

**Regular Meeting Minutes
Fairfield BoE, May 17, 2016**

NOTICE: A full meeting recording can be obtained from Fairfield Public Schools. Please call 203-255-8371 for more information and/or see the FPS website (under Board Meeting Minutes) for a link to FAIRTV.

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

Student Award Presentations were held at 7:00 PM.

Chairman Philip Dwyer called the Regular meeting to order at 7:51PM. Present were members Eileen Liu-McCormack, Marc Patten, Donna Karnal, Jessica Gerber, Philip Dwyer, Anthony Calabrese, Trisha Pytko, Jennifer Maxon-Kennelly and John Llewellyn. Others present were Superintendent Dr. David Title, members of the central office leadership team, and approximately 50 members of the public.

Old Business

Approval of Social Studies Curricula

Mrs. Gerber moved, Mr. Patten seconded that the Board of Education approve the Social Studies Curricula, PK-12.

Public Comment:

Tricia Donovan, Fairfield Resident: Thanked the group for creating a dynamic environment for parents and taking to heart the research standards.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly thanked Dr. Pugliese for responding to all of her questions; she enthusiastically supports the curriculum.

Motion Passed: 9-0

Approval of Social Studies Textbooks, Grades 6-12

Mrs. Gerber moved, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded that the Board of Education approve the recommended Social Studies Textbooks, Grades 6-12, per the memo dated April 29, 2016.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack said she enjoyed reading the texts. While not perfect, the content is there and she thanked the group for its patience and for all the work. She is still quoting some of the stuff from one of the textbooks, she finds it fascinating.

Motion Passed: 9-0

Approval of the Superintendent's Recommended Budget Adjustments

Mrs. Gerber moved, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded that the Board of Education approve the Superintendent's recommended budget adjustments as enclosed.

Mr. Llewellyn asked for an update on the budget cuts at the state level. He believed that per policy, the Board must approve transfers, and he asked about the process in getting this back to the Board. He also requested that the Technology Plan review be placed on the next agenda. Dr. Title said not much has changed at the state level regarding the budget; we will be a good partner with the Town. The budget will be managed to the bottom line as it is done every year; transfers are approved at end of the fiscal year.

Motion Passed: 9-0

Approval of the Recommended Elementary Math Textbook

Mrs. Gerber moved, Mr. Calabrese seconded that the Board of Education approve Bridges 2nd Edition as the recommended Elementary Math textbook.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack said she feels like déjà vu all over again. Math textbooks have a special place in her heart because math is one of the most important languages learned while at school. She has reviewed textbooks ad nauseum and she is baffled by this recommendation. She said this text has not been around for very long and also felt that parents

weren't fully included; she prefers tabling this, rather than rushing to spend half a million dollars. She's not sure how successful this will be. She doesn't feel that parents are 100% behind this as a community. She needs more data.

Mrs. Gerber expressed the importance of engaging with the teachers. In the process of doing this herself, she found out that a large number of teachers chose this text. She took the extra time to meet and speak with teachers at a number of different schools and heard positive feedback in terms of how the curriculum has moved forward and how the text plays an important role in that. She does not share the same concern as Mrs. Liu-McCormack.

Mr. Llewellyn said he also spoke to teachers and found that many were not involved in the process, but a select subset was; he also supports tabling this. He read from the meeting minutes of several years ago, which he said actually had some depth to them - several statements mentioning Fairfield's performance with the new curriculum. He is not convinced that the curriculum has raised the bar. He has questions regarding the data he received from Dr. Rasmussen. Wonders why we don't use free resource. This is not about money; this is really about a full and proper review prior to investing in a book.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said that Mrs. Liu-McCormack has had a month to meet with Mr. Wakeman and review any questions regarding this topic. She also referenced Mr. Llewellyn's comment and felt that his implication of impropriety with the process is an affront to the Board; the union rep that she met with completely assured her that it was an honest selection without pressure. Additionally, she was offended at Mr. Llewellyn's slap to the minutes, as he never offers any suggestions about them.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack said that due to availability, she met with Mr. Cummings instead of Mr. Wakeman.

Public Comment:

Dr. Gerry Kuroghlian, Fairfield Resident: Concerns with staff development in Math Program.

Adam King, Unquowa Road, New Rochelle 4th Grade Teacher: Math curriculum is for the students.

Vessy Doulis, Mill Plain Road: Objects to book.

Nicki Vinoski, Brookside Drive: Supports teachers and the book.

Tara Malecky, Crocus Court: Supports Math curriculum and materials.

Sara Bocchiere, Textbook Review Committee Member, Casimir Drive: Supports the text.

Suzanne Miska, Ryegate Road: Concern with PD Requirements.

Trish Donovan: Fairfield Resident: More evidence is needed to support this text.

Kelly Jacobson: Fairfield Resident: Her research showed different conclusions than those presented at the math review. Concerned about parents using outside math centers.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack said she is hearing different viewpoints and there shouldn't be a rush for spending. This dialogue has been very passionate.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack moved, Mr. Llewellyn seconded to postpone approval of this textbook indefinitely.

Mr. Llewellyn said trend analysis should be looked at and he supports postponing this until we are sure we have the right curriculum. Doesn't think we are knocking the cover off the ball with this curriculum. We shouldn't find a book to fit a curriculum that he believes trends do not indicate effectiveness.

Mr. Patten said if this was to postpone to June he might consider it, but he cannot support this motion; we've been requesting a resource for 2 years. Central Office is aware of the achievement gap and is working on addressing it.

Public Comment:

Adam King, Fairfield Resident: Supportive data based on SBAC will take years; PD is needed regardless of the choice made.

Mr. Dwyer is prepared to act now on the teachers' recommendation.

Mr. Llewellyn added that he wants to add iReady back in to the budget and he asked Mr. Patten if he would be amenable to postponing the vote until the October review of the District Improvement Plan and trend data.

Mr. Patten said no, he doesn't want to lose an entire year.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack questioned if 1 or 2 months of data would be sufficient for Mr. Wakeman to put some data

together and wondered about amending her motion.

Mr. Dwyer noted that since the motion is now the Board's, a vote is required on the current motion before fashioning another.

Ms. Karnal said the Board last voted on this in 2011, so why would we rush into purchasing the wrong book?

Mr. Dwyer said the Board has looked at various math topics over the years and he is ready to act.

Motion Failed: 3-6

Favor: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal, Mr. Llewellyn

Oppose: Mr. Patten, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Calabrese, Ms. Pytko, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly

Mr. Calabrese moved, Mrs. Gerber seconded to call the question.

Motion Passed: 6-3

Favor: Mr. Patten, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Calabrese, Ms. Pytko, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly

Oppose: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal, Mr. Llewellyn

The original motion to approve the textbook passed: 6-3

Favor: Mr. Patten, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Calabrese, Ms. Pytko, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly

Oppose: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal, Mr. Llewellyn

Approval of the Recommended World Language Textbooks

Mrs. Gerber moved, Ms. Pytko seconded that the Board of Education approve the recommended World Language Textbooks, per the memo dated April 29, 2016.

Mrs. Liu-McCormack as mentioned for the record she cannot in good conscience approve it.

Mr. Llewellyn said he spoke to teachers who said that they would prefer a more traditional text rather than an immersion text.

Public comment:

Karin Martel, FWMS WL Teacher: New curriculum supports students learning holistically.

Bari Rabine, Fairfield Resident & WL Teacher: Text supports comprehensible input and digital literacy.

Peggie Shore, RLMS WL Teacher: Curriculum supports writing and comprehension skills.

Motion Passed: 6-3

Favor: Mr. Patten, Mrs. Gerber, Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Calabrese, Ms. Pytko, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly

Oppose: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal, Mr. Llewellyn

Mr. Dwyer excused himself, Dr. Title and Mrs. Gerber, to attend the Board of Finance Meeting. Their presence was requested to discuss the FLHS windows project. Board Vice-Chair Calabrese assumed the position of Acting Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

Approval of Policy 5131.7 – Students – Weapons and Dangerous Instruments

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly moved, Mr. Patten seconded that the Board of Education approve Policy 5131.7 – Students – Weapons and Dangerous Instruments.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said she did not get any comments from the Board and referred to the yellow highlighted areas where wording was cleaned up.

Mr. Llewellyn supports the changes, but would like this to go back to the Policy Committee for content review.

Motion Passed: 7-0 (Mr. Dwyer and Mrs. Gerber were not present for this vote).

Approved June 7, 2016

Approval of Policy 5114 – Students – Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process

Mrs. Maxon-Kenelly moved, Ms. Karnal seconded that the Board of Education approve Policy 5114 – Students – Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said she did not receive any questions, enclosure #4 has the statutory language that has changed. As a reminder, this change is due to the CABE audit and may be addressed later for content.

Motion Passed: 7-0 (*Mr. Dwyer and Mrs. Gerber were not present for this vote.*)

New Business

First Reading of Policies 5144.4, 5145.511, 4400(for deletion), 6121, 6171.2, 0521, and 3515

Acting Chair Calabrese agreed with Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly and recommended addressing all policies at once as a first read.

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said these changes are all a result of the CABE audit.

Mr. Llewellyn asked where the language was lifted from, such as from a state statute, and Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly said she could find that out.

Approval of Minutes

Approval of the Minutes of the May 5, 2016 Special Meeting

Ms. Pytko moved, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of May 5, 2016.

Motion Passed: 5-2

Favor: Mr. Patten, Mr. Calabrese, Ms. Pytko, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly, Mr. Llewellyn

Oppose: Mrs. Liu-McCormack, Ms. Karnal (*Mr. Dwyer and Mrs. Gerber were not present for this vote.*)

Committee/Liaison Reports

Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly reminded the Board that the PTA Council meeting on June 1 is the volunteer recognition meeting and the Brian Fagan awards.

Ms. Pytko added that Mr. Schulz is being honored by SEPTA at McKinley School tomorrow at 7:30.

Open Board Comment

Ms. Pytko attended the screening of “Screenagers” and said it was fascinating.

Mr. Patten confirmed with Mr. Calabrese that the BOF requested the presence of Dr. Title and Mr. Dwyer at the FLHS window project discussion at the BOF meeting.

Mrs. Karnal asked about the grass cutting; Mr. Cullen responded that the grass had not been cut due to the rain; lawn service is on an 11-day rotation.

Adjournment

Ms. Pytko moved, Mrs. Maxon-Kennelly seconded that this Regular Meeting of the Board of Education adjourn.

Motion Passed: 7-0

Meeting adjourned at 9:15PM

*Respectfully Submitted by
Jessica Gerber
Fairfield Board of Education, Secretary*