

Board of Education, Fairfield Public Schools
501 Kings Hwy East, Fairfield CT 06825
Tuesday, February 26, 2013

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education

Voting Summary:

Approval of Minutes

A. Approval of Minutes of the Special Meeting of January 22, 2013. Ms. Iacono moved/Mr. Convertito seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of January 22, 2013.” Motion passed 8-0.

B. Approval of Minutes of the Special Meeting of January 24, 2013. Mr. Kery moved/Mrs. Gerber seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of January 24, 2013.” Motion passed 8-0.

C. Approval of Minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 29, 2013. Ms. Iacono moved/Mrs. Gerber seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 29, 2013.” Motion passed 8-0.

Fairfield Ludlowe High School Educational Specifications.

Mr. Kery moved/Mrs. Gerber seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve the Fairfield Ludlowe High School Educational Specifications.” Mr. Dwyer made a friendly amendment to remove the renovation of student lavatories from the educational specifications; Mr. Kery and Mrs. Gerber accepted. Ms. Iacono called the question, seconded by Mr. Kery; it passed 6-2 (Kennelly, Convertito, Gerber, Dwyer, Iacono, Kery in favor; Liu, Fattibene against). The amended motion passed 7-1 (Kennelly, Convertito, Gerber, Dwyer, Iacono, Fattibene, Kery in favor; Liu against).

Adjournment

Ms. Iacono moved/Mrs. Kennelly seconded the recommended motion “that this Regular Meeting of the Board of Education Adjourn.” Motion passed 8-0. Meeting adjourned 10:33PM.

Detailed Minutes:

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chairman Philip Dwyer called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m. Other members present were Jennifer Maxon Kennelly, John Convertito, Perry Liu, Jessica Gerber, Pamela Iacono (arrived 7:40 p.m.), Paul Fattibene, and Tim Kery. Sue Brand was absent. Also in attendance were Dr. David Title, members of Central Office, student representatives Marco Congello and Alice Rocha, and approximately 25 members of the public.

Mr. Dwyer led the Board and audience in the pledge of allegiance.

2. Presentations

New Teacher and Administrator Evaluation Plan/Requirements

Dr. Title introduced Ms. Esther Bobowick, Director, Professional Development Services (CES). Ms. Bobowick stated that she was a student in Fairfield, and taught at Andrew Warde and Ludlowe as a Special Education Teacher. She stated that her current position as Director is to function as a district/state liaison for Professional Development Services encompassing 17 school districts. She stated that her presentation will focus on the minimum requirements for the new teacher and administrator evaluation program. Ms. Bobowick explained the design process would consider multiple standards, promote consistency, foster dialogue about student learning, encourage aligned professional development, and ensure feasibility of implementation. Ms. Bobowick stated that the guidelines are reflected in a chart as follows:

- Levels of Performance: Overall ratings are: Exemplary, Proficient, Developing and Below standard.
- Process: Orientation, Planning and Goal setting, Evidence Collection, Mid-year check in, Local reporting, State Reporting, Summative assessment.
- Student growth and development: 1-4 goals for student growth, measured by Indicators of Academic Growth and Development (IAGD) based on standardized state tests, one non-standardized indicator, and a mutual agreement necessary for weighting of multiple IAGDs.
- Whole school learning indicators OR student feedback.
- Performance and practice: Standards-based framework and observations
- Parent OR Peer Feedback
- Support and development

Ms. Bobowick stated that goals must be aligned with common core of teaching, and that the biggest challenge thus far in the pilot districts is time. Ms. Bobowick stated that as an example, a principal with 45 teachers may need 7 hours to go through the process, which equals 315 hours, or 42 days of time. Training time is critical. Data teams need to know what is being collected; there is a 5-8 day commitment just to be trained in how to do this.

Mr. Convertito asked if every teacher and administrator need to be evaluated every year. Ms. Bobowick stated yes. Ms. Bobowick stated that Bridgeport, Norwalk, Bethany, Litchfield, New London, and Waterford are some of the pilot districts. In response to Mr. Convertito, Dr. Title stated that there are no collective bargaining implications, all the same rules apply under this system that are currently applied, but there is a lot more to be done.

Mr. Kery asked what happens when a teacher and administrator cannot reach an agreement on the teacher goals. Ms. Bobowick stated that if a mutual agreement on goals is not accomplished, there is a dispute process, but the goal setting should be up to the administrator to have a conversation around the goal, and ensure the goal is attainable and appropriate. Ms. Bobowick stated that goals may change mid-year due to extraordinary circumstances such as when a teacher is absent for 8 weeks, and conversely the goal can be enhanced if students are doing very well. Mr. Kery asked about flexibility with this program, and Ms. Bobowick stated that these are the minimum requirements. In response to Mr. Kery, Dr. Title stated that this process is not within our purview to change, but perhaps some efficiencies can be created such as all 5th grade teachers with the same goal – but this will be labor

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intensive. Dr. Title stated that the flexibility relates only to next year; it is possible to evaluate less than 100% of teachers, but starting in 14/15, everyone does everything. Dr. Title stated that this must all be done at the same time as adapting to common core and new smarter balanced assessments. Ms. Bobowick stated that every state is facing the same dilemma from the federal government.

Mr. Dwyer asked about the 7 hours being a guess. Ms. Bobowick stated that it is a realistic guess, depending on the administrator.

Ms. Iacono stated that she has no confidence that this will be pulled off in time, and requested a copy of the presentation. Ms. Bobowick stated that the goals might have benchmark assessments which are very specific and quantifiable. Ms. Iacono asked how to determine school-wide goals. Ms. Bobowick stated that it should be as many people as possible from district that would add to the decision making process. Ms. Iacono asked what Dr. Title's plan is. Dr. Title stated that there is a committee developing the administrator evaluation and teacher evaluation, and they have to get something in by April 15. Ms. Iacono asked who evaluates the administrators. Dr. Title stated that there is no change in the organizational chart. Ms. Bobowick stated that highly trained teachers may also do observations, and Denver is using this model – 'complementary evaluators'. Dr. Title stated the term "teacher" also applies to math specialists, reading specialists, special education, etc. Ms. Iacono asked for a breakout of the work-load ratios – teacher to administrator. Ms. Iacono stated that she is concerned with the budget constraints and the requirement to have more administrators. Ms. Bobowick stated that she agrees with Ms. Iacono that more administrators are needed for this evaluation process, the new common core, etc., and it would be better to not cut administrators for at least the next 2 years while this new evaluation is being formed. Ms. Iacono asked what is being done to communicate this to the public so that it is clear that administrators cannot be cut. Ms. Bobowick stated that there are 8 or 9 bills before the legislature related to this process in order make this public, etc. This was put in to law so that Connecticut could get a waiver for 'No Child Left Behind'.

Mr. Liu asked how the pilot districts are doing. Ms. Bobowick stated that it is a struggle due to time, and there are no penalties for pilot districts. In the training piece – teachers need to understand the process. Mr. Liu asked whether it was too early to see if this is helping to identify teachers that are doing well or that need help. Ms. Bobowick stated that it is too early in the process. In response to Mr. Liu, Dr. Title stated that a draft is being crafted to submit by April, which won't be implemented until September. Dr. Title stated that a partial implementation may be more trouble than it is worth.

Mr. Fattibene asked about the rating areas. Ms. Bobowick stated that that the district makes the decision, and this does not require a Board decision. Dr. Title stated the only thing the Board has to do is make the decision on partial implementation; the plan design is not a Board vote. Ms. Bobowick stated the matrix that is used is a State matrix.

Mr. Convertito asked about administrator evaluation, and whether teachers can provide feedback. Ms. Bobowick stated that 10% of the administrator evaluation is comprised of teacher and parent feedback.

Mrs. Kennelly stated that there is a time lapse with test scores. Dr. Title stated that if test scores come back late there is a provision to change the final rating. Mrs. Kennelly asked if there might be a conflict of interest if the teacher goals don't support the administrator goals. Ms. Bobowick stated that this is

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usually not the case, but there is an appeal process. Mrs. Kennelly stated that an appeal process can impact time.

Ms. Iacono asked if CAFE was involved with this process. Ms. Bobowick stated that CAFE was involved and that's why it took so long; the implications for budget and time were not fully understood.

Mr. Convertito asked what is gained by opting out of NCLB and going with this? Dr. Title said NCLB had escalating consequences; the law was broken and couldn't be fixed or undone, so the waiver process ensued and the federal government pushed this reform process. Dr. Title stated that if this were implemented properly it would have a positive impact, but the feasibility of doing this now is questionable.

Ms. Bobowick stated that Fairfield is very participatory and other districts look to Fairfield for guidance on this.

3. Approval of Minutes

- A. Approval of Minutes of the Special Meeting of January 22, 2013. Ms. Iacono moved/Mr. Convertito seconded the recommended motion "that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of January 22, 2013."

Motion Carried: 8:0:0

- B. Approval of Minutes of the Special Meeting of January 24, 2013. Mr. Kery moved/Mrs. Gerber seconded the recommended motion "that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of January 24, 2013."

Motion Carried: 8:0:0

- C. Approval of Minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 29, 2013. Ms. Iacono moved/Mrs. Gerber seconded the recommended motion "that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 29, 2013."

Motion Carried: 8:0:0

4. Student Reports

Marco Congello and Alice Rocha reported on current events and accomplishments at Fairfield Ludlowe High School. School staff and community responded quickly when the roof blew off. CAPT testing begins on Monday, and AP test registration is in the process of being distributed. Winter sports season was very successful; wrestling team had 25 victories, 3 wrestlers advanced to State Open, and one advanced to the New England's; gymnastics won 2nd in FCIACs and 3rd in States and one gymnast won individual championship in FCIACs (Perry Kindall). Despite the blizzard, the Quebec, AFS and Builders Beyond Borders trips took place. The college panel info session was held for juniors.

5. Board Committee/Liaison Reports

Ms. Iacono stated that the Riverfield Building Committee is trying to re-work the plan to get the costs down to \$13 million.

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Ms. Gerber stated that the Communications Committee has been attending PTA meetings and the PTAs are pleased the BOE is reaching out. The committee hopes to finish the PTA visits by March and will get a report out after that time. Ms. Gerber stated 2 things are consistently commented on: public comment and minutes. Ms. Gerber stated that there have been comments on the placement and timing of public comment. Ms. Gerber stated that it has been commented that the minutes can be difficult to read with regard to the votes, and they sometimes take too long to get posted. Ms. Gerber stated that it might be helpful to provide BOE biographies on line. Ms. Gerber stated that any communications decisions will be voted on by the Board. Ms. Iacono stated that audience is broader than only PTA's.

Mr. Dwyer stated that the Goals Committee is moving along.

6. Superintendent's Report

Update on Blizzard/2012-2013 School Calendar

Dr. Title stated that this is the year of natural disasters and that the last day of school is currently Wed. June 26. The graduation date will be decided after April 1, and will be on the agenda for the April meeting. We have not received any indication that State will entertain a waiver. Dr. Title stated that there has been extraordinary cooperation with Town and school personnel, which made it possible to open the school after the roof blowing off as well as after the blizzard. This work rivaled the hurricane effort, and Dr. Title publicly thanked Sal and Dave Fryer for their efforts. In response to Mrs. Kennelly, Dr. Title stated that Ludlowe doesn't have to make up the lost day due to the roof, but the staff will make up the day. Mr. Kery echoed the sentiments of Dr. Title regarding the Town and schools working together, and that there are very good examples of staff positively impacting student learning under difficult circumstances. Mr. Kery stated that we have an extraordinary team and he thanked the team for all their efforts.

7. Review of Capital Projects Waterfall

Dr. Title stated that in preparation for the Capital Projects Summit, the waterfall was updated with cash-flow projection. Dr. Title spoke to the waterfall enclosure, created by Lisa Moscato, Tom (Cullen) and Doreen (Munsell). Dr. Title stated that he is requesting feedback on this as there will be a revised capital project plan for the Board's consideration. Fairfield Ludlowe High School is in several places, and the question is should this be done at once or over several years? Mr. Dwyer stated that projects can be swapped but monies will have to be the same.

Mr. Kery asked if projects exceed the \$8 million 13-14 number, then another project has to come out? Dr. Title stated that this is a living document and this is all trade-offs, but none of these projects are pre-approved. Dr. Title stated that there is no sentiment from BOF to move anything up.

In response to a question from Mrs. Kennelly, Dr. Title stated that we used to carry a \$2 million number that we could ask for, and now we have actual numbers of which none add up to \$2 million, which saves money.

8. Old Business

Fairfield Ludlowe High School Educational Specifications

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Mr. Dwyer stated that Mr. Bill Silver of Silver/Petrucci and Associates is in attendance to answer questions, not to make a presentation.

Mr. Kery moved, Mrs. Gerber seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve the Fairfield Ludlowe High School Educational Specifications.”

Mr. Kery asked if there is a way to improve the air quality without spending millions of dollars. Mr. Silver answered that the upper level only could be air conditioned. Mr. Kery asked if better air flow were possible. Mr. Silver stated that capacity would have to be added to those fans at a significant cost.

In response to a question from Mr. Dwyer, the original Ed Specs did not include any ventilation improvements.

Mr. Kery asked if toilet code updates are mandatory or optional? Mr. Silver stated that the ADA is not mandatory, it is a federal law; not state statute, and that some parts of school are in compliance.

Dr. Title stated that the student lavatory is a renovation of deteriorating lavatories.

Mr. Kery stated that the survey was done prior to roof blowing off, and asked if there is a sense of urgency with evaluating the roof. Mr. Morabito stated that the roof that was blown off had a warranty that expired in 2006, and the roof is aging and problematic; but we cannot predict roof failure. Mr. Kery asked if engineers had checked the remainder of the roof. Mr. Morabito said it is not an immediate concern, but on a 15 year warranty we are on the 22nd year. Ms. Iacono asked if projects were to be ranked by urgency, should the roof be done prior to the windows or toilets. Mr. Silver stated that weatherproofing is highest priority, and would provide better insulative value. Dr. Title stated that if something needs to be knocked off the Fairfield Ludlowe Project, then it should be the lavatories.

Mrs. Kennelly stated that coming back to waterfall, if something were added, then something needs to be taken away. Dr. Title said roof may take 2 years to do and that there is a long lead time on windows and on the roof. Dr. Title is looking for direction on what to take to Board of Selectman for consideration.

Mr. Dwyer asked if the air conditioning is not part of waterfall, and if it became a priority then the waterfall would have to be changed. Dr. Title confirmed this.

Ms. Iacono asked if there is an air quality issue at Fairfield Ludlowe. Mr. Cullen clarified that the new spaces for the Fairfield Ludlowe addition would be required to have mechanical means for fresh air and air conditioning. Mr. Cullen stated that there are air quality issues within the guidance area, there is a need for supplemental air. Mr. Greg Hatzis stated that the means of assessment is through “Tools for Schools”; this survey will take place using a new online survey; there may be some updates by the next meeting. Mr. Hatzis stated that the number one complaint is thermal comfort; all windows in the back of school, with sun beating down in rooms causes high levels of heat. Mr. Cullen stated that new windows will help with this. Mr. Kery asked if it would be more optimal to do this duct work when the roof is off, and Mr. Silver stated no. Mrs. Kennelly asked whether a no-build was considered by re-configuring space. Mr. Silver stated that space efficiency was looked at and no-build was considered and it is in the report. Mr. Dwyer asked if the Board could refer to page 3 of the Educational Specifications.

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Board discussion followed on actual numbers (cost) as listed in the Educational Specification. Dr. Title stated the menu of options is listed on the last page. Mr. Silver stated that there are some 'soft costs' involved and are all listed.

Ms. Iacono asked if the lounge in "lounge relocation" was a space only for seniors. Mr. Hatzis stated that he would review the policy on this. He stated he was looking to provide a place that students could go to study rather than having students congregating in places where they shouldn't be. Mr. Hatzis stated this is about re-purposing of current space. Mr. Silver stated that the square feet of this space is roughly the size of half of a classroom.

Mrs. Kennelly asked whether reimbursables are factored in. Mr. Silver stated that this is capital costs only. Mr. Dwyer said to review the waterfall chart. Mr. Cullen stated that the net rate is 26% for renovations. Dr. Title stated that the net rate is closer to 20%. Mr. Cullen stated that reimbursement rates will differ based on whether the project is submitted as a whole or separately.

Mr. Fattibene stated that there are 2 schemes. Mr. Silver stated that Scheme 2 is simpler and has operational benefits beyond dollars. Mr. Fattibene asked if fresh air system duct work were added would that make it cheaper to put in air conditioning later. Mr. Silver stated that the same ductwork cannot be used; air conditioning requires larger size duct work.

In response to a question from Mr. Convertito, Mr. Cullen stated that roof warranties will not be affected by any cuts done in the roof for duct work. Mr. Convertito asked, and Mr. Cullen confirmed that oversized duct work was added at Sherman school to provide air conditioning at a later date.

In response to Mr. Kery, Dr. Title stated that the reimbursement of 20% would be spread out over years.

Mr. Dwyer asked if the \$11 million were passed, would that fit into the waterfall? Dr. Title stated that it would have to make it to all the Town bodies by June 30 for reimbursement. Dr. Title stated that there is no guarantee that this will be approved; this is to move it forward.

Mr. Kery stated the roof has to be done. Dr. Title stated that the windows also need to be done, as PCB testing was done. Mr. Kery stated that he is inclined to go with \$11 million and accepts the friendly amendment to remove the lavatories from the Educational Specifications.

Mr. Fattibene stated that he is dismayed at not being able to add in ductwork due to excess cost.

Mr. Dwyer stated the friendly amendment is to remove the renovation of student lavatories and adopt the Ed Specs for \$11,637,000 recognizing that this tells the Town that the HVAC issues in existing building and the toilets will have to come at a future phase. Mr. Dwyer stated that he did not see any objection to the friendly amendment, so it now becomes the main motion.

Mr. Cullen confirmed that the only change is to remove lavatories.

Ms. Iacono asked if it is going to cost more money to put in ductwork at a later time. Mr. Silver stated it is more cost effective to put in ductwork now, but new windows may vastly improve temperature.

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Mr. Dwyer stated the Ed Specs include 2 science classrooms, 2 general purpose classrooms, cafeteria, senior lounge, windows, lockers, and roofing; it does not include the student lavatories or the HVAC in the existing building.

Public Comment on Motion:

Suzanne Miska, Ryegate Road stated that she is concerned about the configuration of school in the event of a fire. She suggests taking the day care out and redistricting rather than asking for taxpayers to pay the bill.

Cathy Coyle , Sherwood Farm Road, stated that the request for a Building Committee was made over a year ago. There are a number of issues that need to be addressed. She encouraged the Board to expedite the Ed Specs.

Christine Vitale, Verna Hill Road, stated that it is hot in the school; she appreciates the price tag but the effect of the heat should not be discounted. She stated she is also concerned about how quickly the lavatory renovation was dismissed and asked that this be reconsidered.

Mr. Liu stated that he cannot support this; he stated he does support a new roof and new windows, but because this involves adding space without exploring other options, he cannot support it.

Mrs. Kennelly stated that moving the ECC has been mentioned several times and is there a reason this has not been pursued? Mr. Dwyer stated that the Board approved this approach and it would require a Board vote to take a different approach. Ms. Iacono stated that this space was designed specifically for that program, and more than \$4 million dollars for this project was invested. Ms. Iacono stated that Oldfield is not within our purview. Mrs. Gerber stated that the difference between the two high schools this year and next year is 122 students. Mrs. Gerber stated that next year, Fairfield Warde High School will also be over 1400 (capacity), and so it would not make much sense to redistrict.

Mr. Liu stated that these are all theories and he has not seen a real breakdown; he suggested taking a look at the different ways to see what cost benefit works best.

Mr. Kery requested a point of order, that the redistricting has already been discussed 2 years ago.

Ms. Iacono moved to call the question, seconded by Mr. Kery.

Motion Carried: 6:2:0 Mrs. Kennelly, Mr. Convertito, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Ms. Iacono, Mr. Kery in favor; Mr. Liu, Mr. Fattibene against

Mr. Kery moved/Mrs. Gerber seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve the Fairfield Ludlowe High School Educational Specifications.” Mr. Dwyer made a friendly amendment to remove the renovation of student lavatories from the educational specifications. Mr. Kery and Mrs. Gerber accepted.

Motion Carried: 7:1:0 Mrs. Kennelly, Mr. Convertito, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Ms. Iacono, Mr. Fattibene, Mr. Kery in favor; Mr. Liu against

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9. New Business

Request from FairTV Cable Advisory Council

Mr. Dwyer stated that more documents are required before this can be discussed and this will be postponed to the next meeting.

10. Public Comments and Petitions

Dawn Llewellyn, Sturges Road stated that an Illinois superintendent reported that college readiness benchmarks dropped while using CPM.

Wendy Cohenuram, Park Drive, stated that she hopes the Board will take into consideration that many end-of-year plans involve non-refundable tickets, tuitions and days off from work.

11. Open Board Comment

Mr. Dwyer stated that the combined Board of Finance/Board of Selectman hearing is scheduled for March 5th at 7:00 p.m. Mr. Dwyer asked that Board members respond to Meg if attending the celebrity luncheon.

12. Adjournment

Ms. Iacono moved, Mrs. Kennelly seconded the recommended motion: “that this Regular Meeting of the Board of Education adjourn at 10:33 p.m.”

Motion Carried: 8:0:0

Jessica Gerber
Fairfield Public Schools
Secretary, Board of Education