

Board of Education
Fairfield Public Schools
Fairfield, CT

Thursday, May 15, 2014

SPECIAL MEETING
7:30 P.M.

**501 Kings Highway East
2nd Floor Board Conference Room**

AGENDA

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Discussion and Approval of Board of Education By-Laws
Recommended Motion: "that the Board of Education By-Laws be approved as amended"

Enclosures:

1. Current By Laws with 11/26/13 amendments
 2. PF - Article II, Section 3
 3. PD - Article V, Section 4
 4. DK - Article V – Order of Business
 5. PF - Article V, Section 3 - Agenda
 6. JC - Article I, Paragraph C
 7. JL - Series 8100
 8. ELM - Article IV, Series 8400
 9. PD - Article V- Meetings, Section 9
 10. MP - Article VI, Amendments
4. Adjournment
Recommended Motion: "that this Special Meeting of the Board of Education adjourn"

MAY 15 2014

BOARD OF EDUCATION BY-LAWS

PREAMBLE:

The purpose of the Board's By-Laws (the "By-Laws") is to provide for the organization of the Board and for an orderly and efficient method of performing its lawful functions; however, nothing in these By-Laws shall be interpreted to limit or modify in any way or to any degree the duties and responsibilities imposed on this Board by State Law.

ARTICLE I - RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITY (8100)

SECTION 1: RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD (8110)

A. The Fairfield Board of Education (the "Board") is the governing body of the Public Schools (the "School District") of the Town of Fairfield (the "Town") and derives its power and exists under the Constitution and General Statutes of the State of Connecticut (collectively, "State Law").

B. The Board shall:

1. Employ an able and qualified Superintendent of Schools (the "Superintendent").
2. Adopt policies to govern the operation of the School District.
3. In collaboration with the administration, communicate the School District's educational program to the community.
4. Keep apprised of, evaluate and attend to the School District's present and future educational needs as recommended by the administration.
5. Propose an annual budget and capital improvement project request and advocate for its passage.
6. Take any further action as may be required by State Law.

SECTION 2: AUTHORITY OF BOARD MEMBERS (8120)

Board members do not have any authority as individuals to take action for the School District. Only the Board, sitting in a legally constituted meeting, through a formal vote, may take action.

ARTICLE II - ORGANIZATION AND OFFICERS (8200)

SECTION 1: ORGANIZATION (8210)

- A. In November each year, the Board of Education shall organize by electing a Chairman, a Vice Chairman and a Secretary and also shall review its By-Laws (the "Organization Meeting"). The By-Laws can also be amended at any Regular or Special Meeting.
- B. Prior to the election of officers at the Organization Meeting, the Board shall select a temporary chairman and a temporary secretary to serve until the election of a Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary.

SECTION 2: OFFICERS (8220)

- A. Officers of the Board shall be a Chairman, a Vice Chairman and a Secretary. They shall be elected at the Organization Meeting, but not later than thirty (30) days from the date on which newly-elected members take office, and the officers shall take office immediately upon election; however, no member shall hold more than one Board office concurrently. A record of the votes shall be transmitted to the Town Clerk within forty-eight (48) hours.
- B. If the office of Chairman, Vice Chairman or Secretary is vacated for any cause during the term of the holder, another member of the Board shall be elected at the next meeting of the Board to fill the vacancy.

SECTION 3: DUTIES OF OFFICERS (8230)

A. CHAIRMAN -

- 1. The Chairman shall preside over all meetings of the Board, but the Chairman's status as presiding officer shall not impair the Chairman's right or duty to vote on any matter before the Board.
- 2. The Chairman shall be the official spokesperson for the Board and, unless the Board shall otherwise direct, shall make or authorize all announcements concerning Board policy or action.
- 3. The Chairman shall appoint members of the Board to act as voting members of the following bodies:
 - a. The Board of Health, in accordance with §10.9 of the Charter of the Town (the "Town Charter").
 - b. The Parks & Recreation Commission, in accordance with §10.10 of the Town Charter.

- c. Cooperative Educational Services (“CES”), in accordance with the charter and by-laws of CES.
 - d. Any school building committee established by the Town from time to time, subject to any approval(s) required by the Town.
4. The Chairman shall appoint members of the Board to act as liaisons to the following bodies:
 - a. The Representative Town Meeting (the “RTM”).
 - b. The Fairfield Council of Parent-Teacher Associations (the “PTA Council”).
 - c. The Board of Finance
 5. The Chairman shall appoint a member to serve as a delegate at the CAFE Convention.
 6. The Chairman may appoint members of the Board to serve as liaisons to any other local, regional or state body as the Chairman deems necessary or prudent.
 7. Except whenever a Board member’s term is established by the Town, every appointment by the Chairman shall be for a term of one year or until the discharge of the assigned function of the local, regional or state body, whichever is earlier.
 8. Liaisons appointed by the Chairman to local, regional or state bodies shall be expected to attend any meeting of those bodies whenever an educational or related matter appears on the meeting’s agenda.

B. VICE CHAIRMAN -

The Vice Chairman shall function as Chairman in the absence of the Chairman and shall assist the Chairman in the administration of the Chairman’s various responsibilities. If the office of Chairman is vacated, the Vice Chairman shall act as Interim Chairman until the office is filled by a majority vote of the membership of the entire Board.

C. SECRETARY -

The Secretary shall perform all functions prescribed for that office by State Law and such other duties as the Board shall from time to time prescribe. The Secretary shall be responsible for the minutes of Board meetings and shall certify by his or her signature the minutes of each meeting in the official record. The minutes shall accurately record the essence of discussions during the Board meetings without discrimination based on viewpoint. Minutes shall be open to public inspection under such regulations for the safeguarding of its records as the Board shall from time to time adopt.

In the absence at any Board meeting of the Chairman and Vice Chairman, the Secretary shall serve as Chairman.

D. CHAIRMANSHIP AT MEETINGS IN THE ABSENCE OF ALL OFFICERS -

In the absence at any Board meeting of all officers, the Chairman shall be appointed by lot.

SECTION 4: COMMITTEES (8240)

A. POLICY COMMITTEE -

At the annual Organization Meeting of the Board, the Chairman shall appoint three (3) members to the Policy Committee for a one year term.

The Policy Committee shall meet from time to time as appropriate to fulfill its respective purposes; however, the Policy Committee must hold a meeting whenever requested by two (2) of its members. The members of the Policy Committee shall elect a chair by majority vote of the committee to manage the committee's meetings in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act and Robert's Rules of Order.

The Policy Committee's chair shall provide a summary of its work to the Board under "Committee/Liaison Reports," including recommendations for consideration by the Board.

A calendar of anticipated Policy Committee Meetings will be approved at its January Committee meeting. The calendar will be posted, and meetings can be cancelled if there is no need to hold the meeting.

The purpose of the Policy Committee shall be as follows:

1. To formulate and recommend written policies by which the Board shall exercise its leadership in the operation of the School District.
2. To study and evaluate administrative regulations and reports concerning the execution of the Board's written policies in accordance with Article IV, Section 2.

B. ADVISORY COMMITTEES -

Advisory Committees consisting of three (3) Board members appointed by the Chairman, may be established by majority vote of the Board from time to time for assignments which the Board deems beyond the purpose and scope of the Standing Committee. The Board shall provide a charge for the Advisory Committee, which shall include the preparation of a written report and recommendations for the Board's consideration within a specified period of time. Upon the Advisory Committee's presentation of a report and recommendations to the Board for consideration, the Advisory Committee shall be deemed dissolved and only the Board make take further action.

The Chairman and the Superintendent, or his or her delegate, shall be ex officio members of the Advisory Committees, and the chairman may appoint ex officio advisors from the

community for assistance in gathering information, preparing reports and making recommendations. The Advisory Committee shall follow the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act as required by State law.

C. AUTHORITY OF COMMITTEES -

Unless specifically authorized by the Board, the Standing and Advisory Committees shall have the power only to make recommendations to the Board for further action. Neither the committees nor members of the committees shall be authorized to legally bind the Board or expend funds of the School District.

SECTION 5: REMOVAL OF OFFICERS (8250)

The Chairman, Vice Chairman or Secretary may be removed from office for cause, after reasonable notice and hearing, by a majority vote of those present at any Regular Meeting or at any Special Meeting called for the purpose, and may be removed without cause at any time by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the total membership of the Board.

ARTICLE III - MEMBERS (8300)

SECTION 1: QUALIFICATIONS (8310)

Board members must be qualified to serve in accordance with Section 2.1 of the Town Charter.

No member shall be employed for compensation in any position in the School District. If a Board member becomes employed by the School District, his or her position on the Board shall become vacant.

SECTION 2: CODE OF ETHICS (8320)

Board members shall adhere to the most recent edition of CAFE's Connecticut Code of Ethics for Boards of Education (the "Code of Ethics") set forth as Article VII of these By-Laws.

SECTION 3: MEMBERSHIP ON SCHOOL BOARD ASSOCIATIONS (8330)

The Board may hold membership in CAFE and the National School Boards Association and such other organizations or associations which will enhance the Board's ability to govern the School District.

SECTION 4: NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION (8340)

Experienced Board members and the administrative staff shall assist each new member to understand the Board's functions, policies, procedures, and the operation of the School District, as follows:

- A. New members shall be given selected materials on the responsibilities and authorities of the Board and the Superintendent, including a copy of the Board's policies and By-Laws and

Code of Ethics, the Superintendent's administrative regulations, and pertinent materials developed by CAFE.

- B. New members shall be invited to meet with the Superintendent and other administrative personnel to discuss their duties and responsibilities, and continuing Board members shall be notified of and invited to such meetings.
- C. New and continuing Board members are encouraged to attend CAFE-sponsored and/or other workshops approved by the Board.

SECTION 5: INDEMNIFICATION AND INSURANCE (8350)

The Board shall protect and hold harmless Board members against financial loss and expense, including attorneys' fees and costs, to the extent provided by State Law, and the Board shall maintain adequate insurance to protect Board members against such loss and expense.

SECTION 6: CONFLICTS OF INTEREST (8360)

Board members shall comply with the following rules pertaining to conflict of interest:

- A. No member of the Board shall have any direct monetary interest in contracts with the School District, nor shall a member furnish any labor, equipment or supplies directly to the School District. The School District, however, may contract with corporations or businesses in which a Board member is an employee, in which case the member must declare his or her association with the firm and refrain from debating or voting on any related items.
- B. The following rules shall govern conflict of interest in the employment of staff and members of the Board:

A spouse, minor child, dependent of a Board member or persons otherwise related to a Board member, may be employed by the School District but only if (1) the Board member fully discloses the relationship at a public meeting of the Board, and (2) the entire Board subsequently votes to approve the employment (excluding the vote of the related Board member).

Furthermore, Board members shall comply with State Law regarding conflict of interest and attempt to avoid any situations which might have even the appearance of a conflict of interest.

SECTION 7: RESIGNATION, TERMINATION AND VACANCIES (8370)

A. RESIGNATION -

Any Board member may resign in accordance with 2.4 of the Town Charter. Prior to resigning, the Board member shall provide advance notice to the Board in order to assist the Chairman in the orderly and efficient administration of the Board.

B. TERMINATION -

Whenever a Board member no longer is qualified as an elector of the Town, his or her membership on the Board shall terminate in accordance with Section 2.1 of the Town Charter.

C. VACANCIES -

Any vacancy of the membership of the Board shall be filled in accordance with Section 2.5 of the Town Charter.

ARTICLE IV - METHODS OF OPERATION (8400)

SECTION 1: FORMULATION OF POLICIES (8410)

A. The Board recognizes three basic types of written guidance that govern the operation of the School District:

1. The Board formally adopts Policies for implementation by the Superintendent and the Superintendent's staff. The formulation and adoption of written policies shall constitute the basic method by which the Board shall exercise its leadership in the operation of the School District.

2. The Board delegates to the Superintendent the function of developing Administrative Regulations to implement the Board's policies (recognizing that not every policy requires a regulation).

3. The Board adopts By-Laws to govern its internal operations.

B. The Board policies shall be reviewed periodically and revised as needed. In order to insure compliance with current legislation and regulations, the Board shall contract for a full review of all policies and administrative regulations at least once every five years. All proposed revisions shall be referred to the Policy Committee and any changes to Board policy shall initially be presented by the committee to the Board as a draft at a Regular Meeting or a Special Meeting. The policy will then be carried over for adoption at the next regularly scheduled meeting or at the next Special Meeting.

C. The formal adoption of policy shall be recorded in the minutes of the Board, and only those written statements so adopted and so recorded shall be regarded as official Board policy.

SECTION 2: REVIEW OF ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS (8420)

The Board shall delegate to the Superintendent the function of developing administrative regulations to implement Board policy. The Board reserves the right to review administrative

regulations at its discretion through the Policy Committee to insure that they are consistent with policies adopted by the Board.

Administrative regulations need not be reviewed by the Board in advance of implementation except as required by State Law or in cases where strong community attitudes, or possible student or staff reaction, make it necessary or advisable for the regulation to have the Board's advance approval.

SECTION 3: REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES (8430)

Board members shall be reimbursed for expenses incurred in the discharge of their duties under the same regulations that pertain to the School District's staff.

SECTION 4: BOARD EVALUATION (8440)

The Board of Education shall annually undertake a self-evaluation of its policies, practices, and internal operating procedures in order to provide the best possible services to the community and the School District. Each year at the Board's Organizational Meeting, the Board shall schedule a special meeting date for self-evaluation to take place no later than May.

ARTICLE V – MEETINGS (8500)

SECTION 1: REGULAR MEETINGS (8510)

Regular meetings of the Board shall be held in accordance with the schedule on file with the Town Clerk, normally scheduled on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month. The second and fourth Tuesday should be reserved for Board meetings. All Board of Education meetings shall adjourn at 11:00 p.m. unless there is a 2/3 vote of the Board to suspend the rule.

SECTION 2: SPECIAL MEETINGS (8520)

Special Meetings of the Board may be held at any time and shall be called in the manner prescribed by law. Reasonable notice of any Special Meeting and of the purpose thereof, shall be given to members of the Board.

SECTION 3: NOTICE OF MEETINGS (8530)

A. NOTICE TO BOARD MEMBERS -

Notice of each meeting of the Board and agenda, listing all proposed action at such meeting and including all referenced documents, shall be delivered to each member of the Board at least five (5) days prior to such meeting. Subject to each Board member's consent, delivery may be made electronically.

B. NOTICE TO PUBLIC -

In compliance with State Law, the notice of the meeting date, and the agenda for such meeting, shall be made available to the public in writing and electronically on the Board's website. In addition, this information must be on file not less than twenty-four (24) hours before the meeting to which they refer in the Office of the Superintendent. The agenda and all referenced documents shall be made available to the public on the Board's website and at such meeting.

C. AGENDA -

The agenda is designed for the guidance and information of the Board and to inform the public of items of business to come before the Board. Additional items, not included in the filed agenda, may be considered and acted upon at such meetings upon the affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the Board present and voting.

SECTION 4: ORDER OF BUSINESS (8540)

A. The agenda at each Regular Meeting shall be:

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Presentations
4. Approval of Minutes
5. Student/Committee/Liaison Reports
6. Superintendent's Report
7. Old Business
8. New Business
9. Public Comment
10. Open Board Comment
11. Adjournment

B. The agenda at each Special Meeting shall be:

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Business Item(s)
4. Adjournment

C. To encourage public interest, the agenda for every meeting shall be posted on the School District's website and released in advance to the following:

1. Local Newspapers
2. RTM Education and Recreation Committee
3. PTA Presidents and PTA Board of Ed Representatives
4. FEA President
5. Principals, Headmasters and Central Office Administrators
6. Board of Finance
7. Board of Selectmen
8. Public Libraries (including all supporting materials)

9. Any citizen who so requests and is willing to assume any additional cost

SECTION 5: EXECUTIVE SESSION (8550)

Meetings of the Board shall be open to the public; provided, however, that the Board may, by a majority vote of those present at any meeting: (1) hold adjudicative hearings in Executive Session when required by State Law and (2) deliberate and discuss, but not vote, in Executive Session on any matter exempt by State Law from public disclosure, including, but not limited to, personnel matters, collective bargaining strategy, pending claims and litigation.

SECTION 6: PUBLIC COMMENT (8560)

A. PUBLIC COMMENT PRIOR TO BOARD ACTION ON AGENDA ITEMS –

As a means of encouraging public participation during Board meetings, the Chairman shall solicit comments from the public with regard to agenda items, as proposed or amended, that the Board has discussed and will be acting upon by vote. The Chairman may limit public comment in any manner appropriate to the orderly and efficient conduct of Board meetings.

B. ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT AND PETITIONS -

The agenda of Board meetings shall also include an item for public comments and petitions regarding any topic or issue germane to the operation of the School District. The Chairman may limit public comment and petitions in any manner appropriate to the orderly and efficient conduct of Board meetings.

SECTION 7: PROCEDURES DURING MEETINGS (8570)

Except in emergencies, the Board shall not attempt to decide upon any question submitted for consideration by any person or persons until the Board has examined and evaluated all information. The Superintendent shall be given an opportunity to examine and evaluate all such information and to recommend action before the Board attempts to make a decision.

SECTION 8: QUORUM (8580)

Five (5) members of the Board shall constitute a quorum for any Regular or Special Meeting.

SECTION 9: PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE (8590)

Unless otherwise provided in the By-Laws, the Board shall conduct all of its business in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised 10th Edition (Perseus Publishing, Cambridge, Massachusetts).

SECTION 10: MEETINGS

Electronic Mail Communications

The Board of Education believes that Board members electronically connected to other Board members is an efficient and convenient way to communicate. The main goal of electronic mail (e-mail) is to expedite the passage of information. E-mail gives Board members quick access to one another. Communication among Board members via e-mail should conform to the same standards as other forms of communication (i.e., committee meetings, etc.) as directed by the Freedom of Information Act. When used properly, e-mail is an effective communications tool and can provide a formal record.

Guidelines for Board E-Mail Usage

The Freedom of Information Act mandates that all meetings of public bodies, such as school Boards, be open to the public. It is the policy of the Board of Education that e-mail shall not be used in such a manner as to deprive the public of the rights given to it under the Freedom of Information Act. For this purpose, this By-Law sets forth guidelines for the uses intended to be made of e-mail by Board members when communicating with other Board members.

1. E-mail, like other written forms of communication relating to the conduct of the public business, is subject to the Freedom of Information Act and subject to disclosure.
2. Board members shall not use e-mail as a substitute for deliberations at public Board meetings and/or shall not discuss policy matters or vote informally on any issues.
3. E-mail should be used to pass along factual information.
4. Security of e-mail communication cannot be assured. Board members shall not reveal their passwords to others in the network or to anyone outside of it. If any Board member has reason to believe a password has been lost or stolen or that e-mail is being accessed by someone without authorization, he/she shall notify the Superintendent, who will notify the district's technology specialist.
5. Personnel issues and other sensitive subjects should never be discussed on-line. The confidentiality of employee data, student data, and other sensitive subjects must always be maintained.

Any usage contrary to the aforementioned shall be reported immediately to the Superintendent and may result in the suspension and/or revocation of system access.

Accessing E-Mail

In an effort to encourage all Board members to access e-mail while maintaining public fiscal responsibility, the Board of Education will loan to any Board member needing access, a computer (when surplus is available), and other hardware peripherals to be returned to the Board office upon leaving office. It will be the individual Board member's responsibility to provide the hook-up and pay all consumable expenses associated with e-mail usage. In the event a Board member elects not to access e-mail, a hard copy of all e-mail directed to "Board" will be placed

in the Board packet delivered via courier, and will also be accessible in the Board of Education Office.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
The Freedom of Information Act
1-200 Definitions
1-210 Access to public records. Exempt records
1-211 Disclosure of computer-stored public records

ARTICLE VI – AMENDMENTS (8600)

The By-Laws may be amended by the affirmative vote of a majority of the entire membership of the Board, at any Regular or Special Meeting of the Board, provided that a copy of the proposed amendment shall have been included in the call for such meeting, except that it shall not be necessary to include proposed amendments in the call for an Organization Meeting when the By-Laws are reviewed.

ARTICLE VII –CODE OF ETHICS (8700)

The Code of Ethics is based upon "Standards of Leadership for Members of Boards of Education" recommended by the CABA Board of Directors.

1. I will be a staunch advocate of high quality free public education for all Connecticut children. In fulfilling my responsibilities, I will think of "children first."
2. I will, as an agent of the state, uphold and enforce all laws, rules, regulations and court orders pertaining to public schools.
3. I will strive to bring any needed change only through legal and ethical procedures. I will strive to help create public schools which meet the individual educational needs of all children regardless of their ability, race, creed, sex or social standing.
4. I will work unremittingly to help my community understand the importance of proper support for public education, whether it be in providing adequate finance, optimum facilities, staffing and resources, or better educational programs for children.
5. I will join with my Board, staff, community and students in becoming fully informed about the nature, value and direction of contemporary education in our society. I will support needed change in our schools.
6. I will strive to ensure that the community is fully and accurately informed about our schools and will try to interpret community aspirations to the school staff.
7. I will recognize that my responsibility is not to "run the schools" through administration, but together with my fellow Board members, to see that they are well-run through effective policies.

8. I will attempt to confine my Board action to policy-making, planning and appraisal, and will help to frame policies and plans only after my Board has consulted those who will be affected by its actions.
9. I will arrive at conclusions only after discussing all aspects of the issue at hand with my fellow Board members in meeting. I will respect the opinions of others and abide by the principal of majority-rule.
10. I will recognize that authority rests only with the whole Board assembled in meeting and will make no personal promises nor take any private action which may compromise the Board.
11. I will acknowledge that the Board represents the entire school community, and will refuse to surrender my independent judgment to special interest or partisan political groups. I will never use my position on the Board for the gain of myself or my friends.
12. I will hold confidential all matters pertaining to schools which, if disclosed, might needlessly injure individuals or the schools.
13. I will insist that all school business transactions be open and ethical.
14. I will strive to appoint the best professional leader available when a vacancy exists in the chief administrative position.
15. I will strive to appoint the best trained technical and professional personnel available, upon recommendation by the appropriate administrative officer.
16. I will support and protect school personnel in the proper performance of their duties. I will strive to ensure that all personnel have not only the requisite responsibilities, but the necessary authority to perform effectively.
17. I will refer all complaints through the proper "chain of command" within the system, and will act on such complaints at public meetings only when administrative solutions fail.

APPROVED: 11/23/2004

AMENDED: 11/22/2005

REVIEWED: 11/28/2006

REVIEWED: 11/27/2007

AMENDED: 01/08/2008

AMENDED AND APPROVED: 04/28/2009

AMENDED AND APPROVED: 11/24/2009

AMENDED AND APPROVED: 12/14/2010

AMENDED AND APPROVED: 12/01/2011

AMENDED BY BOE: 11/26/2013

MAY 15 2014

PAF
December 4, 2013

Proposed Amendments to Fairfield Board of Education By-Laws

**Page 2,
Article II
Section 3**

DUTIES OF OFFICERS (8230)

A. CHAIRMAN -

1. The Chairman shall have the responsibility for setting the agenda at each meeting. In setting the agenda the Chairman shall consider the recommendations of the Superintendent and confer with the Vice Chairman and Secretary.

~~1.2.~~ The Chairman shall preside over all meetings of the Board, but the Chairman's status as presiding officer shall not impair the Chairman's right or duty to vote on any matter before the Board.

(Note- remaining numbering of Section to be re-numbered accordingly)

Rational for this proposed amendment

A board should be responsible for setting its own agenda. The Chairman is best suited to have this responsibility of setting the agenda. This amendment is consistent with current practice of receiving and considering recommendations from the Superintendent and including the Vice Chairman when needed for discussing issues relating to the agenda. It is also advantageous to include the Secretary. It is in the best interest of the District for the Board to work collaboratively in setting its agenda.

MAY 15 2014

Motion to amend Article V Meetings - paragraph 4 - Order of Business

Motion to replace the existing Order of Business with the replacement order of business as shown:

Existing:

Article V – Meetings

Section 4 – Order of Business (8540)

Paragraph A – The agenda at each regular meeting shall be:

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Presentations
4. Approval of Minutes
5. Student/Committee/Liaison Reports
6. Superintendent's Report
7. Old Business
8. New Business
9. Public Comment
10. Open Board Comment
11. Adjournment

Proposed for Article V, Section 4, Paragraph A (titles remain the same)

1. Call To Order and Roll Call
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Student Reports
4. Public Comment
5. Presentations
6. Old Business
7. New Business
8. Approval of Minutes
9. Superintendents Report
10. Committee/Liaison Reports
11. Adjournment

Rationale: Student reports and public comments should take place early in the agenda to encourage public participation. In surveying 18 other local Boards' of Education the vast majority provide for comment at the beginning of the meeting. Fairfield goes beyond the general practice by being only one of five districts that also schedule public comment prior to voting items. Also, items such as minutes, Superintendent report and committee/liaison reports should take place as administrative matters after full debate on business items. Finally, Board members have several opportunities to debate and report on items and thus the provision for Open Board comment leaves open the potential for discussing items that are not properly posted for discussion.

MAY 15 2014

Motion to amend Article V Meetings - paragraph 4 - Order of Business 8540

Original By – Law

Article V Meetings

ORDER OF BUSINESS-8540

A. The agenda at each Business Meeting shall be:

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Presentations
4. Approval of Minutes
5. Student/Committee/Liaison Reports
6. Superintendent's Report
7. Old Business
8. New Business
9. Public Comment
10. Open Board Comment
11. Adjournment

Motion to amend Article V Meetings - paragraph 4 - Order of Business 8540

Motion to include public comment towards the beginning of the meeting following Student Reports.

Rationale:

We need to be sensitive to the varying schedule constraints of students and residents who wish to participate but cannot participate at the later open comment session. This will help improve public engagement and address concerns regarding the inclusion of public opinions.

Motion to amend Article V Meetings - paragraph 4 - Order of Business 8540

Motion to move New and Old Business items forward on the Order of Business before housekeeping items and presentations.

Rationale:

The Board's first priority should be to attend to the business of the district, part of which is understanding where public concern lies. There is limited time to get that business done so we need to make sure the business is done first and then we can use the remaining time to hear presentations and housekeeping items.

Motion to amend Article V Meetings - paragraph 4 - Order of Business 8540

Motion to add Future Business to the end of each Regular Meeting when next meeting dates are announced and board members may request items be put on the next agenda.

Rationale:

This is in line with the practice of other Boards of Education. It would make for an agenda construction process that is more transparent to both members and the public. This allows both the public and other members to hear the varying concerns and interests across the Board.

Proposed Amendments to By-Law - Article V - Meetings - Order of Business 8540

A. The agenda at each Business Meeting shall be:

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. *Student Reports*
4. *Public Comment*
5. *Actions- Old Business*
6. *Actions- New Business*
7. Presentations
8. Action- Approval of Minutes
9. Committee/Liaison Reports/Superintendent's Report
10. *Future Business- announcement of meeting dates*
11. *Future Business- BOE member request for future agenda items*
12. Public Comment
13. Open Board Comment
14. Adjournment

MAY 15 2014

PAF
December 4, 2013

**Page 9,
Article V
Section 3**

C. AGENDA -

- 1.** The agenda is designed for the guidance and information of the Board and to inform the public of items of business to come before the Board. Additional items, not included in the filed agenda, may be considered and acted upon at such meetings upon the affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the Board present and voting.

- 2.** If an item is requested to be placed on the agenda by at least three (3) Board members, the Chairman shall place the item on the agenda of a Regular meeting within thirty-five days (35) or at the next Regular meeting.

Rational for this proposed amendment

By Connecticut state statute the chairperson of a Board of Education shall call a meeting of the board if requested in writing by three of its members. If no meeting is called within 14 days after such request one may be called by any three members by giving the usual written notice to the other members. (*Connecticut General Statutes §10 – 218, copy attached*) It is in the best interest of the Board to provide a procedure for members to place an item on an agenda at a Regular meeting without the disruption of invoking the procedure permitted in the statute. If a special meeting was called outside of the scheduled Regular meetings it is unlikely that all members would be able to attend. It is in the best interest of the District for a matter to be heard by the full Board.

CHAPTER 170

BOARDS OF EDUCATION

Sec. 10-218. Officers. Meetings. Each board of education shall, not later than one month after the date on which the newly elected members take office, elect from its number a chairperson and elect a secretary of such board and may prescribe their duties. The votes of each member of such board cast in such election shall be reduced to writing and made available for public inspection within forty-eight hours, excluding Saturday, Sunday or legal holidays, and shall also be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which taken, which minutes shall be available for public inspection at all reasonable times. If such officers are not chosen after one month because of a tie vote of the members, the town council or, if there is no town council, the selectmen of the town shall choose such officers from the membership of the board. The chairperson of the board of education or, in case of such chairperson's absence or inability to act, the secretary shall call a meeting of the board at least once in six months and whenever such chairperson deems it necessary or is requested in writing so to do by three of its members. If no meeting is called within fourteen days after such a request has been made, one may be called by any three members by giving the usual written notice to the other members.

Sec. 10-218a. Oath of office. Members of boards of education shall, before entering upon their official duties, take the oath of office provided in section 1-25.

Sec. 10-219. Procedure for filling vacancy on local board of education. If a vacancy occurs in the office of any member of the local board of education, unless otherwise provided by charter or special act, such vacancy shall be filled by the remaining members of said board until the next regular town election, at which election a successor shall be elected; for the unexpired portion of the term, the official ballot specifying the vacancy to be filled.

Sec. 10-220. Duties of boards of education. (a) Each local or regional board of education shall maintain good public elementary and secondary schools, implement the educational interests of the state, as defined in section 10-4a, and provide such other educational activities as in its judgment will best serve the interests of the school district; provided any board of education may secure such opportunities in another school district in accordance with provisions of the general statutes and shall give all the children of the school district as nearly equal advantages as may be practicable; shall provide an appropriate learning environment for its students which includes (1) adequate instructional books, supplies, materials, equipment, staffing, facilities and technology, (2) equitable allocation of resources among its schools, (3) proper maintenance of facilities, and (4) a safe school setting; shall, in accordance with the provisions of subsection (f) of this section, maintain records of allegations, investigations and reports that a child has been abused or neglected by a school employee, as defined in section 53a-65, employed by the local or regional board of education; shall have charge of the schools of its respective school district; shall make a continuing study of the need for school facilities and of a long-term school building program and from time to time make recommendations based on such study to the town; shall adopt:

MAY 15 2014

REVISED

Motion to Amend as shown (bold is proposed new language, strikeout is proposed removal)

Article I, Section 3, Paragraph C – Secretary (8230)

The Secretary shall perform all functions prescribed for that office by State Law and such other duties as the Board shall from time to time prescribe. The Secretary shall be responsible for the minutes of Board meetings and shall certify by his or her signature the minutes of each meeting in the official record. The minutes shall accurately record the essence of discussions during the Board meetings without discrimination based on viewpoint, ~~be written in conformance with the provisions of Robert's Rules of Order, Article XV, Section 48, as described on pages 468 to 471 of the current edition of Robert's Rules.~~ **Minutes shall contain a notice in bold type indicating that the full meeting recording can be obtained from the District and list any other forms that may be available to the public.**

Minutes shall be open to public inspection under such regulations for the safeguarding of its records as the Board shall from time to time adopt.

Purpose: This conforms the form to Robert's Rules of Order and provides clear direction for the Secretary. As all minutes are approved by the board, it is unnecessary to state they should be "without discrimination, etc." as by the action of approving the minutes the board is certifying that they are accurate and reflect action, not opinion.

MAY 15 2014

JL

Dear BOE Members –

I would like to propose an amendment to the District's By-Laws for the upcoming meeting on December 10th; Article I - Responsibilities and Authority (8100- Responsibilities of the Board, Section B, items 1 – 5).

The rationale for the proposed amendment attempts to restore specificity and accountability back to the Board of Education by utilizing language based on CABA guidelines that clearly define the function of Boards of Education.

Please see the attached CABA PDF or the following link: ["So You Want to be a School Board Member"](#)

Existing By-Law 8100

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD

B. The Board shall:

1. Employ an able and qualified Superintendent of Schools (the "Superintendent").
2. Adopt policies to govern the operation of the School District.
3. In collaboration with the administration, communicate the School District's educational program to the community.
4. Keep apprised of, evaluate and attend to the School District's present and future educational needs as recommended by the administration.
5. Propose an annual budget and capital improvement project request and advocate for its passage.

Proposed By-Laws 8100 – Each amendment proposal to be taken separately:

Proposed Amendment to Item 1 above:

- i. Select, retain and evaluate the superintendent of schools, who serves as the district's chief executive officer and implements board policy.

Proposed Amendment to replace Items 2 and 4 above:

- ii. Develop, implement and monitor the district's policies, including short- and long-term goals and objectives. These policies serve as the road map for the school district. These policies give direction to the administration and staff and become the foundation for accountability.

Proposed Amendment to Item 3 above:

- iii. Build public support and understanding of public education. This means communicating and interpreting the school district's mission to the public, listening to the community, and when appropriate, incorporating citizens' views into the discussions and actions of the Board.

Proposed Amendment to Item 5 above:

- iv. Develop, approve and monitor implementation of the budget, which provides resources for the educational priorities of the school district.

Proposed Addition to above:

- v. As agents of the State, the Board of Education will uphold and enforce all laws, rules, regulations and court orders pertaining to public schools.

This publication will provide you with essential information and insights about the qualities and responsibilities of an effective board member.

- *More than 1,400 school board members serve their communities by working to improve the quality of education in Connecticut school districts. There are over 97,000 school board members in the U.S.*
- *School board membership is a challenging task, but an important one. For those of you who decide to accept the challenge, we wish you luck and offer our support.*
- *To increase your success as a school board member, CABB offers professional development opportunities throughout the year. These workshops will improve your knowledge and help you make informed decisions that will positively impact student achievement in your district.*

Local Boards and CABB Services

The Connecticut Association of Boards of Education provides professional development, legal information, policy development and maintenance, publications and advocacy for local and regional boards of education.

Board Development

CABB offers professional development opportunities for school board members through workshops and seminars conducted throughout the state, as well as facilitation for boards at the local level.

Policy Service

CABB's knowledgeable staff provides accurate, up-to-date information you need to develop and maintain a comprehensive manual of school board policies, administrative regulations and bylaws.

Advocacy

CABB is an advocate on behalf of boards of education in all legislative and regulatory arenas at the state and federal levels.

Publications

CABB's various publications provide school board members with information to enhance skills and to increase knowledge of the complex issues facing school boards.

Negotiations Service

CABB collects and provides salary and benefit information on superintendents, administrators, teachers, and other school district employees.

Legal Resource

CABB can provide answers to legal questions regarding laws and issues facing school districts and their board members.

CABB is an invaluable resource for candidates and new board members. We encourage you to take advantage of our extensive knowledge and experience.

For more copies of this information on how to become a candidate and the responsibilities of a school board member, contact: Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, 81 Wolcott Hill Road, Waterbury, CT 06109; Phone: 860-571-7416 or 800-317-6033; Fax: 860-571-7452; Email: mdickinson@cabe.org; www.cabe.org

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So, You Want to Be a School Board Member?

A Guide for School Board Candidates



Our Mission: To assist and support regional boards of education in providing high quality education for all Connecticut children through effective leadership.

The School Board - An Overview

A local or regional board of education has one of the most important responsibilities in our society—helping connect the will of the community to the education of the children in the community. Its decisions affect the lives of students and their parents, the livelihoods of those the district employs and the economic well-being of the community.

School Boards are a uniquely American institution. They derive their power and authority from the State Constitution and the statutes of the State of Connecticut. Accordingly, a local or regional school board member acts as an agent of the state government with all the authority and limitations delegated by the General Assembly and the State Constitution. But, a board member also serves to connect the will of the community to the education of its children.

More than 1400 dedicated citizens guide Connecticut public school districts as school board members. Our public schools serve over 560,000 children and employ more than 60,000 people. Connecticut school board members receive no compensation for their service, receiving only the satisfaction that comes from providing an indispensable public service.

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So You Want to Be a School Board Member?

To become a school board member you must be a registered voter and not be employed by the board of education on which you serve. Your town officials can provide you with further information on candidacy. School board members serve anywhere from two- to six-year terms. Aside from approximately 10 districts which hold elections in May, school board elections are held the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November of odd-numbered years. In Connecticut, local and regional school boards vary in size from 5 to 13 members.

To enhance your knowledge about the duties of a school board member and become better acquainted with public education in your community, you should attend board meetings, speak with board members and members of the community and/or attend PTA/PTO meetings and visit districts websites.

What are the Essential Attributes of a Good School Board Member?

School boards exercise their authority at board meetings. The effective school board member should exhibit a strong commitment to working with others on the board in a non-

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partisan manner toward the common goal of providing the best possible education for the children in the community. There are certain skills and attributes which are consistently present in successful board of education members. Good board members:

- Put children first
- Believe in public schools
- Build an understanding of education issues locally and at the State and national levels
- Maintain high standards of conduct
- Strive to reach consensus on difficult issues
- Work out interpersonal conflicts appropriately
- Treat all individuals with respect
- Manage stress and stressful situations
- Maintain channels of communication
- Take responsibility for actions
- Focus on important issues
- Demonstrate honesty, sincerity and critical thinking skills
- Value and seek challenges
- Maintain a sense of humor, and
- Above all, have the capacity to learn and grow as they recognize the scope of the responsibilities of service on a local board of education.

It is important to remember that decision-making authority is vested in the board of education, not in the individual members. Therefore, it is essential that members of the board of education be able to work well together to achieve their goals.

3

The School Board: Challenges and Rewards

The education of students is an extremely important priority for any community. Citizens have strong beliefs about what should or should not occur in the schools. Dealing with these challenges, as well as with limited resources, changing demographics, and ever-increasing expectations require fact, patience and a strong commitment to the education of the children in the community.

But the rewards of serving on a local or regional board of education are also great. Board members bring their unique experiences and beliefs to the board table and the work that they do can influence the lives of children, long after these board members are no longer on the board.

Setting the vision for education in the local community, making curriculum decisions, allocating resources and establishing student performance standards are just a few of the issues that boards must face. And decisions on these issues will influence what happens in the school district well into the future.

In Connecticut, many new things are taking place. The Common Core State Standards, the new teacher/principal evaluation and support system and other reforms are in full swing. Greater numbers of students are taking more difficult and more advanced courses than ever before and we are striving to reduce our achievement gaps.

There is much work to be done. A school board member should try to learn as much as

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possible about education in his or her community, as well as across the state and nation in order to maximize school board effectiveness. School board service is an incredible learning experience.

Serving as a school board member demands time, energy and a willingness to listen. If you talk to most school board members, they will tell you it is also one of the most rewarding experiences they have ever had. Giving back to their communities, influencing the lives of children and carrying out an essential democratic responsibility can be one of the high points of any citizen's life.

It's All About Student Achievement

Local board of education members are besieged with numerous competing issues; student discipline, budget, problems with school buses and negotiating teacher contracts are just a few examples. It is easy to forget that the primary purpose of a board of education is to ensure high achievement for all students. Board members must keep this in mind to ensure that board meetings stay focused on student learning and that other discussions do not overshadow the most important task.

What Does a School Board Do?

Boards of education have several functions:

- Building public support and understanding of public education.
- Communicating and interpreting the school district's mission to the public, listening to the community, and when appropriate, incorporating

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ing citizens' views into the discussions and actions of the Board.

- Implementing state and federal legislation on the local level.
- Developing trust with municipal officials is increasingly important.
- Developing, implementing and monitoring the district's policies, including short- and long-term goals. These policies serve as the road map for the school district. They give direction to the administration and staff and become the foundation for accountability.
- Selecting, retaining and evaluating the superintendent of schools, who serves as the district's chief executive officer and implements board policy. Perhaps no single decision a board makes has more impact than the selection of the superintendent.
- Developing, approving and monitoring implementation of the budget. The budget provides resources for the educational priorities of the school district.
- Serving as the impartial hearing panel on such issues as termination, expulsion and grievance.

Effective boards and board members establish good working relationships with the superintendent and refrain from becoming involved in the day-to-day operation of the schools. *They remember that board members have no individual authority other than to vote at a formal board meeting. Outside of an official meeting, or unless otherwise designated by the board, an individual board member is an ordinary citizen, with no more authority than any other citizen.*

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CABE Code of Ethics for Boards of Education

This is an abridged form of the CABE Code of Ethics, based upon "Standards of Leadership for Members of Boards of Education" recommended by the CABE Board of Directors.

I will be a staunch advocate of high quality free public education for all Connecticut children.

I will, as an agent of the state, uphold and enforce all laws, rules, regulations and court orders pertaining to public schools.

I will strive to help create public schools which meet the individual educational needs of all children regardless of their ability, race, creed, gender, physical condition or social standing.

I will work unremittingly to help my community understand the importance of proper support for public education, whether it be in providing adequate finances, optimum facilities, staffing and resources, or better educational programs for children.

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CABE Code of Ethics for Boards of Education

I will join with my board, staff, community and students in becoming fully informed about the nature, value and direction of contemporary education in our society.

I will strive to ensure that the community is fully and accurately informed about our schools and will try to interpret community aspirations to the school staff.

I will recognize that my responsibility is not to "run the schools" through administration but, together with my fellow board members, to see that they are well-run through effective policies.

I will attempt to confine my board action to policy-making, planning and appraisal, and will help to frame policies and plans only after my board has consulted those who will be affected by its actions.

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CABE Code of Ethics for Boards of Education

I will arrive at conclusions only after discussing all aspects of the issue at hand with my fellow board members in meetings. I will respect the opinions of others, and abide by the principle of minority-rule.

I will recognize that authority rests only with the whole board assembled in a meeting, and will make no personal promises nor take any private action which may compromise the board.

I will acknowledge that the board represents the entire school community, and will refuse to surrender my independent judgment to special interests or partisan political groups.

I will refer all complaints through the proper "chain of command" within the system, and will act on such complaints at public meetings only when administrative solutions fail.

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MAY 15 2014

**Motion to Amend By-Law
Article IV – Methods of Operation 8400
to Add NEW Board of Education By-law:
Short Term Goals, Objectives and Action Plans**

Rationale: This amendment's purpose is to more clearly define the process by which the Board of Education, in cooperation with the Superintendent, shall operate in setting its short term priorities for the year via measurable goals, objectives, and action plans. This provides an orderly process by which to clearly assess the District's effectiveness at driving performance improvement through its policies, with Student Achievement always being a priority.

**Motion to approve Proposed Amendment to add to By-law 8450:
Short Term Goals, Objectives and Action Plans**

1. **Motion to approve Proposed Amendment to add to By-law 8450:**
By the start of each school year, the Board of Education shall formulate (June meeting) and approve (August/September Meeting) specific Short Term Goals, Objectives and Action Plans which define the District's priorities for the academic school year.
2. **Motion to approve Proposed Amendment to add to By-law 8450:**
The Board of Education Short Term BOE Goals, Objectives and Action Plans shall be in alignment with the BOE mission statement, long term educational goals ("Long Term Goals"), as well as the school district's 5 year Strategic Plan
3. **Motion to approve Proposed Amendment to add to By-law 8450:**
These BOE Goals, Objectives and Action Plans shall strive to be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and define a specific time frame.
4. **Motion to approve Proposed Amendment to add to By-law 8450:**
Discussion and amendment of BOE Short Term Goals, Objectives and Action Plans shall occur at the November and December meetings, respectively.
5. **Motion to approve Proposed Amendment to add to By-law 8450:**
Board of Education annual Short Term Goals and Objectives shall address a) Student Achievement, b) Fiscal Management, c) Board of Education Effectiveness, d) Human Resources e) Facilities and f) Other Special Objectives.
6. **Motion to approve Proposed Amendment to add to By-law 8450:**
The Board of Education shall develop, in collaboration with the Superintendent, an Action Plan for each Short Term Goal and Objective to be accomplished during the current academic year, unless otherwise specified.
7. **Motion to approve Proposed Amendment to add to By-law 8450:**

ELM

The Board of Education shall, in collaboration with the Superintendent, review progress towards achieving the stated Short Term Goals and Objectives utilizing district outcomes available for December, March and June, respectively.

Reference Attachments:

**See attachment for samples of other District's Board of Education Goals, Objectives and Action Plans for illustrative purposes

http://www.westport.k12.ct.us/media/boe_goals_final_sept_10_2012mtg.pdf

<http://www.hicksvillepublicschools.org/Page/8489>

http://www.darienps.org/current/board_of_ed/districtgoalsandobjsapproved.pdf

Sample DRG B school standardized test analysis – example of setting specific BOE educational targets

[http://www.whps.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server_2241129/File/Boe%20Documents/20130917/CMT,%20CAPT%20results%20Sep%2017,%202013%20\(1\).pdf](http://www.whps.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server_2241129/File/Boe%20Documents/20130917/CMT,%20CAPT%20results%20Sep%2017,%202013%20(1).pdf)

ELM

**Motion to Amend By-Law
Article IV – Methods of Operation 8400
to Add NEW Board of Education By-law 8460
Strategic Plan**

Rational: This amendment is included to reinforce that the checks and balances of good policy that link long-term planning and management tools to short-term realities and results are utilized and properly connected to more effectively drive accountability and effectiveness of the Board's governance.

Motion to approve Proposed Amendment to add to By-law 8460: Strategic Plan

In November of each year, the Board of Education shall review and update the District's five year Strategic Plan. The Board, in cooperation with the Superintendent, will publicly assess progress against the existing 5 year Strategic plan, discuss outcomes and recommend adjustments to the plan that may be required due to changes in student or employee demographics, legislative and regulatory climate or educational requirements, that may change from year to year.

MAY 15 2014

Motion to amend Article V Meetings - paragraph 9 – Parliamentary Procedure

Motion to update this provision to adopt most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order as shown:

Unless otherwise provided in the By-Laws, the Board shall conduct all of its business in accordance with the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised 40th-Edition (Perseus Publishing, Cambridge, Massachusetts)

Rationale: The Board's intent is to follow the most recent edition of Robert's Rules (11th edition or its future editions) and Robert's Rules of Order, recommended citation is to say "the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised." This amendment allows the board to remain current with Robert's Rules without having to amend the by-laws with each changing edition.

MAY 15 2014

Motion to Amend as shown (bold is proposed new language, strikeout is proposed removal)

Article VI – Amendments (8600)

The by-laws may be amended by a **two thirds** ~~the affirmative~~ vote of the entire membership of the Board, at any Regular meeting or Special Meeting of the Board, provided that a copy of the proposed amendment shall have been included in the call of the meeting. ~~, except that it shall not be necessary to include proposed amendments in the call for an Organization Meeting when the By-laws are reviewed.~~

Rationale: As stated in a variety of books on parliamentary procedure, Robert's Rules of Order encourages creating by-laws that can't be amended too easily. "In amending a previously adopted by-law, make sure the rights of all members continue to be protected. The surest way to provide this protection is to prevent by-laws from being changed without first giving every member an opportunity to weigh in on a change. And, amending by-laws should never be changed as long as a minority of one third disagrees with the proposal. Always specify in your by-laws the exact requirements for their amendment. *According to Robert's Rules you should, at the least, require two thirds vote and previous notice to make any change at all in your by-laws.*" (Emphasis added.)