development and Maintenance, and Library Displays and Programs, and Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy

A. Standards for Reviewing Challenges to Library and Other Educational Material, Display, or Student Program

1. All library materials shall be evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in Connecticut law, including, but not limited to, discrimination based on race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability.
2. Library and other educational material, displays, and student programs shall only be excluded for legitimate pedagogical purposes or for professionally accepted standards of collection maintenance practices, as adopted in this policy and/or any accompanying procedure for the continual review of library and educational material within a school library.
3. No library and other educational material, display, or program shall be removed from library media centers, or programs be cancelled, because of the origin, background or viewpoints expressed in such material, display, or program, or because of the origin, background, or viewpoints of the creator of such material, display, or program. unless such material is not developmentally- or age-appropriate at a given school level based on CT State curriculum standards.
4. The removal, exclusion, or censoring of any book on the sole basis that a person with a vested interest finds such book offensive is prohibited.
5. Any process for an individual with a vested interest to challenge any library and other educational material, display, or student program shall neither favor nor disfavor any group based on protected characteristics.

B. Process for Challenging Library and Other Educational Material, Display, or Student Program

The Board establishes the following process for individuals with a vested interest to challenge any library and other educational material, display, or student program, as well as a process for the District to respond to any such challenges:

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Library Collection Development and Maintenance, and Library Displays and Programs, and Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy

1. An individual with a vested interest may submit a Request for Reconsideration of Library Material Form (the “Request Form”) to the principal of the school in which the library and other educational material, display, or student program is being challenged to initiate a review of such material. The Request Form is attached hereto as Appendix B.

Using the Request Form, an individual shall specify which portion or portions of such material the individual objects to and provide an explanation of the reasons for such objection. The individual submitting the Request Form must include the individual’s full legal name, address, and telephone number. If the individual who has submitted a Request Form is a parent or guardian, consideration of requests to reconsider and remove material, displays, or student programs shall be limited to the parents and guardians of students and eligible students currently enrolled in the school or District.

2. Upon receipt, the principal or the principal’s designee shall promptly forward the Request Form to the Superintendent or Superintendent’s designee and communicate to the school’s Library Media Specialist.

3. The administration may consolidate any requests for review and reconsideration of the same challenged library and other educational material.

4. For each challenged library and other educational material, the Superintendent, or the Superintendent’s designee, shall appoint a Review Committee consisting of:

- a. the Superintendent, or the Superintendent’s designee;
- b. the principal of the school in which the library and other educational material is being challenged, or the principal’s designee;
- c. the director of curriculum, or a person in an equivalent position, employed by the Board;
- d. a representative from the Board;
- e. at least one grade-level-appropriate, certified teacher familiar with the library material, provided the teacher selected is not the individual who submitted the Request Form;
- f. a parent or guardian of a student age thirteen years or younger enrolled in the District, provided the parent or guardian selected is not the individual who submitted the Request Form;

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Library Collection Development and Maintenance, and Library Displays and Programs, and Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy

- g. a parent or guardian of a student age fourteen years or older enrolled in the District, provided the parent or guardian selected is not the individual who submitted the Request Form; and
- h. a certified school librarian employed by the Board or employed by another board of education in the state.

In cases where the request is submitted by a student enrolled in grades nine through twelve, and when appropriate and at the discretion of the Superintendent, a student enrolled in grades nine through twelve may serve on the Review Committee, provided the student selected is not the individual who submitted the Request for Reconsideration and the Superintendent consults with the principal of the school involved in such reconsideration request prior to making the determination whether to include the student on the Review Committee.

5. Any library and other educational material being challenged shall remain available in the school library media center according to such material's catalog record and be available for a student to reserve, check out, or access until a final decision is made by the Review Committee.
6. The Review Committee must evaluate the Request Form; read the challenged material in its entirety; evaluate the challenged material against this policy; and make a written decision on whether or not to remove the challenged material not later than sixty (60) school days from the date the Request Form was received by the principal or the principal's designee. The Review Committee shall provide a copy of the committee's decision and report to the individual with a vested interest who submitted the Request Form and to the principal of the school.
7. The individual with a vested interest who submitted the Request Form may appeal the Review Committee's decision to the Board. The Board shall determine whether the reconsideration process was followed and communicate its decision to the individual.
8. Once a decision has been made by the Review Committee any library and other educational material, such material cannot be subject to a new request for review and reconsideration for a period of three (3) years.

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**Library Collection Development and Maintenance, and
Library Displays and Programs, and
Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy**

Legal References: Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-15c

Public Act No. 25-168, “An Act Concerning the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2027, and Making Appropriations Therefore, and Provisions Related to Revenue and Other Items Implementing the State Budget.”

Policy adopted:

NEW FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Fairfield, Connecticut

APPENDIX A

LIBRARY REVIEW PROCEDURE

Library Collection Development and Review Procedures

Collection development is an ongoing process undertaken by the school's library media specialist. It includes selecting library materials using the selection guidelines noted below, reviewing and removing materials from the collection as needed, and replacing lost and worn materials as needed.

When selecting library materials, District library media specialists take into account:

- Fiscal responsibility/budgetary constraints;
- Collection statistics as identified by data analyses, considering age of collection, suggested number of copies per student, and areas of need;
- Whether the informational need can be met by current database content and electronic subscriptions, aiming to leverage existing digital investments first;
- Alignment with curricular and cocurricular programs, district goals, and the District Vision of the Learner, in consultation with the instructional leadership and administrative teams as needed;
- Opportunities to enrich and support the curriculum and students as readers taking into consideration the various interests, abilities, learning styles and developmental levels of the students served. This includes ensuring that any new material uses language that is appropriate for the targeted grade range and developmental levels and whether the new material's treatment of difficult or sensitive subjects (e.g., death, mental health, violence, sexuality) is in a developmentally-appropriate way for the intended student audience;
- Consultation with professionally prepared resources (e.g., children's literature databases, School Library Journal, Kirkus, Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), Voya, local, state, and national literary awards, etc.), to identify materials that meet evolving needs and remain current;
- Circulation history at District libraries to note emerging interests of students and staff;
- Requests of materials by staff, students, and faculty for educational, research, or literary purposes;

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- A commitment to providing multiple perspectives of an issue and a representative range of materials to reflect student experiences locally as well as the global community of our world;
- The library collection as a whole, with attention to gaps, redundancies, and emerging needs.

Books gifted to the school library will be evaluated according to these guidelines as well.

Systematic review and withdrawal of library materials that are no longer relevant or useful is necessary to maintain the quality of the collection and make efficient use of space. The Library/Media Specialist is responsible for this process and may confer with teaching staff and administration in questionable cases.

In the review and withdrawal of materials, the age of the material, use, alignment with curriculum, programming, learner interest, and physical condition will be taken into account. The following content guidance will be applied:

- A. Science, travel, geography, technical information (computer, fiber optics, etc.) more than five years from copyright date should be examined and replaced with more timely materials as budgets allow.
- B. Fiction that has not circulated for five years and is not recognized as having permanent value should be withdrawn.
- C. Superseded editions unless they contain unique materials (maps, bibliographies, charts, etc.) should be withdrawn.
- D. Duplicate copies of materials that were previously popular should be withdrawn.
- E. Obsolete, discredited, or unauthorized information should be withdrawn.
- F. Almanacs, yearbooks, etc., older than five years should be withdrawn. (*Decennial editions may be kept.*)

The physical condition of library materials may result in the withdrawal of some materials over time. Books with torn or ragged covers, yellowed pages, more than four pages missing, will be withdrawn unless contents are necessary and irreplaceable. (They may be repaired if possible.)

When items are removed from the collection, library media specialists will follow New Fairfield Board of Education policies to determine how to best reassign or discard materials.

APPENDIX B

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIAL

This form may be used by an individual with a vested interest to challenge any library or other educational material, display, or student program in accordance with the Board’s Library Collection Development and Maintenance, Library Displays and Programs, and Library Material Review and Reconsideration policy. The form should be completed in its entirety and submitted to the principal of the school in which the library and other educational material are being challenged to initiate a review of such material.

Full Legal Name of Person Submitting Request:

Please note that the process for challenging any library and other educational material, display, or student program is available only to the following “individuals with a vested interest” as defined in the Board’s Library Collection Development and Maintenance, Library Displays and Programs, and Library Material Review and Reconsideration policy:

- any school staff member employed by the Board (“Staff Member”),
- the parent or guardian of a student currently enrolled in a school operated by the Board at the time a request for reconsideration is filed (“Parent/Guardian”), and
- any student currently enrolled in a school operated by the Board at the time a request for reconsideration is filed (“Student”).

Referring to the definitions immediately above, please indicate your role by checking any or all of the following that apply. I am a:

_____ Staff Member _____ Parent/Guardian _____ Student

Address:

Telephone Number:

Email Address:

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I have read the Board’s Library Collection Development and Maintenance, Library Displays and Programs, and Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy: (check one)

- Yes
- No

I am requesting that the following library material(s), display(s), and/or student program(s) be reviewed:

I am requesting that this material be reviewed because I object to: (check one)

- The entire material
- A specific portion or portions of the material (identify portion(s) below)

I provide the following explanation of the reasons for my objection(s) stated above:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Received by:

Name: _____
School: _____
Date: _____

Business/Non-Instructional Operations

Food Service

Collection of Unpaid Meal Charges

The New Fairfield Board of Education (the “Board”) recognizes the importance of providing nutritious food to students in New Fairfield Public Schools (the “District”).

The District is a sponsor of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Services’ Child Nutrition Programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Programs (SBP), and the District adheres to the federal and state guidelines and regulations pertain to these school Child Nutrition Programs. In accordance with federal law, the District will make a public announcement and notify parents and guardians of the eligibility criteria for free and reduced-price meals and provide information regarding how a household may make an application for these benefits. Such notice and application will generally be distributed at the beginning of each school year.

Charging Meals

The District uses an automated prepayment system for student meal accounts in addition to cash sales. Students whose accounts have insufficient funds, and who do not bring a meal or other funds to school to pay for meals, may charge meals to their meal accounts. Students will be informed of their right to purchase a meal, which excludes a la carte items, for any school breakfast, lunch or other meal offered by the District, even if the student’s account has insufficient funds.

The District prohibits publicly identifying or shaming a student for any unpaid meal charges, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Delaying or refusing to serve a meal to such student;
- Designating a specific meal option for the student; or
- Otherwise taking any disciplinary action against the student.

Staff members and adults in the building are prohibited from charging adult meals and a la carte foods and beverages.

Collection of Unpaid Meal Charges

The District’s efforts to recover from households money owed due to the charging of meals must not have a negative impact on the children involved and shall focus primarily on the adults in the household responsible for providing funds for meal purchases. The District shall consider whether the benefits of potential collections outweigh the costs that would be incurred to achieve those collections.

For the purposes of this policy, “delinquent debt” means unpaid meal charges.

Business/Non-Instructional Operations

Food Service

Collection of Unpaid Meal Charges (continued)

The District will contact the parents/guardians of students who charge meals to their meal accounts in order for the District to collect the delinquent debt. The first such communication will be a written communication, by e-mail, after the balance reaches \$5.00. Subsequent written and verbal communications with parents/guardians concerning delinquent debt will be made by the building administrator or designee, as may be necessary and appropriate. All communications regarding unpaid meal charges shall be made directly and discreetly to parents/guardians. Written communications with parents/guardians regarding collection of a student's unpaid meal charges shall include an application for free and reduced price meals, information on local food pantries and the Connecticut Department of Social Services' supplemental nutrition assistance program, and a link to the District's or Town's website that lists any community services available to Town residents.

In the event a student's unpaid meal charges are equal to or more than the cost of thirty (30) meals, the parents/guardians of such student will be referred to the District's homeless education liaison.

The first day (1st) day a meal is charged:

- An auto generated email is sent weekly to any account on file when a student's account has a negative balance. This email contains information relating to using the online portal to put funds on your child's account, applying for free-reduced price meals, accessing local food pantries, and community services in case this information is helpful.
- Additionally, the Kitchen Lead/designee will do follow up calls to the parent/guardian, at the contact number indicated in the school district software system, notifying them either via a conversation or message, that their child was served a meal/s and that there were not enough funds in their account to cover the cost of the meal/milk and that it is expected that payment will be made the next day.

If payment is not made or payment was made but additional meals are consistently provided without funds, the steps above will repeat, additionally the following steps will be taken:

- The Kitchen Lead/designee will provide this information to the principal/designee and ask for the family to be contacted in case there are extenuating circumstances the food service department may not be aware of.
- The school building principals/designee will contact the parent/guardian to discuss the situation, to determine if there is a need the family has that the district is not aware of, if appropriate offer direction/guidance to obtain support and arrange for debt repayment.
- Additionally, Per the State of Connecticut, Department of Education, Operational Memorandum No 11-22, "If a student's unpaid meal charge equals or exceeds the costs of 30 meals, the LEA must also refer the parent or guardian to the LEA's designated local McKinney-Vento Act Homeless Education Liaison."

Business/Non-Instructional Operations

Food Service

Collection of Unpaid Meal Charges (continued)

The district shall comply with the applicable federal and state laws and other federal or state requirements concerning the collection of unpaid meal charges, including but not limited to requirements relating to unpaid meals, as defined by federal law, and record keeping relating thereto. The District may accept gifts, donations or grants from any public or private sources for the purpose of paying off any unpaid charges for school lunches, breakfasts or other such feeding programs. The District is required to have all unpaid meal balances paid in full by June 30 of each year, from monies other than the food service account.

Dissemination of Procedures

This procedure shall be provided in writing to all student households at the start of each school year and to households transferring to the District during the school year. This procedure will be provided to all District staff responsible for its enforcement. In addition, school social workers, nurses, the homeless liaison, and other staff members assisting children in need or who may be contacted by families with unpaid meal charges shall be informed by this procedure.

The District shall maintain, to the extent required by law, documentation of the methods used to communicate this procedure to student households and District staff responsible for procedure enforcement.

The District shall provide this procedure to the Connecticut State Department of Education during Administrative Reviews.

(cf. 3542 – Food Service)

(cf. 3542.31 – Free or Reduced-Price Lunch Program)

Legal References:

State Law:

Connecticut General Statutes

§ 10-215 Lunches, breakfasts and other feeding programs for public school children and employees.

State of Connecticut, Department of Education, School Health, Nutrition and Family Services Operational Memorandum No. 11-22, “Connecticut Statutory Requirements for Unpaid Meal Charges in Public Schools,” June 15, 2022.

State of Connecticut, Department of Education, Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education Operational Memorandum No. 4-17, “Guidance on Unpaid Meal Charges and Collection of Delinquent Meal Payments,” Nov. 2, 2016.

Business/Non-Instructional Operations

Food Service

Collection of Unpaid Meal Charges (continued)

Federal Law:

7 C.F.R. Part 210 National School Lunch Program.

7 C.F.R. Part 220 School Breakfast Program.

7 C.F.R. Part 245 Determining Eligibility for Free and Reduced-Price Meals and Free Milk in Schools.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Policy Memo SP 46-2016, "Unpaid Meal Charges: Local Meal Charge Policy," July 8, 2016.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Policy Memo SP 47-2016, "Unpaid Meal Charges: Clarification on Collection of Delinquent Meal Payments," July 8, 2016.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Policy Memo SP 57-2016, "Unpaid Meal Charges: Guidance and Q&A," Sept. 16, 2016.

Policy adopted: May 19, 2011
Policy revised: June 15, 2017
Policy revised: November 4, 2021
Policy revised:

NEW FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Fairfield, Connecticut

Instruction

Library Collection Development and Maintenance, and Library Displays and Programs, and Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy

The New Fairfield Board of Education (the “Board”), having consulted with the Superintendent of Schools for the New Fairfield Public Schools (the “District”), the District’s director of curriculum or a person in an equivalent position, and a librarian employed by the Board, adopts this Policy Regarding Library Collection Development and Maintenance, Library Displays and Programs, and Library Material Review and Reconsideration in accordance with Connecticut law.

It is the policy of the Board to ensure that all District library materials maintained by the District are evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in Connecticut law, including, but not limited to, discrimination based on race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability.

Any school library media specialist or school library staff member who, in good faith, implements this policy shall be immune from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed and shall have the same immunity with respect to any judicial proceeding that results from such implementation.

The Board shall review this policy, and update it as necessary, every five years.

I. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

“**Individual with a vested interest**” means any school staff member employed by the Board, the parent or guardian of a student currently enrolled in a school operated by the Board at the time a request for reconsideration is filed, and any student currently enrolled in a school operated by the Board at the time a request for reconsideration is filed.

“**Library and other educational material**” means any material belonging to, on loan to or otherwise in the custody of a District school library media center, including, but not limited to, nonfiction and fiction books, magazines, reference books, supplementary titles, multimedia and digital material, software and other material not required as part of classroom instruction.

“**Remove**” means deliberately taking library material out of a library's collection. The term “**remove**” does not include the process of clearing such collections of any materials that are no longer useful.

Instruction

Library Collection Development and Maintenance, and Library Displays and Programs, and Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy

“**School library staff member**” means a school library media specialist, school librarian, any certificated or noncertificated staff member whose assignment is in the school library, or any individual carrying out or assisting with the functions of a school library media specialist or school librarian.

II. Library Collection Development and Maintenance

The Board recognizes that library and other educational material should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all students and should represent a wide range of viewpoints in the collection as a whole.

The Board requires that students have access to age-appropriate and grade-level-appropriate material and shall provide access to library and other educational material that is relevant to the research, independent reading interests, and educational needs of students based on a student’s age, development, or grade level. The Board also recognizes the importance of the school library media center as a place for voluntary inquiry, the dissemination of information and ideas, and the promotion of free expression and free access to ideas by students.

The Board acknowledges that a school library media specialist is professionally trained to curate and develop a collection that provides students with access to an array of age-appropriate and grade-level-appropriate library and other educational material.

Staff, students, and families may submit verbal, electronic (email), or written requests for book titles or other library materials to the school's library media specialist for consideration in the collection; the library media specialist will give consideration to the request in the context of the Standards and collection development guidelines described in this policy.

The Board directs the Superintendent to establish a procedure by which a certified school library specialist will continually review library and other educational material within a school library media center using professionally accepted standards, which shall include, but need not be limited to, the material’s relevance, the physical condition of the material, the availability of duplicates or copies of the material, the availability of more recent age-appropriate or grade-level-appropriate material, and continued demand for the material (the “Library Review Procedure”). The Library Review Procedure is attached hereto as Appendix A.

Instruction

Library Collection Development and Maintenance, and Library Displays and Programs, and Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy

The Board directs the Superintendent to establish a procedure by which a certified school library specialist will continually review library and other educational material within a school library media center using professionally accepted standards, which shall include, but need not be limited to, the material's relevance, the physical condition of the material, the availability of duplicates or copies of the material, the availability of more recent age-appropriate or grade-level-appropriate material, and continued demand for the material (the "Library Review Procedure"). The Library Review Procedure is attached hereto as Appendix A.

III. Library Displays and Programs

The Board recognizes that displays should be provided for the interest, information and enlightenment of all students; represent a wide range of viewpoints; require student access to age-appropriate and grade-level-appropriate content; and provide access to content that is relevant to the research, independent interests, and educational needs of students.

The Board further recognizes the importance of library displays and student programs as resources for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas and to promote free expression and free access to ideas by students.

The Board acknowledges that a school library media specialist is professionally trained to curate and develop displays and programs that provide students with access to an array of age-appropriate and grade-level-appropriate library and other educational material.

IV. Library Material Review and Reconsideration

The purpose of this policy section regarding library material review and reconsideration is to establish a process for individuals with a vested interest to challenge any District library and other educational material, display, or student program, as well as a process for the District to respond to any such challenges and related parameters. It is recognized that District staff make a good faith effort to provide multiple viewpoints. A collection, display, or some resources may be under development or in circulation at a given moment in time.

Instruction

Library Collection Development and Maintenance, and Library Displays and Programs, and Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy

A. Standards for Reviewing Challenges to Library and Other Educational Material, Display, or Student Program

1. All library materials shall be evaluated and made accessible in accordance with the protections against discrimination set forth in Connecticut law, including, but not limited to, discrimination based on race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability.
2. Library and other educational material, displays, and student programs shall only be excluded for legitimate pedagogical purposes or for professionally accepted standards of collection maintenance practices, as adopted in this policy and/or any accompanying procedure for the continual review of library and educational material within a school library.
3. No library and other educational material, display, or program shall be removed from library media centers, or programs be cancelled, because of the origin, background or viewpoints expressed in such material, display, or program, or because of the origin, background, or viewpoints of the creator of such material, display, or program. unless such material is not developmentally- or age-appropriate at a given school level based on CT State curriculum standards.
4. The removal, exclusion, or censoring of any book on the sole basis that a person with a vested interest finds such book offensive is prohibited.
5. Any process for an individual with a vested interest to challenge any library and other educational material, display, or student program shall neither favor nor disfavor any group based on protected characteristics.

B. Process for Challenging Library and Other Educational Material, Display, or Student Program

The Board establishes the following process for individuals with a vested interest to challenge any library and other educational material, display, or student program, as well as a process for the District to respond to any such challenges:

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Library Collection Development and Maintenance, and Library Displays and Programs, and Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy

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Using the Request Form, an individual shall specify which portion or portions of such material the individual objects to and provide an explanation of the reasons for such objection. The individual submitting the Request Form must include the individual’s full legal name, address, and telephone number. If the individual who has submitted a Request Form is a parent or guardian, consideration of requests to reconsider and remove material, displays, or student programs shall be limited to the parents and guardians of students and eligible students currently enrolled in the school or District.

2. Upon receipt, the principal or the principal’s designee shall promptly forward the Request Form to the Superintendent or Superintendent’s designee and communicate to the school’s Library Media Specialist.

3. The administration may consolidate any requests for review and reconsideration of the same challenged library and other educational material.

4. For each challenged library and other educational material, the Superintendent, or the Superintendent’s designee, shall appoint a Review Committee consisting of:

- a. the Superintendent, or the Superintendent’s designee;
- b. the principal of the school in which the library and other educational material is being challenged, or the principal’s designee;
- c. the director of curriculum, or a person in an equivalent position, employed by the Board;
- d. a representative from the Board;
- e. at least one grade-level-appropriate, certified teacher familiar with the library material, provided the teacher selected is not the individual who submitted the Request Form;
- f. a parent or guardian of a student age thirteen years or younger enrolled in the District, provided the parent or guardian selected is not the individual who submitted the Request Form;

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Library Collection Development and Maintenance, and Library Displays and Programs, and Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy

- g. a parent or guardian of a student age fourteen years or older enrolled in the District, provided the parent or guardian selected is not the individual who submitted the Request Form; and
- h. a certified school librarian employed by the Board or employed by another board of education in the state.

In cases where the request is submitted by a student enrolled in grades nine through twelve, and when appropriate and at the discretion of the Superintendent, a student enrolled in grades nine through twelve may serve on the Review Committee, provided the student selected is not the individual who submitted the Request for Reconsideration and the Superintendent consults with the principal of the school involved in such reconsideration request prior to making the determination whether to include the student on the Review Committee.

5. Any library and other educational material being challenged shall remain available in the school library media center according to such material's catalog record and be available for a student to reserve, check out, or access until a final decision is made by the Review Committee.
6. The Review Committee must evaluate the Request Form; read the challenged material in its entirety; evaluate the challenged material against this policy; and make a written decision on whether or not to remove the challenged material not later than sixty (60) school days from the date the Request Form was received by the principal or the principal's designee. The Review Committee shall provide a copy of the committee's decision and report to the individual with a vested interest who submitted the Request Form and to the principal of the school.
7. The individual with a vested interest who submitted the Request Form may appeal the Review Committee's decision to the Board. The Board shall determine whether the reconsideration process was followed and communicate its decision to the individual.
8. Once a decision has been made by the Review Committee any library and other educational material, such material cannot be subject to a new request for review and reconsideration for a period of three (3) years.

Instruction

**Library Collection Development and Maintenance, and
Library Displays and Programs, and
Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy**

Legal References: Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-15c

Public Act No. 25-168, “An Act Concerning the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30, 2027, and Making Appropriations Therefore, and Provisions Related to Revenue and Other Items Implementing the State Budget.”

APPENDIX A

LIBRARY REVIEW PROCEDURE

Library Collection Development and Review Procedures

Collection development is an ongoing process undertaken by the school's library media specialist. It includes selecting library materials using the selection guidelines noted below, reviewing and removing materials from the collection as needed, and replacing lost and worn materials as needed.

When selecting library materials, District library media specialists take into account:

- Fiscal responsibility/budgetary constraints;
- Collection statistics as identified by data analyses, considering age of collection, suggested number of copies per student, and areas of need;
- Whether the informational need can be met by current database content and electronic subscriptions, aiming to leverage existing digital investments first;
- Alignment with curricular and cocurricular programs, district goals, and the District Vision of the Learner, in consultation with the instructional leadership and administrative teams as needed;
- Opportunities to enrich and support the curriculum and students as readers taking into consideration the various interests, abilities, learning styles and developmental levels of the students served. This includes ensuring that any new material uses language that is appropriate for the targeted grade range and developmental levels and whether the new material's treatment of difficult or sensitive subjects (e.g., death, mental health, violence, sexuality) is in a developmentally-appropriate way for the intended student audience;
- Consultation with professionally prepared resources (e.g., children's literature databases, School Library Journal, Kirkus, Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), Voya, local, state, and national literary awards, etc.), to identify materials that meet evolving needs and remain current;
- Circulation history at District libraries to note emerging interests of students and staff;
- Requests of materials by staff, students, and faculty for educational, research, or literary purposes;

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- A commitment to providing multiple perspectives of an issue and a representative range of materials to reflect student experiences locally as well as the global community of our world;
- The library collection as a whole, with attention to gaps, redundancies, and emerging needs.

Books gifted to the school library will be evaluated according to these guidelines as well.

Systematic review and withdrawal of library materials that are no longer relevant or useful is necessary to maintain the quality of the collection and make efficient use of space. The Library/Media Specialist is responsible for this process and may confer with teaching staff and administration in questionable cases.

In the review and withdrawal of materials, the age of the material, use, alignment with curriculum, programming, learner interest, and physical condition will be taken into account. The following content guidance will be applied:

- A. Science, travel, geography, technical information (computer, fiber optics, etc.) more than five years from copyright date should be examined and replaced with more timely materials as budgets allow.
- B. Fiction that has not circulated for five years and is not recognized as having permanent value should be withdrawn.
- C. Superseded editions unless they contain unique materials (maps, bibliographies, charts, etc.) should be withdrawn.
- D. Duplicate copies of materials that were previously popular should be withdrawn.
- E. Obsolete, discredited, or unauthorized information should be withdrawn.
- F. Almanacs, yearbooks, etc., older than five years should be withdrawn. (*Decennial editions may be kept.*)

The physical condition of library materials may result in the withdrawal of some materials over time. Books with torn or ragged covers, yellowed pages, more than four pages missing, will be withdrawn unless contents are necessary and irreplaceable. (They may be repaired if possible.)

When items are removed from the collection, library media specialists will follow New Fairfield Board of Education policies to determine how to best reassign or discard materials.

APPENDIX B

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIAL

This form may be used by an individual with a vested interest to challenge any library or other educational material, display, or student program in accordance with the Board’s Library Collection Development and Maintenance, Library Displays and Programs, and Library Material Review and Reconsideration policy. The form should be completed in its entirety and submitted to the principal of the school in which the library and other educational material are being challenged to initiate a review of such material.

Full Legal Name of Person Submitting Request:

Please note that the process for challenging any library and other educational material, display, or student program is available only to the following “individuals with a vested interest” as defined in the Board’s Library Collection Development and Maintenance, Library Displays and Programs, and Library Material Review and Reconsideration policy:

- any school staff member employed by the Board (“Staff Member”),
- the parent or guardian of a student currently enrolled in a school operated by the Board at the time a request for reconsideration is filed (“Parent/Guardian”), and
- any student currently enrolled in a school operated by the Board at the time a request for reconsideration is filed (“Student”).

Referring to the definitions immediately above, please indicate your role by checking any or all of the following that apply. I am a:

_____ Staff Member _____ Parent/Guardian _____ Student

Address:

Telephone Number:

Email Address:

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I have read the Board’s Library Collection Development and Maintenance, Library Displays and Programs, and Library Material Review and Reconsideration Policy: (check one)

- Yes
- No

I am requesting that the following library material(s), display(s), and/or student program(s) be reviewed:

I am requesting that this material be reviewed because I object to: (check one)

- The entire material
- A specific portion or portions of the material (identify portion(s) below)

I provide the following explanation of the reasons for my objection(s) stated above:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Received by:

Name: _____
School: _____
Date: _____