

Voting Summary:

Regular Meeting Notes Fairfield BoE; January 30, 2014

Call to order of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education and Roll Call

Chairman Philip Dwyer called the Regular meeting to order at 7:35PM. Present were members Eileen Liu-McCormack (arrived 7:45), John Convertito, Donna Karnal, Jessica Gerber, Philip Dwyer, Paul Fattibene, Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly, John Llewellyn and Marc Patten. Others present were Dr. Title, members of the central office leadership team, student representatives Danielle Clarke, Ethan King and Bill Moeder and approximately 100 members of the public.

Chairman Dwyer asked the Board for unanimous consent to move agenda items 3 and 7 to follow after agenda item 8. The Board agreed.

New Business

Approval of Plan and Specifications for Riverfield Project 051-0125EA.

Mrs. Gerber moved/Mr. Patten seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve the plans and specifications for the Riverfield Project Number 051-0125EA. ” Motion passed 7-0-2 (Mr. Convertito, Ms. Karnal, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Fattibene, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Patten in favor; Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Llewellyn abstained).

Adoption of a Recommended Budget for the 2014-2015 Fiscal Year.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved/Mr. Convertito seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve an operating budget for the 2014-2015 fiscal year in the amount of \$----- as presented, to be forwarded to the Town of Fairfield.

Amendments

Mr. Patten moved/Mr. Convertito seconded “to eliminate World Language in grades 4 & 5 and to increase the instruction from 2 x 25 minutes to 4 x 25 minutes in grade 6. The net savings to the proposed budget for this change is \$75,029 (\$66,109 salary, \$8920 benefits)”. Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved/Mrs. Gerber seconded to postpone this amendment to a date certain. Motion passed 6-3 (Ms. Karnal, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Llewellyn and Mr. Patten in favor; Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Convertito, Mr. Fattibene against).

Mrs. Liu-McCormack moved/Mr. Llewellyn seconded “to increase the proposed budget by adding \$353,553 for the purpose of restoring the World Language program in grades 4, 5, 6 to the instructional levels in 2010-11”. Mr. Patten moved/Ms. Karnal seconded to postpone this amendment to a May discussion; motion failed 4-4-1 (Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Fattibene, Mr. Patten in favor; Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Llewellyn against; Mr. Convertito abstained). The original amendment failed 3-6 (Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal, Mr. Llewellyn in favor; Mr. Convertito, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Fattibene, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Patten against).

Mrs. Liu-McCormack moved/Mr. Llewellyn seconded “to increase the proposed budget by adding \$34,000 for

the purpose of reinstating the second 5th grade general music class by adding a .5 teaching position". Mr. Fattibene moved/Mr. Convertito seconded to amend this amendment to read, "I move to increase the proposed budget by adding \$34,000 for the purpose of enhancing 5th grade general music." This amendment failed 2-7 (Mr. Fattibene, Ms. Karnal in favor; Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Convertito, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Llewellyn, Mr. Patten against). The original amendment passed 6-2-1 (Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Convertito, Ms. Karnal, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Fattibene, Mr. Llewellyn in favor; Mr. Dwyer, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly against; Mr. Patten abstained).

Mr. Fattibene moved/Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded "to eliminate the sports facility rental fees collected from participants resulting in a loss of \$56,000 in revenue in the operating budget". Motion passed 9-0.

Mr. Convertito moved/Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded "to reduce the high school parking fees to their 2012-2013 levels at a net loss of \$20,000 of income to the operating budget". Motion failed 4-5 (Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Convertito, Mr. Fattibene, Mr. Llewellyn in favor; Ms. Karnal, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Patten against).

Mr. Patten moved/Mrs. Gerber seconded "to increase the budgeted cost for custodial services by approximately \$20,000 to permit PTAs to be exempt from reimbursement of overtime fees effective July 1, 2014". Mr. Convertito moved/Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded to amend this amendment to read, "to increase the budgeted cost for custodial services by \$10,000 to permit PTAs to be 50% exempt from reimbursement of overtime fees effective July 1, 2014." Motion failed 2-6 (Mr. Convertito, Mr. Dwyer in favor; Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Fattibene, Mr. Llewellyn, Mr. Patten against; Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly was not in the room for this vote). The original amendment passed 7-2 (Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Fattibene, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Llewellyn, Mr. Patten in favor; Mr. Convertito, Mr. Dwyer against).

Mr. Fattibene moved/Mr. Dwyer seconded "to increase account or object code 319 – Conference & Travel, sub-account 69 Board of Education Services, line item 54490 Workshops & Conferences in the proposed budget from \$0 to \$2400 for the purpose of paying the cost for Board of Education members to attend the annual CABE/CAPSS conference, with the priority of payment being given to the Board of Education members last elected and with any remaining balance being apportioned among the remaining attending Board of Education members, if requested". Motion passed 8-1 (Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Fattibene, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Llewellyn, Mr. Patten; Mr. Convertito against).

Mrs. Liu-McCormack moved/Mr. Llewellyn seconded "to increase the proposed budget by adding \$9500 for the purpose of increasing testing for gifted and talented students in middle school". After discussion and public comment Mrs. Liu-McCormack withdrew her motion.

Mr. Fattibene moved/Mr. Patten seconded to suspend the rules and extend the meeting to 1:00AM. Motion passed 9-0.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack moved/Mr. Llewellyn seconded "to increase the proposed budget by adding \$10,000 to enhance the MS Gifted & Talented Program". Motion failed 3-5-1 (Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Fattibene, Mr. Llewellyn in favor; Mr. Convertito, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Patten against; Ms. Karnal abstained).

Original motion, as amended:

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved/Mr. Convertito seconded the recommended motion “that the Board of Education approve an operating budget for the 2014-2015 fiscal year in the amount of \$157,022,051 as presented, to be forwarded to the Town of Fairfield”. Motion passed 7-1-1 (Mr. Convertito, Ms. Karnal, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Fattibene, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Patten in favor; Mr. Llewellyn against, Mrs. Liu-McCormack abstained).

Adjournment

Mr. Convertito moved/Ms. Karnal seconded the recommended motion “that this Regular Meeting of the Board of Education adjourn”. Motion passed 9-0. Meeting adjourned 12:05AM.

Detailed Minutes:

Board of Education, Fairfield Public Schools
501 Kings Highway East, 2nd Floor Board Conference Room, Fairfield, CT
Thursday, January 30, 2014
Regular Meeting Minutes

Call to order of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education and Roll Call

Chairman Philip Dwyer called the Regular meeting to order at 7:35PM. Present were members Eileen Liu-McCormack (arrived 7:45), John Convertito, Donna Karnal, Jessica Gerber, Philip Dwyer, Paul Fattibene, Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly, John Llewellyn and Marc Patten. Others present were Dr. Title, members of the Central Office Leadership Team, student representatives Danielle Clarke, Ethan King and Bill Moeder and approximately 100 members of the public.

Chairman Dwyer led the Board and audience in the Pledge of Allegiance, and asked the Board for unanimous consent to move agenda items 3 (Approval of Minutes) and 7 (Old Business) to follow after agenda item 8. The Board agreed.

Student Reports

Student Representatives Ethan King and Bill Moeder reported for Fairfield Ludlowe High School; juniors in Ludlowe are adjusting to the SBAC, seniors have been accepted to Penn State, Harvard, University of Pennsylvania, University of Connecticut, and Cornell, among others; the cafeteria expansion plans are in the works; mid-terms have ended; girls basketball is a contender for the FCIAC title, boys wrestling improved their record last night, and boys basketball, ice hockey and swimming are on track for the state tournament.

Student Representative Danielle Clarke reported for Fairfield Warde High School; mid-terms are over; the MEH class is going to Paris, Milan, Florence and Rome in April; a gap program presentation will be held on February 4; Military Career Day will be March 19; a school club is giving a presentation on healthy relationships; the school store will open Monday; the basketball, hockey, and wrestling teams are doing well, and girls indoor track placed 4th in FCIACs.

Board Committee/Liaison Reports

Mr. Fattibene reported that decisions were rendered on six separate referrals that were sent to the Transportation Safety Advisory Board.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Title reported that \$500,000-\$700,000 in savings is expected from the cost containment measures put in place to offset the \$1.4 million shortfall; there will be another update at the February 25 meeting, and most likely at each meeting thereafter, until the end of the fiscal year.

New Business

Approval of Plans and Specifications for Riverfield Project 051-0125EA

Mrs. Gerber moved/Mr. Patten seconded the recommended motion "that the Board of Education approve the plans and specifications for the Riverfield Project Number 051-0125EA"

Mr. Dwyer explained the project and the lag times in the approval process. Mr. Quinn, the Riverfield Building Committee Chairman, stated that neighborhoods on Hunter Road and Lakeside were mostly concerned about traffic and parking; a traffic plan and study were undertaken which improved traffic flow with trucks and deliveries.

Motion passed 7-0-2 (Mr. Convertito, Ms. Karnal, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Fattibene, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Patten in favor; Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Llewellyn abstained)

Adoption of a Recommended Budget for the 2014-2015 Fiscal Year

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved/Mr. Convertito seconded the recommended motion "that the Board of Education approve an operating budget for the 2014-2015 fiscal year in the amount of \$----- as presented, to be forwarded to the Town of Fairfield"

Ms. Karnal read a prepared statement regarding her previously discussed Guidance Counselor amendment; she stated that she will not be moving forward with this suggestion and that her top priority is the student body and she thanked the Central Office Staff for being responsive to her questions.

Board Members discussed proposed amendments and referred to a handout with numbered amendments.

Mr. Convertito stated he is withdrawing his proposed amendment #6:

I move to increase the proposed budget by adding \$52,000 (\$34,000 salary, \$18,000 benefits) for the purpose of adding 1.0 FTE to provide support to the media centers at the high schools.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack stated that she is postponing her proposed amendment #1:

I move to not offer busing to those families who pay full tuition for the pre-K programs at Burr and Dwight schools at a net projected savings of approximately \$42,000.

She requested it be brought back to the Board for more discussion at a future date.

Mr. Llewellyn stated that he is postponing his proposed amendment #2:

I move to restructure the Curriculum Leader positions at a net change to the budget of \$_____.

Mr. Llewellyn requested it be postponed and brought back to the Board for discussion at a future date; that this amendment could bring a \$500,000 savings by year 3; that Curriculum Leaders should become part time department heads and part time teachers; and their positions should be located within the schools.

Mr. Patten proposed amendment #3:

Mr. Patten moved/Mr. Convertito seconded “to eliminate World Language in grades 4 & 5 and to increase the instruction from 2 x 25 minutes to 4 x 25 minutes in grade 6. The net savings to the proposed budget for this change is \$75,029 (\$66,109 salary, \$8920 benefits)”

Mr. Patten stated that this amendment is not intended to take away from the World Language (WL) requirement. Mr. Convertito stated that once eliminated, it is difficult to bring back; that his preference is to restore 6th grade and bring back the 4th and 5th grade to its previous levels; and that he does not support this amendment. Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly stated that she would like to postpone this to allow the staff to review scheduling and curriculum issues.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved/Mrs. Gerber seconded to postpone this amendment to a date certain.

Ms. Karnal agreed with Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly and if this item could be brought back for discussion prior to September. Dr. Title voiced his concern regarding instructional time for Language Arts and the need to review the 6th grade schedule, and that he is not in favor of removing 4th and 5th grade WL. Mrs. Liu-McCormack stated that postponing it decreases the chances to reinstate. Mr. Fattibene stated he would not support postponing the amendment, or this motion, and would prefer the administration decide on how best to improve the program. Mr. Dwyer stated the Board has an interest in adding WL back in the schedule, and the motion to postpone gives the staff a chance for review.

Public Comment on Motion to Postpone:

Trish Donovan, Taintor Drive, stated that she is against postponing the motion; that learning a language early is preferable.

Carolyn Trabuco, Sherwood Farm Road, stated that she reached out to experts on this; more time is needed to research.

Motion passed 6-3 (Ms. Karnal, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Llewellyn and Mr. Patten in favor; Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Convertito, Mr. Fattibene against)

Mrs. Liu-McCormack proposed Amendment #4:

Mrs. Liu-McCormack moved/Mr. Llewellyn seconded “to increase the proposed budget by adding \$353,553 for the purpose of restoring the World Language program in grades 4, 5, 6 to the instructional levels in 2010-11”

Mrs. Liu-McCormack stated that WL should start as early as possible; Mr. Llewellyn agreed. Mr. Patten stated a full restoration of WL is preferable. Ms. Karnal asked whether the WL is a financial issue or Language Arts time constraint issue. Dr. Title responded that it was both.

Mr. Patten moved/Ms. Karnal seconded to postpone this amendment to a May discussion;

Public Comment on Motion to Postpone:

Dawn Llewellyn, Sturges Road, stated she is against the motion to postpone, and asked for data regarding the analysis on WL.

Sue Miska, Ryegate Road, stated that the system of postponement is flawed, and asked for a budget cut cost analysis.

Tricia Donovan, Taintor Drive, asked that the money be put in the budget now; that May is too late.

Motion failed 4-4-1 (Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Fattibene, Mr. Patten in favor; Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Llewellyn against; Mr. Convertito abstained)

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly stated that she would like the WL program re-examined; a real plan is needed with input

from the administrators. Board members generally agreed that the WL program should be enhanced. Dr. Title stated that many different delivery models exist for WL. Mr. Convertito stated that while he fully supports reinstating the WL program, he cannot support this motion without a clear plan.

Public Comment on Motion:

Neal Fink, Crest Terrace, stated that while he would like to see programs fully restored, he is concerned that it will be a false hope, given that other Town bodies have yet to decide on the budget.

Matt Wagner, Grasmere Ave. and Registrar of Voters, stated that the Board should be advocating for what it wants the curriculum to be, and not discuss a program cut due to a budgetary concern.

The original amendment failed 3-6 (Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal, Mr. Llewellyn in favor; Mr. Convertito, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Fattibene, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Patten against).

Mrs. Liu-McCormack proposed Amendment #5:

Mrs. Liu-McCormack moved/Mr. Llewellyn seconded "to increase the proposed budget by adding \$34,000 for the purpose of reinstating the second 5th grade general music class by adding a .5 teaching position"

Mrs. Liu-McCormack stated that this amendment is a 'need', not a 'want'. In response to Mr. Patten's request to hear from a principal, Mill Hill Principal, Kevin Chase, stated that the recent Mill Hill music performance was excellent; the current music structure is successful; core instruction would be impacted if more time had to be carved out for music.

Dr. Title stated that this has been in effect for less than a year and is still a work in progress; less costly options may exist.

Public Comment on Motion:

Ellen Jacobs, RTM District 9, stated that emails she has received request the restoration of instructional programs.

Jennifer Hoffman, Whitewood Drive, shared her child's letter regarding a request for more music instruction.

Jon Noyes, Holland Hill Music Teacher, stated that a devastating cut to the program was music composition; he asked the Board to consider the 5th graders.

Martha Vosburgh, Stratfield Music Teacher, stated that the teachers offer a fantastic music program, but the creative aspect has been cut the most.

Shardon Cardillo, Sherman Music Teacher, stated that she is also a product of Sherman School, and that 5th grade is the culmination of 6 years of music learning; one song may be a vehicle to learn several elements.

Sheila Doherty, Dwight Music Teacher, reaffirmed that the higher level thinking and creativity is what is now missing.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly asked for input from Mrs. Schmardel. Dr. Cutaia-Leonard stated that she and Mrs. Schmardel have been reviewing the program; the music department would prefer the full music curriculum to be reinstated; discussions on adding to the program without full reinstatement are ongoing; that 5th graders have additional opportunities for music with band and orchestra; and more time is required to meet with the elementary team and discuss ways to more fully implement the music program.

Mr. Fattibene moved/Mr. Convertito seconded to amend this amendment to read, "I move to increase the proposed budget by adding \$34,000 for the purpose of enhancing 5th grade general music."

Mr. Fattibene stated that this allows administrators to determine the best way to enhance the program which may not include a .5 position. Mr. Convertito stated that this is something that was just recently cut; having heard from principals that more instructional time is needed for core subjects, and adding it back in without specifics creates a target to cut it again. Mrs. Liu-McCormack appreciates the amendment, but stated that this program has previously run successfully, and the teachers can do so again.

Mr. Dwyer stated that this is a question of balance. Mr. Fattibene stated that Dr. Title may add this to the budget where he sees fit.

This amendment failed 2-7 (Mr. Fattibene, Ms. Karnal in favor; Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Convertito, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Llewellyn, Mr. Patten against)

The original amendment passed 6-2-1 (Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Convertito, Ms. Karnal, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Fattibene, Mr. Llewellyn in favor; Mr. Dwyer, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly against; Mr. Patten abstained).

Mr. Fattibene proposed Amendment #7:

Mr. Fattibene moved/Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded "to eliminate the sports facility rental fees collected from participants resulting in a loss of \$56,000 in revenue in the operating budget"

Mr. Fattibene stated that students should not have any fees for sports participation; Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly agreed that singling out certain sports for fees is unjust.

Public Comment:

Sue Miska, Ryegate Road, thanked the Board for listening to parents and students.

Motion passed 9-0

Mr. Convertito proposed Amendment #8:

Mr. Convertito moved/Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded "to reduce the high school parking fees to their 2012-2013 levels at a net loss of \$20,000 of income to the operating budget"

Mr. Convertito stated that this should be a revenue neutral fee to cover the cost; it should not be a revenue source. Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly stated that parking is a privilege.

Public Comment:

Suzanne Miska, Ryegate Road, stated that the original intention for the fee was to cover the security officer at both schools and she supports the motion.

Motion failed 4-5 (Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Convertito, Mr. Fattibene, Mr. Llewellyn in favor; Ms. Karnal, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Patten against).

Mr. Patten proposed Amendment #9:

Mr. Patten moved/Mrs. Gerber seconded "to increase the budgeted cost for custodial services by approximately \$20,000 to permit PTAs to be exempt from reimbursement of overtime fees effective July 1, 2014"

Mr. Patten stated that PTA groups shouldn't be penalized for supporting the schools. Mrs. Gerber stated she is in support of this motion; she approved the fees last year but misunderstood the burden this placed on PTAs. Dr. Title stated that the \$20,000 figure was an approximation of the overtime fees that would be charged to PTA's; an agreement with the First Selectman allowed the collected fees to be kept by Fairfield Public Schools, rather than the Town. In response to Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Dr. Title stated that a school PTA overtime allowance fund, if created, would have to be managed by staff. Mr. Convertito stated he is not in favor of anything that must be tracked, but is in favor of a fee that would at least cover custodial fees.

Mr. Convertito moved/Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded to amend this amendment to read, "to increase the budgeted cost for custodial services by \$10,000 to permit PTAs to be 50% exempt from reimbursement of overtime fees effective July 1, 2014."

Board discussion followed on whether PTAs should be charged any fees, containing overtime custodial costs, and weekend events.

Public Comment:

Melissa Rosenbluh, Greenbriar Rd, requested clarification on fees.

Lisa Havey, Longview Ave, stated that the Board should support PTAs.

Neal Fink, Crest Terrace, asked for a full exemption of PTA fees.

Ann Harvey, Hemlock Road, stated she is opposed to this amendment.

Kristen Tharrington, Walbin Court, stated that if significant fees are incurred, parents will see it as another non-profit where profits are dwindled.

In response to Ms. Karnal, Dr. Title stated that the PTAs, going forward, will be charged for custodial fees after 11pm on a weekday, and for weekend events.

Motion failed 2-6 (Mr. Convertito, Mr. Dwyer in favor; Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Fattibene, Mr. Llewellyn, Mr. Patten against; Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly was not in the room for this vote).

Public Comment:

Ann Harvey, Hemlock Road, suggested that there should be no fees if out by 11pm.

Lisa Havey, Longview Ave., stated that PTA fees are not equitable, some PTAs can afford more.

Neal Fink, Crest Terrace, stated that the PTA is not an ordinary non-profit; it serves the school district.

Dr. Title confirmed that this motion would completely exempt the PTA from any fees. Mr. Dwyer confirmed that outstanding PTA bills must still be paid.

The original amendment passed 7-2 (Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Fattibene, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Llewellyn, Mr. Patten in favor; Mr. Convertito, Mr. Dwyer against)

Mr. Fattibene proposed Amendment #10:

Mr. Fattibene moved/Mr. Dwyer seconded "to increase account or object code 319 – Conference & Travel, sub-account 69 Board of Education Services, line item 54490 Workshops & Conferences in the proposed budget from \$0 to \$2400 for the purpose of paying the cost for Board of Education members to attend the annual CABE/CAPSS conference, with the priority of payment being given to the Board of Education members last elected and with any remaining balance being apportioned among the remaining attending Board of Education members, if requested"

Mr. Fattibene stated that this is a beneficial conference, especially for new members, to understand state issues, and make meetings more productive. Mr. Dwyer encouraged Board members to attend at their own expense, but he is supportive of this motion for those members who request it.

Mr. Patten failed to obtain unanimous consent to change the amount from \$2400 to \$3000.

Motion passed 8-1 (Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Fattibene, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Llewellyn, Mr. Patten; Mr. Convertito against)

Mr. Dwyer asked for an updated budget number from Mrs. Munsell; she stated that the budget has an additional \$112,400, which now brings the overall budget to a 3.86% increase.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack proposed Amendment #11:

Mrs. Liu-McCormack moved/Mr. Llewellyn seconded "to increase the proposed budget by adding \$9500 for the purpose of increasing testing for gifted and talented students in middle school"

Mrs. Liu-McCormack stated that this population is often overlooked, special education and gifted students are equally as far away from the center on average; this population deserves to be identified and receive services; these are the best and the brightest; Fairfield should be focusing on this population as well.

In response to Mrs. Gerber, Dr. Boice stated that approximately 20% of students are identified as Gifted. Dr. Cutaia-Leonard stated that students are identified by Naglieri and Cogat testing in the 3rd grade, and may also be identified via student portfolio review thereafter.

In response to Mrs. Liu-McCormack's question regarding the over identification of Gifted students in the middle school, Dr. Cutaia-Leonard responded that a 2009 Gifted Program review refined the program with a new testing schedule and an increased cutoff score.

Public Comment:

Julie Gottlieb, Applegate Road, stated that a child can be both Gifted and Special Ed; they are not mutually exclusive.

Marcy Spolyar, Brookridge Ave., stated the program should be strengthened, not the testing.

Dawn Llewellyn, Sturges Road, agreed that the program should be extended.

Ellen Jacobs, Cedar Road, stated that boys mature later and she is in favor of a later test.

Maureen Sawyer, Thor Place, recommended adding to the program itself; not testing.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly clarified that there was no cut last year to the middle school gifted program; the cut was to Dr. Title's proposed enhancement to the program; and she agrees that the program needs improvement, not the testing, and she will not be supporting this amendment.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack received Board approval to withdraw this motion.

Mr. Dwyer stated that due to the late hour, the meeting will adjourn after public comment, and original agenda items 3 and 7 will be tabled to the next meeting.

Mr. Fattibene moved/Mr. Patten seconded to suspend the rules and extend the meeting to 1:00 AM. The Board unanimously approved, 9-0.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack moved/Mr. Llewellyn seconded "to increase the proposed budget by adding \$10,000 to enhance the MS Gifted & Talented Program"

Motion failed 3-5-1 (Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Mr. Fattibene, Mr. Llewellyn in favor; Mr. Convertito, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Patten against; Ms. Karnal abstained).

Mr. Dwyer read the main motion as amended "that the Board of Education approve an operating budget for the 2014-2015 fiscal year in the amount of \$157,022,051 as presented, to be forwarded to the Town of Fairfield"

Public Comment:

Kevin Chase, Mill Hill Principal, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders and the budget.

Nancy Haberly, Duck Farm Road, asked when consistency will be seen in schools; all students should be treated equally.

Lisa Davy, Wilton Road, stated she is a parent of a special education child and is shocked by the amount of outplacements.

Elizabeth McGoey, Stratfield School Principal, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Katherine McManus, Stratfield School, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Matt Hutzelmann, Pansy Rd., spoke in support of the budget as is.

Richard Curesky, Fairfield Teacher, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Kristen Tharrington, Walbin Court, spoke in support of the budget and the Curriculum Leaders.

Gina Luczaj, Sherwood Farm Road, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Ann Harvey, Hemlock Road, asked the Board to support teachers and Central Office Staff, including Curriculum Leaders.

Franklyn MacLean, NSS LA Teacher, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Elise Archibald, NSS Math/Science Teacher, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Bethany Winchester, Riverfield Teacher, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Martha Murphy, Riverfield Teacher, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Brenda Anziano, Riverfield Principal, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Annalisa Sherman, Burr School Teacher, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Amy Lacey, Stratfield Teacher, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Pam Williams, Riverfield Teacher, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Laura Deangelis, Riverfield Teacher, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Jessica Ottavio, Riverfield Teacher, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Maureen Sawyer, Thor Place, spoke in support of the budget and the Curriculum Leaders.

Christine Vitale, Verna Hill Road, spoke in support of budget.

Lauren Moreno, Sherman Teacher, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Lisa Henkel, Burr LA, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Eric Therriault, Jennings IIT, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Meagan Bolton, Jennings Teacher, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Kathleen Ruppert, Jennings Teacher, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Sara Bocchiere, Jennings Teacher, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Kathleen Kane, NSS Teacher, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Debbie Jackson, NSS Principal, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Andrea Leonardi, Director of Special Education, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Monica Schapper, Jennings LA, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Tara Hyder, Jennings LA, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Mary Ellen McKee, Mill Hill LA, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Tony Vuolo, Jennings Principal, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders and the budget.

Leslie Pearson, McKinley Principal, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Kristen Bruno, ECC Principal, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Frank Arnone, OHS Principal, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Dawn Llewellyn, Sturges Road, stated that more consistency is needed among schools.

Sue Miska, Ryegate Road, would have liked to have seen more principals support Music and World Language.

Jason Bluestein, Burr Principal, spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Tricia Donovan, Taintor Drive, stated that she is disappointed in the discussion tonight; priorities are not clear.

Mary Hogue, Stonewall Lane, spoke in support of the budget and appreciated the staff commentary.

Neal Fink, Crest Terrace, spoke in support of the budget and asked the Board to unanimously approve the budget.

Ken Lee, Rhoda Avenue, asked the Board to be unified and advocate for the budget.

Bob Esposito, FLHS Director of Pupil & Guidance Services, thanked the Board for not cutting counselors and spoke in support of Curriculum Leaders.

Mr. Llewellyn stated that he is a strong advocate to improve the district and there may be different ways to do things better; conflicting information was received on food services and special education, and more transparency is needed.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack stated that more time is needed to analyze the budget book, it is hasty to accept everything fully; priorities should be discussed before voting on the budget.

Mr. Patten stated that he fully supports the budget.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly stated that new members are at a disadvantage with the timing of the budget; Dr. Title is always open to suggestions on the budget; the January 31 deadline is hard and fast; Board members should submit questions and present ideas much earlier in the process than two days before the vote.

Mrs. Gerber stated that the Board is here to support the students; she thanked Dr. Title; and asked the Board to support the budget.

Motion passed 7-1-1 (Mr. Convertito, Ms. Karnal, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Fattibene, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Patten in favor; Mr. Llewellyn against, Mrs. Liu-McCormack abstained).

Adjournment

Mr. Convertito moved/Ms. Karnal seconded the recommended motion “that this Regular Meeting of the Board of Education adjourn”. Motion passed 9-0. Meeting adjourned 12:05AM.

*Jessica Gerber
Fairfield Public Schools
BOE Secretary*