

FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION

Public Work Session

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, April 29, 2025 at 6:00 PM at the Fairfield Municipal Building

MR. ANTHONY DEPASCALE, BOARD PRESIDENT, CALLED THE ROLL AT 6:10 PM:

TRUSTEE	ATTENDANCE	TRUSTEE	ATTENDANCE
Ms. Andrea Bellise-Jandoli	PRESENT (6:30)	Ms. Angela Altaai	PRESENT
Mr. Joseph Fede	PRESENT	Mr. Anthony DePascale	PRESENT
Ms. Melinda Street	PRESENT		

ADMINISTRATION	POSITION	ATTENDANCE
Mr. Ryan Gupta	Superintendent of Schools	PRESENT
Mr. Wally Lindsley	Business Administrator/Board Secretary	PRESENT

BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education meeting finds it necessary to meet in Executive Session (Closed to the Public) to discuss attorney/client privileged information, which is exempt from the Open Public Meetings Act.

RECOMMENDATION TO MOVE TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education hereby convenes to Executive Session for discussion of the following subjects: **1, 3, 8 and 9**.

It is anticipated that the Executive Session will take approximately **90 minutes**; the Board may take action when it reconvenes to Public Session; and the minutes of the Executive Session shall be released to the public when the reason for the Executive Session no longer exists.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters or other exceptions to the sunshine laws as follows:

1. Any matter considered confidential by federal law, state statute, or court rule;
2. Any matter in which the release of information would impair the receipt of federal funds;
3. Any material which would constitute an unwarranted invasion of individual privacy if disclosed;
4. Any collective bargaining agreements;

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5. Any matter involving the purchase, lease or acquisition of real property with public funds;
6. Any tactics and techniques used in protecting the safety and property of the public;
7. Any pending or anticipated litigation;
8. Personnel matter related to the employment, appointment or termination of current or prospective employees;
9. Attorney/Client privilege.

Motion by: **Angela Altaai** Seconded by: **Melinda Street** Time: **6:30 PM**

Motion to return to open session (to be moved in Public Session):

Motion by: **Angela Altaai** Seconded by: **Melinda Street** Time: **7:47 PM**

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting is hereby adjourned.

Motion by: **Melinda Street** Seconded by: **Angela Altaai** Time: **7:47 PM**

ROLL CALL

Ms. Bellise-Jandoli, Mr. Fede, Ms. Street, Ms. Altaai, Mr. DePascale - All Ayes

FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, April 29, 2025

7:30 PM at the Fairfield Municipal Building

(Access livestream at www.fpsk6.org at 7:30 PM. Also available on Channel 34)

The Board will reconvene from Executive Session and Mr. Anthony DePascale, Board President, will preside and call the public meeting to order at approximately 7:30 PM.

MR. ANTHONY DEPASCALE, BOARD PRESIDENT, CALLED THE ROLL AT 7:50 PM:

TRUSTEE	ATTENDANCE	TRUSTEE	ATTENDANCE
Ms. Andrea Bellise-Jandoli	PRESENT	Ms. Angela Altaai	PRESENT
Mr. Joseph Fede	PRESENT	Mr. Anthony DePascale	PRESENT
Ms. Melinda Street	PRESENT		

ADMINISTRATION	POSITION	ATTENDANCE
Mr. Ryan Gupta	Superintendent of Schools	PRESENT
Mr. Wally Lindsley	Business Administrator/Board Secretary	PRESENT

The public has been duly informed of this meeting in accordance with Chapter 231 of the Public Laws of 1975 by posting, at least 48 hours in advance, a notice on the bulletin boards in Stevenson and Churchill Schools, a notice to the Township Clerk, and a notice to The Herald News and The Progress.

Now, please join us for the Pledge of Allegiance.

BOARD PRESIDENT’S REPORT:

Mr. DePascale congratulated West Essex High School for their incredible achievement in the state rankings. This success is a clear reflection of years of strong leadership, laid out by Mr. Gupta as Director of Curriculum.

Mr. DePascale oversaw the restoration of the flagpole area at Churchill School where community members had donated brick pavers. Thanks to an anonymous donor and Mike Manning of Manning Landscaping they were able to beautifully restore the area. Mr. DePascale also plans to collaborate with Denise Cafone on future fundraisers.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT:

Mr. Gupta thanked the Board and Mike Manning for their support, highlighting the impressive impact of community donations. He emphasized the importance of taking pride in the school and its appearance.

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

- **Wally A. Lindsley presented the Budget Presentation.**

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS/COMMENTS: (any new or old business)

Finance: Joseph Fede reported:

- Thanked Wally and Ryan for their hard work on the budget presentation and recognizing their understanding of the district's challenges. He highlighted the 3.7% budget increase and emphasized that rising costs are expected. He advised of potential unexpected costs, including healthcare, out-of-district placements, a possible preschool mandate, and changes in federal and state funding. While praising the presentation, he maintained a stance of cautious optimism and urged awareness of both known and unforeseen financial challenges.

HSA: Melinda Street reported:

- The HSA will host its biggest annual fundraiser, a Tricky Tray Casino Night, on May 15, 2025. Tickets will be on sale until May 5, 2025. Please come out and help support the kids.

SEPAG:

- The next meeting will be held on May 7, 2025.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON: *AGENDA ITEMS ONLY*

A member of the public asked about the ballot question and how the classroom aides and guidance counselor will be utilized. Mr. Gupta responded.

A member of the public asked about a full day Pre-K program. Mr. Gupta and Mr. DePascale responded.

**FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
FINANCE - APRIL 29, 2025**

The following finance motions are made at the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools:

CONSENT AGENDA

Anything placed on this agenda, Items **1 - 8**, will be voted upon in one motion.

Motion by **Joseph Fede** Seconded by **Melinda Street** to approve the following motions:

1F. Adoption of the Final Budget 2025-2026 School Year

The Superintendent recommends approval to adopt the Final Budget for SY 2025-2026:

BE IT RESOLVED that the final budget for the Fairfield Board of Education, in the County of Essex, State of New Jersey be approved for the 2025-2026 school year using the 2025-2026 school year state aid figures and the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary be authorized to submit the final budget to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools for approval in accordance with the statutory deadline, as follows:

ADOPTION OF FINAL 2025-2026 SCHOOL BUDGET

	General Fund	Special Revenues	Debt Service	Total
2025-2026 Total Expenditures	\$17,849,870	\$279,793	\$0	\$18,129,663
Less: Anticipated Revenues	\$2,923,142	\$279,793	\$0	\$3,202,935
Taxes to be Raised	\$14,926,728	\$0	\$0	\$14,926,728

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education advertised said final budget in the Progress in accordance with the form suggested by the State Department of Education and according to the law; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education public meeting be held at the Fairfield Municipal Building on **April 29, 2025 as amended** at 7:30 PM for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on the budget for the 2025-2026 school year.

2F. To approve the Appropriation of Legal Reserves as follows:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education includes in the final budget an appropriation of surplus in the amount of \$695,910.

FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
FINANCE - APRIL 29, 2025

3F. Adjustment for Health Care Costs

BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education includes in the final budget the adjustment for increased costs of health benefits in the amount of \$191,757. The additional funds will be used to pay for the additional increases in health premiums.

4F. Adjustment for Enrollment

BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education includes in the final budget the adjustment for enrollment in the amount of \$62,001. The district intends to utilize this adjustment for supplies and materials necessary for the additional students.

5F. Capital Reserve Withdrawal - Other Capital Projects

BE IT RESOLVED that included in the general fund appropriations, budget line 600 is a withdrawal from Capital Reserve - Other Capital Projects in the amount of \$1,152,167 for other capital project costs associated with Winston S. Churchill School (boiler replacement), Adlai E. Stevenson School (server room upgrade, recreation improvement) and District wide door replacement. The total cost of these projects are \$1,480,500 which represents expenditures for construction elements or projects that are in addition to the facilities efficiency standards determined by the Commissioner as necessary to achieve the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.

6F. Maximum Travel

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.3, a board of education must establish a maximum dollar limit for travel expenditure, as defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.1 et seq.,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education approves travel and related expense reimbursements in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.3, to a maximum expenditure of \$23,050 for the 2025-2026 school year.

7F. Travel and Related Expense Reimbursement 2025-2026

WHEREAS, the Fairfield Board of Education recognizes school staff and Board members will incur travel expenses related to and within the scope of their current responsibilities and for travel that promotes the delivery of instruction or furthers the efficient operation of the school district; and

WHEREAS, N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.3 et seq. requires Board members to receive approval of these expenses by a majority of the full voting membership of the Board and staff members to receive prior approval of these expenses by the Superintendent of Schools and a majority of the full voting membership of the Board; and

**FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
FINANCE - APRIL 29, 2025**

WHEREAS, a Board of education may establish, for regular district business travel only, an annual school year threshold of \$300 per staff member where prior Board approval shall not be required unless this annual threshold for a staff member is exceeded in a given school year (July 1 through June 30); and

WHEREAS, travel and related expenses not in compliance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A Subchapter 7 but deemed by the board of education to be necessary and unavoidable as noted on the approved Board of Education Out-of-District Travel and Reimbursement Forms;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education approves all travel not in compliance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A Subchapter 7 as being necessary and unavoidable as noted on the approved Board of Education Out-of-District Travel and Reimbursement Forms; and

WHEREAS, the Fairfield Board of Education established \$19,600 as the maximum travel amount for the current school year and has expended \$9,592 as of this date;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education approves travel and related expense reimbursements in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.3, to a maximum expenditure of \$23,050 for the 2025-2026 school year.

8F. BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT IN THE COUNTY OF ESSEX, NEW JERSEY (with not less than a majority of the full membership of the Board concurring) AS FOLLOWS:

It is hereby determined that one additional spending proposal will be submitted for voter approval at the Annual School Election scheduled for November 4, 2025. The form of the proposal will read substantially as follows with such adjustments as required in accordance with guidelines or requirements of the Department of Education:

RESOLVED that there shall be raised an additional \$359,201 of funds in the 2025-2026 School Year to hire three (3) classroom aides, one (1) special education teacher, and one (1) school counselor to provide support to students with academic, social, and emotional needs. Approval of these funds will result in a permanent increase in the district's tax levy.

ROLL CALL

Ms. Bellise-Jandoli, Mr. Fede, Ms. Street, Ms. Altaai, Mr. DePascale - All Ayes

**FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
ADMINISTRATIVE - APRIL 29, 2025**

The following administrative motion is made at the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools:

CONSENT AGENDA

Anything placed on this agenda, Item **1**, will be voted upon in one motion.

Motion by **Andrea Bellise-Jandoli** Seconded by **Joseph Fede** to approve the following motion:

- 1A. To approve with appreciation the donation of 1 Frisbee Golf Set with stand and frisbees from Kevin Richter.

ROLL CALL

Ms. Bellise-Jandoli, Mr. Fede, Ms. Street, Ms. Altaai, Mr. DePascale - All Ayes

**FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
PERSONNEL - APRIL 29, 2025**

The following personnel motions are made at the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools:

CONSENT AGENDA

Anything placed on this agenda, ~~Items 1--5~~ **Items 1 - 4**, will be voted upon in one motion.

Motion by Andrea Bellise-Jandoli Seconded by Angela Altaai to approve the following motions:

1P. To approve the appointment(s) of the following substitute staff member(s) for the 2024-2025 school year, pending receipt of all required documentation:

Name	Position	Daily Rate	Effective Date(s) on or about:
Marissa Tamuzza	Substitute Teacher Substitute Aide	\$150 per day \$15.50 per hour	04/30/2025

2P. To approve the resignation of the following staff member:

Name	Location	Position	Reason	Last Day of Employment
Raymond Santana	WSC	Principal	Resignation	6/30/2025

3P. To approve the abolishment of staff positions as follows:

WHEREAS, State law authorizes a board of education to reduce the number of staff members employed in the district whenever, in the judgment of the Board, it is advisable to abolish any such positions for reasons of economy or because of reduction in the number of pupils or of change in the administrative or supervisory organization of the district or for other good cause upon compliance with the provisions of the statute.

WHEREAS, the Superintendent of Schools has recommended a reduction in force that includes the abolishment of the positions for reasons of economy and efficiency.

WHEREAS, for reasons of economy and efficiency, the Board finds it advisable to implement a reduction in force.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Fairfield Board of Education that, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, the following positions have been abolished as a result of a reduction in force:

1. One Full-Time Child Study Team Secretary Position
2. One Full-Time Health and Physical Education Teacher Position
3. Two (2) Part-Time Registered Nurse Positions

**FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
PERSONNEL - APRIL 29, 2025**

4P. To approve the reduction in force of staff as follows:

WHEREAS, for reasons of economy and efficiency, the Board is implementing a reduction in force.

WHEREAS, as a result of a reduction in force, the Board must terminate and/or non-renew the contracts of employees.

WHEREAS, the Board wishes to thank the employees for their dedication and service to the Fairfield School District.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Fairfield Board of Education that, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, the contracts of the following employees are hereby terminated and/or non-renewed as a result of the reduction in force:

1. Employee #100113
2. Employee #101294
3. Employee #101353
4. Employee #101352

~~5P. For reasons of economy and efficiency, to approve a change of assignment for tenured staff member, Jane Serpico, from Child Study Team Secretary to Child Study Team/School Secretary effective May 2, 2025. PULLED AT MEETING~~

~~WHEREAS, the Board has reviewed the Superintendent's recommendation for reassignment of staff and believes the approval of such reassignment is both appropriate and in the best interest of the district.~~

~~NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Fairfield Board of Education that, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board approves the following:~~

- ~~● Effective May 2, 2025, Jane Serpico is reassigned from the position of "Child Study Team Secretary" to "Child Study Team/School Secretary" at a prorated salary of \$60,805 for the 2024-2025 school year.~~

ROLL CALL

Ms. Bellise-Jandoli, Mr. Fede, Ms. Street, Ms. Altaai, Mr. DePascale - All Ayes

**FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
POLICY - APRIL 29, 2025**

The following policy motions are made at the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools:

CONSENT AGENDA

Anything placed on this agenda, ~~Items 1--6~~, **Items 1 - 3** will be voted upon in one motion.

Motion by **Andrea Bellise-Jandoli** Seconded by **Melinda Street** to approve the following motions:

- 1PO. BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby affirms the Superintendent's decision in HIB Investigation WSCS #18 2024-2025 for the reasons set forth in the Superintendent's Report to the Board. A copy of the Board's decision will be sent to the affected students' parents.
- 2PO. BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby affirms the Superintendent's decision in HIB Investigation WSCS #19 2024-2025 for the reasons set forth in the Superintendent's Report to the Board. A copy of the Board's decision will be sent to the affected students' parents.
- 3PO. BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby affirms the Superintendent's decision in HIB Investigation WSCS #20 2024-2025 for the reasons set forth in the Superintendent's Report to the Board. A copy of the Board's decision will be sent to the affected students' parents.

PULLED AT MEETING

- ~~4PO. BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby affirms the Superintendent's decision in HIB Investigation WSCS #21A 2024-2025 for the reasons set forth in the Superintendent's Report to the Board. A copy of the Board's decision will be sent to the affected students' parents.~~
- ~~5PO. BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby affirms the Superintendent's decision in HIB Investigation WSCS #21B 2024-2025 for the reasons set forth in the Superintendent's Report to the Board. A copy of the Board's decision will be sent to the affected students' parents.~~
- ~~6PO. BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby affirms the Superintendent's decision in HIB Investigation WSCS #21C 2024-2025 for the reasons set forth in the Superintendent's Report to the Board. A copy of the Board's decision will be sent to the affected students' parents.~~

ROLL CALL

Ms. Bellise-Jandoli, Mr. Fede, Ms. Street, Ms. Altaai, Mr. DePascale - All Ayes
Ms. Altaai - Abstain: item 2

**FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
APRIL 29, 2025**

The Board President will open the floor to the public comments on non-agenda items.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: NON-AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

Guidelines in Accordance with Policy #0167

1. *This is not a question and answer session, but an opportunity to hear comments from the public, directed to the Board President.*
2. *Each person who wishes to make a statement must state their name and address for the record.*
3. *If it appears this portion of the meeting will last longer than 30 minutes, comments may be limited to 3 minutes each until all others have been heard. No participant may speak more than once on the same topic.*
4. *District staff members may make a statement, except when the issue addressed is subject to remediation by an existing alternate method and/or the administrative chain of command has been previously utilized.*
5. *Please be respectful of the Board, Administration, Staff, and audience members in attendance.*

NEXT MEETING

BE IT RESOLVED that the next meeting will be held, in person, on May 29, 2025, Public Work Session beginning at 6:00 PM followed by Executive Session with Public Session resuming at approximately 7:30 PM, at the Fairfield Municipal Building.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting is hereby adjourned.

Motion by: **Joseph Fede**

Seconded by: **Melinda Street**

Time: **8:34 PM**

ROLL CALL

Ms. Bellise-Jandoli, Mr. Fede, Ms. Street, Ms. Altaai, Mr. DePascale - All Ayes