

FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION

Public Work Session

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 26, 2026 at 6:00 PM at the Fairfield Municipal Building

MR. ANTHONY DEPASCALE, BOARD PRESIDENT, CALLED THE ROLL AT 6:30 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

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: **3 and 8**.

It is anticipated that the Executive Session will take approximately **1 hour**; 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 that 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 matters 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: 7:29 PM

ADJOURNMENT

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

Motion by: Melinda Street Seconded by: Angela Altaai Time: 7:29 PM

ROLL CALL

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

FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 26, 2026

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 7:30 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 reported on ongoing facility projects, budgeting, and curriculum enhancements, with continued focus on maintaining high-quality education

The FEF is hosting its annual Derby Gala on March 11, 2026 from 6:30 to 10:30 pm at Nanina’s in the Park. The HSA is also hosting a Skate Night on March 27, 2026 at Montclair State Ice Arena providing a fun family-focused community event.

The Municipal Alliance announced two upcoming events: Fairfield Bike Rodeo on April 25 (9 to 11:00 am) and a Beefsteak Fundraiser date TBD (either June 3 or June 4) both aimed at engaging the community and kids.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT:

Mr. Gupta provided updates on school photo services and the Churchill principal search, and expressed appreciation for staff involvement in the process.

- **Ms. Cafone and teachers of Churchill School presented the Students of the Month (Bulldogs) with certificates.**

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT: NONE

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

HSA: Melinda Street reported: We are excited to partner with New Beginnings. Approved students will soon support our school staff while gaining valuable experience.

Curriculum/Technology: Angela Altaai reported: The curriculum, instruction, assessments, and professional development are progressing well, and technology upgrades continue to support teaching and learning.

Personnel: Angela Altaai reported: The district is still hiring instruction aides. Community members are encouraged to apply and spread the word.

Finance and Building/Grounds: Joseph Fede reported: The district’s finances remain stable with careful planning, and summer buildings and grounds projects are underway.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON: *AGENDA ITEMS ONLY*

NONE

**FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
FINANCE - FEBRUARY 26, 2026**

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

CONSENT AGENDA

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

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

- 1F. To approve the Minutes from the Public & Executive Session of January 22, 2026.
- 2F. To approve the Bills and Claims List and Payroll as follows:

Ratify and Affirm Bills & Claims List - 2/11/2026	\$318,441.32
Ratify and Affirm Bills & Claims List - 2/26/2026	\$150,163.17
Ratify and Affirm January 30, 2026 Payroll	\$423,846.96
Ratify and Affirm February 15, 2026 Payroll	\$429,582.78

- 3F. To approve the transfer of funds for the month of January 2026 as certified by the Business Administrator and authorized by the Superintendent of Schools.
- 4F. To approve the report of the Board Secretary and Treasurer of School Monies for the period of January 1, 2026 through January 31, 2026. Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10 and certify that as of January 2026, the Board Secretary's monthly financial reports did not reflect an over expenditure in any of the major accounts or funds, and based on the appropriation balances reflected on these reports and the advice of district officials, we have no reason to doubt that the district has sufficient funds available to meet its financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.

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

- 5F. To ratify and affirm the tuition contract for Student ID #9240515463 with the South Hackensack School District - Memorial School for the period commencing December 18, 2025 through June 30, 2026, and to approve the total tuition charge in the amount of \$15,069, payable to the Fairfield Board of Education.

ROLL CALL

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

**FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
ADMINISTRATIVE - FEBRUARY 26, 2026**

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

CONSENT AGENDA

Anything placed on this agenda, Items ~~1~~ **2-3**, will be voted upon in one motion.

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

- ~~1A. To approve the proposal from B | W | S Architects, the Architects of Record for Pre-Referendum Services for the Fairfield Board of Education at an amount not to exceed \$35,000, plus reimbursable expenses.~~
- 2A. To approve the proposal from Machado Law Group to conduct an audit of the District's Special Education Program at an amount not to exceed \$7,000.
- 3A. To approve, with appreciation and gratitude, the food donation from Raising Cane's Chicken Fingers to the Fairfield School District staff.

ROLL CALL

Ms. Bellise-Jandoli, Mr. Fede, Ms. Street, Ms. Altaai, Mr. DePascale - All Ayes (**Items 2A and 3A**)

Item 1A was withdrawn from the agenda.

**FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS - FEBRUARY 26, 2026**

The following buildings and grounds 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:

1B. To approve the following Building Use Applications:

<u>Organization Group/Location/Purpose</u>	<u>Date and Time Slot</u>
Catherine Prall Family Night	Retroactively to February 5, 2026 5:30 PM to 6:15 PM (1st Session)
Stevenson Cafeteria	6:30 PM to 7:15 PM (2nd Session)

ROLL CALL

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

**FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
PERSONNEL - FEBRUARY 26, 2026**

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

1P. To approve the retirement of the following staff members:

Name	Location	Position	Reason	Last Day of Employment
Susan Healy	AES	Preschool Teacher	Retirement	06/30/2026
Patricia A. Lozito	AES	School Nurse	Retirement	06/30/2026
Rita Schubach	AES	Playground/Cafeteria Aide	Retirement	06/30/2026
Robert Woodson	WSC	Custodian	Retirement	06/30/2026

2P. To ratify and affirm the resignation of the following staff member:

Name	Location	Position	Reason	*Last Day of Employment
Jelsamina Nichols	AES	Instructional Aide	Resignation	02/06/2026

* In accordance with the 30-day requirement, unless mutually agreed for an earlier release date

3P. To approve the appointment(s) of the following staff member(s) for the 2025-2026 school year, pending receipt of all required documentation:

Name	Location/ Position	Tenure Track or Leave Replacement	Replacing or New Position	Step	Prorated Salary/Hourly Rate	Effective Date(s) on or about:
Cynthia Perez	WSC School Counselor	Tenure Track	New Position (Approved Ballot Question)	MA, 6	\$66,879	03/02/2026
Damla Secilmis	WSC Instructional Aide	N/A	New Position	N/A	\$20.50	03/16/2026

4P. To ratify and affirm the appointment of the following staff member for the 2025-2026 school year:

Name	Location/ Position	Replacing or New Position	Prorated Salary/Hourly Rate	Effective Date(s) on or about:
AnnMarie Perna	AES Instructional Aide	Jelsamina Nichols	\$20.50	02/02/2026

**FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
PERSONNEL - FEBRUARY 26, 2026**

5P. To approve the leave of absence for the following employee:

Name	Location	Position	Maternity/ Disability Leave	NJLA/FMLA w/o pay, but with benefits	Return Date
Melisa Locantore	AES	Teacher of 1st Grade	05/20/2026 - 06/19/2026	08/31/2026 - 11/20/2026	2026/2027 school year

(NOTE: All dates are considered “on or about”)

6P. To approve the appointment(s) of the following substitute staff member(s) for the 2025-2026 school year:

Name	Position	Hourly Rate	Effective Date(s) on or about:
Donna Mustacchio	Substitute Aide	\$16.00 per hour	03/01/2026

7P. To approve the revised hourly rate of the following substitute staff member(s) for the 2025-2026 school year:

Name	Position	Daily Rate/ Hourly Rate	Effective Date(s) on or about:
Elaina Ragusa	Substitute Teacher Substitute Aide	\$130 per day \$16.00 per hour	01/26/2026

8P. To approve the revised hourly rate for the following staff member(s) for the remainder of the 2025-2026 school year, effective February 1, 2026:

Name	Location/Position	Hourly Rate
Kayla Derrig	AES, Instructional Aide	\$20.50
Crystal Elie	AES, Instructional Aide	\$20.50

ROLL CALL

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

**FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
CURRICULUM/PROGRAM - FEBRUARY 26, 2026**

The following curriculum/program motions are made at the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools:

CONSENT AGENDA

Anything placed on this agenda, Items **1-2**, will be voted upon in one motion.

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

1C. To approve the following requests for Professional Development:

Employee Name	Conference/Workshop	Location	Date(s)	Expenses*
Lisa Giuffre	NJSHA Annual Convention	Iselin, NJ	04/16 and 04/17/2026	Registration Fee: \$285.00 Cost of Mileage/Tolls: \$ 37.30
Wally Lindsley	NJASBO Annual Conference	Atlantic City, NJ	06/02/2026 to 06/05/2026	Registration Fee: \$500.00 Cost of Hotel: \$417.91 Personal Expenses: Cost of Mileage/Tolls: \$152.32 Cost of Incidentals: \$238.00

*Estimated reimbursement of mileage, meals, and incidentals (according to NJ per diem rates) to be paid pending completion of the workshop and submission of the travel report.

2C. To approve the SEMI Program Waiver as follows:

WHEREAS, N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-5.3(b)1 provides that a school district may request a waiver of compliance with respect to the District’s participation in the Special Education Medicaid Initiative (SEMI) Program for the 2026-2027 school year; and

WHEREAS, the Fairfield Board of Education desires to apply for this waiver due to the fact that it projects Fairfield will not meet the minimum number of Medicaid-eligible classified students; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield Board of Education hereby authorizes the Chief School Administrator to submit to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools, in the County of Essex, an appropriate waiver of the requirements of N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-5.3(b)1 for the 2026-2027 school year.

ROLL CALL

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

**FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
POLICY - FEBRUARY 26, 2026**

The following policy 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 **Melinda Street** to approve the following motion:

1PO. To approve the second reading and adoption of the following policies and regulations as noted:

<u>Policy #</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Status</u>
P 0142.01	Nepotism (M)	Revised
P 1220	Employment of Chief School Administrator (M)	Revised
P&R 1552	Sexual Harassment - Staff (M)	New
P&R 2530	Resource Materials	Revised
P&R 2535	Library Material (M)	New
P 3362	Sexual Harassment (M)	Abolished
R 3362	Sexual Harassment of Teaching Staff Members Compliant Procedure	Abolished
P 4352	Sexual Harassment (M)	Abolished
R 4352	Sexual Harassment of Support Staff Members Complaint Procedure	Abolished
P&R 9130	Public Complaints	Revised

ROLL CALL

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

**FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
ENROLLMENT - FEBRUARY 26, 2026**

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Students 6/30/2025</u>	<u>Students 2/20/2026</u>
Preschool Inclusive	27	17
Preschool Disabilities	10	16
Kindergarten	99	97
First	93	100
Second	94	87
Third	104	98
Fourth	84	106
Fifth	108	89
Sixth	110	107
Out-of-District	2	2
Charter School	3	3
Total	734	722

**FAIRFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
FEBRUARY 26, 2026**

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS: NON-AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

NONE

NEXT MEETING

BE IT RESOLVED that the next meeting will be held, in person, on March 19, 2026, 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: **Andrea Bellise-Jandoli** Seconded by: **Melinda Street** Time: **8:10 PM**

ROLL CALL

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