

**FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**Public Work Session**

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 14, 2024 at 6:00 PM at the Fairfield Municipal Building

MR. ANTHONY DEPASCALE, BOARD PRESIDENT, CALLED THE ROLL AT 6:00 PM:

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

<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>	<b>POSITION</b>	<b>ATTENDANCE</b>
Dr. Susan Ciccotelli	Superintendent of Schools	PRESENT
Mrs. Kathleen Marano	Interim Business Administrator/Board Secretary	PRESENT

*Now, please join us for the Pledge of Allegiance.*

**I. 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: 8 & 9.

It is anticipated that the Executive Session will take approximately 45 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.

Introduced by: Angela Altaai      Seconded by: Andrea Bellise-Jandoli      Time: 6:15 PM

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

Introduced by: Melinda Street      Seconded by: Andrea Bellise-Jandoli      Time: 7:25 PM

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**ADJOURNMENT**

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

Introduced by: Melinda Street      Seconded by: Andrea Bellise-Jandoli      Time: 7:25 PM

**ROLL CALL**

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

**FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**Meeting Minutes**

Thursday, March 14, 2024

7:30 PM at the Fairfield Municipal Building

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

**I. OPEN MEETING –PUBLIC NOTICE OF MEETING**

MR. ANTHONY DEPASCALE, BOARD PRESIDENT, CALLED THE ROLL AT 7:30 PM:

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

*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 and will read the following announcement to those 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.*

<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>	<b>POSITION</b>	<b>ATTENDANCE</b>
Dr. Susan Ciccotelli	Superintendent of Schools	PRESENT
Mrs. Kathleen Marano	Interim Business Administrator/Board Secretary	PRESENT

**II. PUBLIC COMMENT ON: AGENDA ITEMS ONLY**

Rose Laprus asked during future meetings if the redline version of any policy changes could be included. In addition, can the Transfer Report be attached to the agenda.

III. ENROLLMENT

Grade	Students 6/9/2023	Students 3/8/2024
Preschool Inclusive	18	17
Preschool Special Ed	18	17
Kindergarten	98	93
First	96	98
Second	86	99
Third	107	84
Fourth	106	108
Fifth	85	107
Sixth	91	86
<b>Home Instruction</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Out-of-District</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>708</b>	<b>712</b>

IV. PERSONNEL

A. Certificated

1. Employment

BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the employment of Kaitlynn Bohr as a full-time tenure track Elementary Teacher for the 2023-2024 school year. Ms. Bohr will begin employment approximately April 8, 2024 at a prorated salary based on B.A.+30, Step 2 on the current teachers’ salary guide pending receipt of required documentation.

2. Retirement

BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, accepts the letter of retirement from Sandy Rivera, Special Education Teacher, effective June 30, 2024, with regret, best wishes, and appreciation for her 20 years of service to the students of Fairfield.

3. Resignation

BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, accepts the letter of resignation from Marissa Murino, Elementary Teacher dated March 5, 2024. In addition, approves Ms. Murino’s last day of approximately May 3, 2024 in accordance with the 60-day requirement unless mutually agreed for an earlier release date.

4. Home Instructors

BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approves Laura Barra and Sara Goodman as Home Instructors for the 2023-2024 school year, on an as-needed basis, at the hourly rate per contract for student contact.

5. Approval of New Jersey Learning Acceleration Grant Tutors and Position

BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the position and the following tutors paid through the New Jersey Learning Acceleration Grant Funding:

Julia Booth	Dorian Nazarian
Kristin Crisafi	Jaelyn VanNatten

6. Mentor Teacher

BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approves James Verrengia as mentor to novice teacher Kaitlynn Bohr effective approximately April 8, 2024 through June 30, 2024. Fee is paid by the novice teacher.

7. Administrative Leave

BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the paid Administrative Leave of Absence for Employee #100061 effective retroactively to March 5, 2024, pending further action.

B. Non-Certificated

1. Stipend Approval

BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approves Michelle Adams to receive a stipend of \$2,500 in accordance to the updated Payroll/Benefits Coordinator job description approved at the February 22, 2024 Board meeting for the 2023-2024 school year.

C. Substitutes

1. Employment

BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the following fully-qualified substitutes for the 2023-2024 school year pending receipt of required documentation:

Valerie Apriceno	Teacher/Aide	Alexandra Mazzeo	Teacher/Aide
Rick Cielo	Teacher	Christa Prestifilippo	Teacher/Aide/Sec
Renee Litz	Teacher/Aide	Christina Proietto	Teacher/Aide
Nicole Massaro	Teacher/Aide		

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**Personnel Recommendations:**

Introduced by: Angela Altaai

Seconded by: Melinda Street

Discussion: None

**ROLL CALL**

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

**V. CURRICULUM/PROGRAM**

A. ESY Program (2024)

BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the following Summer 2024 program outline, which delineates staff positions, expenses and hours required for the extended school year:

Summer 2024 Positions						
<b><u>OUTSIDE CONTRACTED SERVICES</u></b>	Staff needed	Days per person	# Hours per day	Total hours	Hourly rate	Not to Exceed
Physical Therapist		N/A	as needed			\$2,500.00
Occupational Therapist (pending contract)		N/A	as needed			\$8,500.00
<b><u>IN-HOUSE STAFF</u></b>						
Speech Therapist	1	20	4.5	90	\$61.85	\$5,566.50
Primary MD Teacher	2	20	4.5	180	\$61.85	\$11,133.00
Primary/Secondary LLD	1	20	4.5	90	\$61.85	\$5,566.50
School Nurse/ LLD Aide	1	20	4.5	90	\$61.85	\$5,566.50
Aides (MD/LLD)	6	20	4.0	480	\$15.13	\$7,262.40
Substitute Teachers, Aides & Nurse (as needed)	*Hired teacher, aide and nurse salaries will be adjusted for any time a sub is used.					*Adjusted
<b>CHILD STUDY TEAM (LDTC, Psychologist, Speech Therapist and Occupational Therapist)</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>For student contact time and required meetings.</b>			<b>\$61.85 per hour</b>	<b>Not to exceed \$7,000.00</b>
<b>TOTAL NOT TO EXCEED</b>						<b>\$53,094.90</b>

**B. Field Trip Approval**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the addition of the following field trip to our current list:

<u>Event/Location</u>	<u>Subject Area</u>
Mayo Performing Arts Center (MPAC) (Morristown, NJ)	Fine Arts
Planetarium at Raritan Valley Community College (Branchburg, NJ)	Science

**C. Professional Development Workshop**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approves attendance at the following workshop and approves the reimbursement of registration and/or mileage, to be made, pending completion of the workshop and submission of the travel reports. \*Lodging will be noted separately if applicable.

<u>Staff</u>	<u>Workshop</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Registration</u>
Gualtieri, Donna	Next Generation Science Standards - Phenomena-Driven Strategies (BER)	05/15/2024 Online	\$279
Healy, Sue	Reducing Disruptive Behaviors While Increasing Self-Regulation & Academic Success (BER)	Virtual Recorded Version	\$279 IDEA
Santana, Ray	Restorative Discipline (BER)	05/13/2024 Online	\$279

**Curriculum and Program Recommendations:**

Introduced by: Anthony DePascale

Seconded by: Andrea Altaai

Discussion: Anthony DePascale asked Dr. Ciccotelli who funds these field trips? Dr. Ciccotelli explained that typically parents cover the cost for the field trips. However, there are specific field trips that the Board of Education pays for.

**ROLL CALL**

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

**VI. POLICY**

**A. Policy Second Reading and Adoption**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the second reading and adoption of the following policies:

<u>Policy #</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Revised/Correction</u>
P 0155	Board Committees	Revised
P 8500	Food Services (M)	Strauss Esmay Correction

**B. HIB Investigation Confirmation**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education accepts the following Superintendent’s HIB Investigation results as reported at the Executive Session on February 22, 2024 as follows:

1. HIB incident WSCS #5 2023-24, WSCS #6 2023-24, WSCS #8 2023-24 and WSCS #9 2023-24 were reported to the principal and reviewed by the Superintendent. After a full investigation, it was determined that the incidents **did not** satisfy the ABR definition of HIB.
2. HIB incident WSCS #7A 2023-24 and WSCS #7B 2023-24 were reported to the principal and reviewed by the Superintendent. After a full investigation, it was determined that the incidents **did** satisfy the ABR definition of HIB.

**Policy Recommendations:**

Introduced by: Andrea Bellise-Jandoli

Seconded by: Angela Altaai

Discussion: None

**ROLL CALL**

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

**VII. BUSINESS/FINANCE OFFICE RESOLUTIONS**

**A. Minutes Approval**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education approves/accepts the minutes from the February 12, 2024 Executive Session, February 13, 2024 Executive Session, February 22, 2024 Public & Executive Sessions and February 25, 2024 Executive Session.

***FINANCE:***

**B. Bills/Claims/Payrolls**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education approves the following Bills and Claims List and Payroll:

<b>Ratify and Affirm</b> Bills & Claims List - March 5, 2024	\$204,925.89
<b>Ratify and Affirm</b> Bills & Claims List - March 14, 2024	\$218,745.63
<b>Ratify and Affirm</b> February 29, 2024 Payroll	\$415,382.85

**C. Transfer of Funds**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education authorizes the transfers in the 2023-2024 budget, per details of the Transfers Report for February 2024, per state law, for the 2023-2024 school year.

**D. Secretary/Treasurer Report**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education acknowledges and accepts the reports of the Board Secretary and Treasurer of School Monies for the period of February 1, 2024 through February 29, 2024.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the financial reports for the month be accepted and shall become a part of the official minutes of this meeting.

**E. Adoption of the Tentative Budget 2024-2025 School Year**

The Superintendent recommends approval to adopt the Tentative Budget for SY 2024-2025:

BE IT RESOLVED that the TENTATIVE budget for the Fairfield Board of Education, in the County of Essex, State of New Jersey be approved for the 2024-2025 school year using the 2024-2025 school year state aid figures and the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary be authorized to submit the TENTATIVE budget to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools for approval in accordance with the statutory deadline, as follows:

**ADOPTION OF TENTATIVE 2024-2025 SCHOOL BUDGET**

	<b>General Fund</b>	<b>Special Revenues</b>	<b>Debt Service</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>2024-2025 Total Expenditures</b>	\$17,169,410	\$329,929	\$0	\$17,499,339
<b>Less: Anticipated Revenues</b>	\$2,785,361	\$329,929	\$0	\$3,115,290
<b>Taxes to be Raised</b>	\$14,384,049	\$0	\$0	\$14,384,049

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education advertises said tentative 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 25, 2024 at 7:30 PM for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on the budget for the 2024-2025 school year.

**F. Appropriation of Legal Reserve**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education includes in the final budget an appropriation of surplus in the amount of \$478,352.

**G. 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 **\$23,464**. The additional funds will be used to pay for the additional increases in health premiums.

**H. 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 **\$20,464**. The district intends to utilize this adjustment for supplies and materials necessary for the additional students.

**I. Capital Reserve Withdrawal - Other Capital Projects**

BE IT RESOLVED that included in the general fund appropriations, budget line 620 is a withdrawal from Capital Reserve - Other Capital Projects in the amount of \$1,201,000 for other capital project costs associated with Winston S. Churchill School (roof replacement - 3 sections and server room relocation). The total cost of this project is \$1,201,000 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.

**J. Relocation of Data Closets**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education authorizes the Business Administrator to advertise for the relocation of the data closets at Winston S. Churchill School.

**K. 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 \$21,900 for the 2024-2025 school year.

**L. Travel and Related Expense Reimbursement 2024-2025**

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 Subchapter 7 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

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WHEREAS, a Board of education may establish, for regular district business travel only, an annual school year threshold of \$150 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 \$5,412 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 \$19,600 for the 2024-2025 school year.

***CONTRACTS:***

M. Professional Services

BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education approves JCT Solutions for 40 hours of professional services not to exceed \$5,600 for emergency technical issues related to servers/phones/firewalls/networking/technical troubleshooting.

***BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS:***

N. Building Use Applications

BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education approves the following Building Use Applications:

<u>Organization Group/Location/Purpose</u>	<u>Date and Time Slot</u>
Churchill Yearbook Club Sarah Kirk - Churchill Room 16	8:00 AM - 8:45 AM 3/14, 3/21, 3/28, 4/11, 4/18, 4/25/2024
Fairfield SEPAG - Speaker Meghan Cafone - Churchill Gym	7:30 PM - 9:00 PM 4/9/2024
Fairfield Recreation Department Baseball/Softball Practice and Games Churchill and Stevenson Fields	March 25, 2024 - August 9, 2024 Monday - Friday 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM Saturday and Sunday 9:00 AM - 8:00 PM

**Business/Finance Resolutions Items A-N**

Introduced by: Andrea Bellise-Jandoli

Seconded by: Melinda Street

Discussion: None

**ROLL CALL**

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

**VIII. OLD BUSINESS**

None

**IX. NEW BUSINESS**

None

**X. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Angela Altaai reported on Technology:**

- Both school sent out some damaged chromebooks for repairs;
- Quotes are being obtained for a new door buzzer/alert system;
- Adjustments to our firewalls at Churchill School;
- Several chromebooks are out of warranty, and the usable parts are being repurposed to repair other chromebooks;
- New open registration on-line system in Genesis to assist parents to register their children on line instead of in person;
- Process has begun to set up new chromebooks for 4th graders at Churchill for them to use until they are in 6th grade.

**Angela Altaai reported on Personnel:**

- Committee met on February 27, 2024 to go over staffing and recommendations for next year;
- Questions were raised regarding the nursing staff:
  - Clarify there are 2 full time nurses (one in each building);
  - 2 part-time nurses, each of which alternate between the two schools weekly.
- Blast was sent out to the district regarding the need for lunch aides, playground aides and substitute teachers. The protocols have been changed and teacher substitutes with children in the district can now substitute in both schools, but not in their child's classroom. Anyone interested should contact Dr. Trabacco or Mr. Santana.
- The Superintendent and Business Administrator interviews are still ongoing.

**Anthony DePascale reported:**

- We have had 63 applicants for the Superintendent position;
- Interviews are going well and being conducting on Sundays and various other days;
- We are hopeful that we will be able to narrow down the selection.

**Joseph Fede reported on Buildings and Grounds:**

- The committee met with Dr. Ciccotelli, Mrs. Marano, John Porcino and Rodney Watkins, the board architect;
- The schools are in need of repairs;
- They are \$9.3 million dollars of repairs that need to be made within the next five years;
- The Churchill roof replacement and boiler replacement is planned to be done over this summer and next summer and thankfully has already been budgeted for;
- There are still a lot of repairs to be made at both schools;
- Some of these repairs would have been addressed, if the referendum had passed a few years ago;
- The \$9.3 million in repairs is based on today's pricing, so this number can go up depending when these repairs are made;
- Waiting to hear back from PSE&G, if they can potential replace the boilers at a reduced cost;
- Part of the 5-year plan - once we can determine how much the district can afford to allocate each year, it will be determined how we can address/fix all the issues;
- We will put together a presentation once our 5 year plan is determined.

**Anthony DePascale** further clarified that the money for the roof project is already budgeted.

**Joseph Fede reported on Finance:**

- Mr. Fede acknowledge and expressed gratitude for the support received during the vote last year in November;
- The district would have been in a much more dire situation and would have had to make additional cuts and a repeat of what happened last year, without the support during the vote;
- Tax levy did increase 2.26%. The 2% cap is \$281,000 and there is additional health benefit enrollment adjustment given by the State of approximately \$43,000;
- State aid which is based on enrollment increased by 8%, which is approximately \$1 million dollars;
- Our Capital Reserve currently only stands at \$1.2 million dollars. Going back to the \$9.3 million in repairs which are needed and can only be paid through our Capital Reserve money;
- We need to find ways to save money and build up our Capital Reserve in the next five years, so that these repairs can be made and paid for;
- Short term items which the board discussed:
  - Teacher negotiations;
  - New salary for new Business Administrator;
  - New Superintendent;
  - Other costs that go up and "unknown costs";
- Long Term items the board discussed:
  - We are close to the 5% participants in the free/reduced lunch program, which will cost the district more money. This can't be plan for, but need to have funds ready to adjust for State mandates;
  - Tentative budget was passed;
  - Trying to find more efficient ways to run the schools;
    - Cut subscription busing - the district pays approximately \$350,000;
    - High probability that subscription busing will be cut and only mandated busing for students who live 2.1+ miles from the schools will continue.

**Anthony DePascale further commented:**

- Thanking the community for passing the questions in November. The district would have been in a much worse position than last year and would have looked to cut another 5 to 7 teaching positions.
- The \$1.2 million dollars in Capital Reserve is after the roof project money has been taken out.
- When Mr. Fede spoke about the 9.3 million dollars in repairs (of which 6 million would have been covered in the referendum) We have a tall task ahead of us in making the repairs and keeping the schools safe.
- Mr. DePascale praised Ms. Marano when budgeting for the roof project. He stated she budgeted for “unforeseen issues”, so if there is any mold/remediation that is found when the roof is being completed, there is money already factored into our budget.
- Restated that the repairs are based on today's pricing, (taken from our architects and projects that are being done now) so this number can go up depending when these repairs are made.
- There are a lot of things the board is taking into consideration:
- \$350,000 is what the district is subsidizing for busing, if we take that cost and pass it along to the community, based on the current number of students who currently take the bus, it would raise the cost approximately an additional \$1,300 per student (this would be in addition to the current cost of busing)
- Mr. Fede has been working with Dr. Ciccotelli and Mrs. Marano on the budget. We are in a good place, because of the questions that passed in November.
- We will continue to work and be “student centered” while we make the tough decisions for what is best for the district, not just for now, but for the future.

**Melinda Street reported on Special Education:**

- SEPAG meeting - Meghan Cafone gave a presentation of the difference between a 504 and IEPs.
- The presentation was well attended by parents as well as some of the staff members (OT, child study and speech)
- Next meeting will be April 9, 2024 at 7:30 pm at the Churchill library (Topic: Special Ed Parent Rights;
- HSA has two upcoming events:
  - Saturday, March 23, 2024 Color Run Fundraiser; and
  - Tricky Tray event on May 15, 2024, tickets will go up for sale next week and will be accepting donations and sponsorships. For information go to the HSA website.

**Anthony DePascale**

- Acknowledged Tracy Ripa co-president of SEPAG and Kristen DePatria co-president of the Fairfield Education Foundation.
- Recently spoke with Mrs. Marano regarding the maintenance budget (which unfortunately can only be used for maintenance issues). The school board has approached the HSA to work together in helping to give a facelift and make our fields a little safer.

**Andrea Bellise-Jandoli reported on Negotiations**

- Committee is working with the teachers and attorneys to come to new agreement;
- Next meeting is in two weeks.

**XI. PUBLIC COMMENTS: NON-AGENDA ITEMS ONLY**

Melissa Podeia - Spoke about Dr. Trabucco's recent email concerning the roof at Stevenson School. The roof is under warranty and repairs have been made with every leak. What is covered under the warranty and will need to be replaced? Who is looking for mold and making certain there is no mold? The room smells a little musty. Who is following up?

Mr. DePascale responded - Under the warranty, when there is a leak the roofing company comes out to make the repairs, unfortunately when they fix one area, we find a leak in another area. John Porcino, the supervisor, is in charge of monitoring the repairs and has been on the roof trying to identify where the leaks are. Mr. DePascale asked Dr. Ciccotelli when there is water that comes through the roof, do we have someone looking to see that there is no mold?

Dr. Ciccotelli advised that there is "testing", they can't just say there is no mold.

Mr. DePascale will confirm with John Porcino on what is being done and how it is tested and will reach back out to Ms. Podeia.

Jenna Bozios - asked if there is possibility to replace the roof and not patch it?

Mr. DePascale responded - without seeing the contract it is probably not advantageous from a finance standpoint, if we are responsible. We rely on John Porcino to fill us in during the building and grounds meeting. We will speak with John and have him look at the contract and see how long ago and what the warranty states. If it does warrant a continuous problem, we will forward it to our board attorney to review.

Rose Laprus - You have the community's support. The \$9.3 million does it include the roof?

Joseph Fede responded - Yes, the roof and boiler at Churchill is included in the \$9.3 million.

Anthony DePascale responded - the architect firm (in his opinion) is giving you the highest possible cost, because when it comes to a school a company has to be "bonded" A lot of districts go through a consortium, which are state approved vendors. We asked our business administrator and architects to open it up to public entities, public roofing companies and boiler contractors, such as PSE&G and not be locked into whomever is in the consortium. This way we are not stuck with the highest bidder. We can go out to bid and narrow down two or three bidders. We have made the decision moving forward to get multiple bids.

Rose Laprus asked:

- Is there a potential for any state aid or grants for any of the upcoming projects? Is \$9.3 million a worse case scenario?
  - Joseph Fede responded - It is based on project by project. \$9.3 million is a worse case scenario based on the work being done this year. Two years from now \$9.3 million can go up.
  - Anthony DePascale asked Kathleen Marano - What was the state aid for the roofing project?
  - Kathleen responded - \$52,000

- Can you do everything all at once? Could we try again under a new referendum?
  - Anthony DePascale - 3 years ago, we voted down the \$28 million referendum which had the average cost of \$256 per tax paying home. Today, it would be closer to \$60 million with the average cost of \$585 per tax paying home. The \$6 million is now \$9.3 million that would have been covered under that referendum. We definitely need the community's support. It takes a lot of time and money to go forward with another referendum.
- What would be the estimated cost for mandated busing?
  - Kathleen Marano - \$250,000 for 4 to 5 buses
  - Anthony DePascale - the cost of busing will go up because we are going from 12 buses to 4 to 5 and we would need to re-bid the contracts.

Tracy Ripa - When you remove busing - there are some logistical issues at the school, how much of \$350,000 will be used for those logistical issues?

Anthony DePascale - From a logistical standpoint, at this moment we are not 100%. When the board decides on this issue, it will decide based on what is best for the district financially. We will tackle all of the logistical issues, including before/after care, etc. Once the board unanimously decides on this matter, we will figure everything out. We have an idea of what needs to be done and are exploring all avenues.

Frank LaMorte - How can we change and cut corners to save money. I was under the impression we were looking to hire a Superintendent/Principal. I've now heard this is not the case. We are in a tough position and our town is not set up for children to walk to school. We need to look at every little decision and what the district is spending.

## **XII. NEXT MEETING**

BE IT RESOLVED that the next meeting will be held, in person, on April 25, 2024, 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.

## **XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

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

Introduced by: Andrea Bellise-Jandoli      Seconded by: Angela Altaai      Time: 8:10PM

## **ROLL CALL**

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