

FAIRFIELD CITY SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 19, 2026

The Board of Education of the Fairfield City School District in the County of Butler, Ohio, held a Regular Meeting on the 19th of February, 2026 in the Catherine D. Milligan Community Room at Fairfield Senior High School.

The meeting was called to order by the President at 6:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL – Present: Mrs. Berding-Miller, Mr. Clark, Mr. Cline, Mr. McDonald & Mr. Napier
Absent: None

Also present: Mr. Smith, Mr. Phillips, Mrs. Hauer, Mr. Hussel, Mrs. Aug, Mr. Perry & Mr. Wolterman
Absent: None

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Kevin McDonald

COMMUNICATION

This is the portion of the meeting where you are invited to share your thoughts with the Board. In order for the Board to fulfill its obligation to complete the planned agenda in an effective and efficient fashion, a maximum of thirty (30) minutes of public participation may be permitted at each meeting. Please know that this time has been set aside for the Board to listen to you. Your comments are valued and will be taken into careful consideration. The Board will not engage in dialogue at this time. Presentations are limited to five (5) minutes each.

Two individuals addressed the Board regarding recess policies:

- *Amelia Geiser, parent, spoke in support of stronger, standardized recess policies and shared research supporting recess as essential to academic and social-emotional development.*
- *Dr. Kathy Ramstetter (Global Recess Alliance), Fairfield graduate, parent and researcher, presented national research supporting recess as a necessary component of child development and urged the Board to evaluate district recess practices.*

The Board thanked the speakers for their comments and research materials.

SUPERINTENDENT’S RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS

26-19 RESIGNATION/EMPLOYMENT– Mr. Hussel

MOTION – Moved by Mr. Napier to approve the following:

A. Personnel – Professional

1. Resignation

- a. Alaura Wallace, Creekside, 8th grade Language Arts
(effective at the end of the 2025-2026 school year; for personal reasons)

2. Employment

- a. Jennifer Roth, District, Itinerant Preschool Intervention Specialist,
additional 20% contract

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(recommended for an additional percentage to her continuing contract for the 2025-2026 school year, effective February 26, 2026; This brings her to a 100% continuing contract status.)

b. Extracurriculars 2025-2026

Senior High

Jennifer Carroll, Volleyball, Assistant Boys
James Hauser, Lacrosse, Girls JV Coach
Catherine Hensley, Volleyball, Assistant Boys
Micah Pennington, Lacrosse, Varsity, Boys Assistant Coach
Richard Urmie, Lacrosse, Girls Assistant Coach

Freshman

Grant Hubbard, Volleyball, Boys

Middle – Creekside Middle and Crossroads Middle Combined

Melissa Mason, Track, Middle School, 7th/8th Grade

c. Home Instructor 2025-2026

Jonathon Stewart

(Periodically the district has students who qualify for home instruction by placement on an IEP developed through the Special Services Department. It is recommended that the above noted person(s) be employed as Home Instructors at the rate of \$35.42 per hour, effective for the 2025-2026 school year.)

d. Volunteers 2025-2026 (Athletic)

Lucas Corner
Joshua Cunningham

(The above-noted persons are recommended for approval as volunteer coaches for the 2025-2026 school year in district athletic programs. Board approval of volunteers is a requirement of the Ohio High School Athletic Association. Recommendation is contingent upon submission of all required documents.)

(All employment is contingent upon satisfactory submission of all required documents.)

SECOND – Seconded by Mr. McDonald

ROLL CALL – Ayes: Mrs. Berding-Miller, Mr. Clark, Mr. Cline, Mr. McDonald & Mr. Napier

Nays: None

Motion Carried: 5-0

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26-20 RESIGNATIONS/UNPAID LEAVES OF ABSENCE/EMPLOYMENT/SUPPORT
SUBSTITUTES – Mr. Hussel

MOTION – Moved by Mrs. Berding-Miller to approve the following:

B. Personnel – Support

1. Resignations

- a. Bryce Blanton, North, Educational Assistant
(effective the end of the day February 27, 2026; for personal reasons)
- b. Teresa Stephens, Crossroads, Clerk IV
(effective the end of the day February 4, 2026; to accept another position within
the District)
- c. Lakrisha Tatum, Transportation, Bus Driver
(effective the end of the day February 20, 2026; for personal reasons)

2. Unpaid Leaves of Absence

- a. Karen Booker, Central, Educational Assistant
(effective February 2, 2026; for personal reasons)
- b. Jeanette Barth, Freshman, Educational Assistant
(effective April 9, 2026 through April 24, 2026; for personal reasons)
- c. Ross Shaw, Transportation, Bus Driver
(effective January 14, 2026 through February 6, 2026; for personal reasons)

3. Employment

- a. Bradley Dieterich, Freshman, Educational Assistant
(effective February 4, 2026; for a replacement position)
- b. Teresa Stephens, District, Confidential Secretary III
(effective February 5, 2026; for a replacement position)

4. Support Substitutes 2025-2026

Alyssa Booker
Nancy Dria
Miriam Galan Sandoval
Julie Rasnick
Lakrisha Tatum
Aniyah Tivis

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(All recommendations are for the 2025-2026 school year at a rate approved by the Board, and contingent upon satisfactory submission of all required documents.)

(All employment is contingent upon satisfactory submission of all required documents.)

SECOND – Seconded by Mr. Cline

ROLL CALL – Ayes: Mrs. Berding-Miller, Mr. Clark, Mr. Cline, Mr. McDonald & Mr. Napier

Nays: None

Motion Carried: 5-0

C. Items for Board Discussion

1. Resolution to Initiate Procedures Under Ohio Law for the Reemployment of Retired Employee – Jason Hussel

Mr. Hussel recommended approval of a resolution to initiate procedures under Ohio law for the re-employment of retired employee Michelle Hilbert, Assistant Principal at South Elementary, noting cost savings and continuity of leadership.

2. Five Year Forecast – Jay Phillips

Mr. Phillips presented the Spring 2026 Five-Year Forecast update.

Key highlights included projected deficit spending of \$9.4 million in FY26, 77% of expenditures allocated to salaries and benefits, declining state share of base cost funding, and projected cash depletion in FY28 without new revenue.

Board discussion included competitive compensation, staff retention, state funding trends, and long-term sustainability concerns.

3. FCSD Engagement Feedback – Kim Hauer

Mrs. Hauer summarized four engagement sessions (two staff, two community) regarding potential reductions if the May 5 ballot issue fails.

Feedback was analyzed for alignment between staff impact ratings and community priority ratings. Three categories were identified: high impact/high priority, lower impact/lower priority, and mixed alignment.

The process emphasized transparency and thoughtful consideration.

4. Potential Reductions – Billy Smith

- Eliminate one and one-half (1.5) District administrative positions, for an estimated cost savings of \$170,000
- Eliminate three (3) administration building support staff positions, for an estimated cost savings of \$183,000
- Restructure the Curriculum and Instruction Department to eliminate five (5) FTE Instructional Specialist positions, for an estimated cost savings of \$577,000
- Reduce fifteen (15) FTE teaching positions through attrition, for an estimated cost savings of \$1,665,000

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- Reduce one (1) psychologist position through attrition, for an estimated cost savings of \$100,000
- Eliminate forty-eight (48) grades K-5 unit leader supplemental positions, for an estimated cost savings of \$73,000
- Eliminate thirty-three (33) grades 6-8 department head supplemental positions, for an estimated cost savings of \$78,000
- Eliminate seventeen (17) grades 9-12 department head supplemental positions, for an estimated cost savings of \$54,000
- Reduce building budgets Districtwide by ten (10) percent, for an estimated cost savings of \$90,000
- Reduce ten (10) English learner tutor positions, for an estimated cost savings of \$405,000
- Reduce the number of extended service days worked, for an estimated cost savings of \$80,000
- Eliminate administrative tuition reimbursement, for an estimated cost savings of \$20,000
- Modify the Chromebook technology replacement cycle for grades K-5, for an estimated cost savings of \$217,000
- Eliminate district funding of college readiness assessments for students including AP and PSAT, for an estimated cost savings of \$90,000
- Eliminate practice of waiving extracurricular participation fees for economically disadvantaged students, for an estimated cost savings of \$55,000
- Modify fee structure for extracurricular participation to include a \$100 increase, for an estimated cost savings of \$150,000
- Reduce elementary building hours to 6:00 p.m., Monday–Friday, and eliminate weekend use, resulting in the reduction of eight (8) custodial positions, for an estimated cost savings of \$500,000
- Eliminate all school field trips, for an estimated cost savings of \$60,000

Mr. Smith presented Tier 1 proposed reductions totaling approximately \$4.57 million in savings.

Reductions included administrative reductions, instructional specialist restructuring, teaching reductions through attrition, supplemental eliminations, budget reductions, EL tutor reductions, Chromebook cycle modification, extracurricular fee adjustments, custodial reductions, and elimination of field trips.

Board members engaged in extensive discussion regarding impacts on student support services, athletics, community partnerships, mental health services, staffing implications, and levy timing.

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The Board expressed consensus for the Superintendent to return March 5 with a formal recommendation consistent with the discussed Tier 1 list.

26-21

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION TO INITIATE PROCEDURES UNDER OHIO LAW FOR THE REEMPLOYMENT OF RETIRED EMPLOYEE

MOTION – Moved by Mr. Napier to approve the following:

D. Other Items for Board Action

1. Recommend approval of RESOLUTION TO INITIATE PROCEDURES UNDER OHIO LAW FOR THE REEMPLOYMENT OF RETIRED EMPLOYEE as follows:

WHEREAS, the employee listed below is employed as an administrator and has expressed an interest and desire of retiring with the State Teacher Retirement System effective May 31, 2026 and being rehired in their same position by the Fairfield City School District Board of Education (the “Board”); and

WHEREAS, the Board is willing to consider reemploying this employee in his same position; and

WHEREAS, Ohio Revised Code § 3307.353 specifically provides that the Board must follow special “public input” procedures prior to rehiring retired employees into the same positions the employees held prior to the date of retirement.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Fairfield City School District Board of Education:

SECTION I

The Board hereby authorizes and instructs its Treasurer to make arrangements that the public notice attached hereto and incorporated herein as Exhibit “A” shall appear in a newspaper of general circulation within the School District at least 60 days prior to May 7, 2026 to provide the required “public notice” as prescribed by R.C. 3307.353 with respect to the following employee:

Michelle Hilbert

SECTION II

In accordance with the public notice attached hereto and incorporated herein as Exhibit “A”, the public hearing required under Ohio Revised Code Section 3307.353 shall occur on April 9, 2026 at the Catherine D. Milligan Community Room, Fairfield Senior High School, 8800 Holden Blvd., Fairfield, Ohio at 6:30 PM.

SECTION III

It is found and determined that all formal actions of this Board concerning or related to the adoption of this Resolution were adopted in an open meeting of this Board, and all deliberations of this Board and any of its committees that resulted in such formal actions were adopted in meetings open to the public, in compliance with all applicable requirements of the Ohio Revised Code.

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SECOND – Seconded by Mr. Cline

ROLL CALL – Ayes: Mrs. Berding-Miller, Mr. Clark, Mr. Cline, Mr. McDonald & Mr. Napier

Nays: None

Motion Carried: 5-0

TREASURER’S RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS

26-22

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR JANUARY 8, 2026, JANUARY 15, 2026, JANUARY 27, 2026 AND FEBRUARY 5, 2026/APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORTS FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY 2026/APPROVAL OF SUPPLEMENTAL CONTRACTS/APPROVAL TO AUTHORIZE THE SUPERINTENDENT AND TREASURER TO WAIVE AND/OR WRITE OFF PRIOR-YEAR INSTRUCTIONAL AND EXTRACURRICULAR STUDENT FEES FOR CURRENT OR FORMER STUDENTS WHOSE FAMILIES WERE ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED AND/OR ELIGIBLE FOR FREE OR REDUCED-PRICE MEALS AT THE TIME THE FEES WERE ACCESSED/APPROVAL OF DISPOSALS – Mr. Phillips

MOTION – Moved by Mrs. Berding-Miller to approve the following:

A. Recommend approval of the minutes of the following meetings:

January 8, 2026 – Organizational Meeting

January 15, 2026 – Special Meeting

January 27, 2026 – Special Meeting

February 5, 2026 – Work Session Meeting

B. Recommend approval of the financial reports for the month of January, 2026.

** Treasurer Phillips noted an addendum clarifying that his recommendation included approval of the Spring 2026 Five-Year Forecast Update and its submission to the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce. The Board approved the Treasurer’s recommendation as presented.*

C. Recommend approval of a supplemental contract for Deion Curtis in the amount of \$1,400.00, to be fully funded by the Tempo Club. This supplemental is for choreographer services for the 2025-2026 winter guard season, with all payment processed through Fairfield City Schools. There is no cost to the District’s General Fund.

D. Recommend approval of a supplemental contract for Michael Carpenter in the amount of \$2,000.00, to be fully funded by the Tempo Club. This supplemental is for staging, soundtrack and program design services for the 2025-2026 winter guard season, with all payment processed through Fairfield City Schools. There is no cost to the District’s General Fund.

E. Recommend approval to authorize the Superintendent and Treasurer to waive and/or write off prior-year instructional and extracurricular student fees for current or former students whose families were economically disadvantaged and/or eligible for free or reduced-price meals at the time the fees were assessed, when such waiver is deemed appropriate and properly documented. This authorization specifically extends to fees assessed in previous school years and supersedes the current policy limitation restricting administrative fee waivers to the current school year.

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F. Recommend approval of the disposal of the following fixed assets:

Tag Number	Disposal	Building
12699	Kettle	North
18056	Projector	Special Services
19599	Desktop	Technology
19601	Desktop	Technology
19602	Desktop	Technology
19603	Desktop	Technology
19604	Desktop	Technology
19608	Desktop	Technology
19619	Desktop	Technology
19624	Desktop	Technology
19626	Desktop	Technology
19637	Desktop	Technology
19638	Desktop	Technology
19644	Desktop	Technology
21130	Calculator	Special Services
21131	Calculator	Special Services
21132	Calculator	Special Services
21133	Calculator	Special Services
21134	Calculator	Special Services
21135	Calculator	Special Services
21136	Calculator	Special Services
21137	Calculator	Special Services
21138	Calculator	Special Services
21139	Calculator	Special Services
21625	Washer	FHS
21798	Wii Console	Special Services
23669	Monitor	Special Services
23771	Xbox	Special Services
25008	Xbox	Special Services
25032	Desktop	Technology
25033	Desktop	Technology
25034	Desktop	Technology
25035	Desktop	Technology
25036	Desktop	Technology
25041	Desktop	Technology
25042	Desktop	Technology
25044	Desktop	Technology
25046	Desktop	Technology
25047	Desktop	Technology
25048	Desktop	Technology
25049	Desktop	Technology
25051	Desktop	Technology
25052	Desktop	Technology
25055	Desktop	Technology
25634	Desktop	Technology

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25736	Calculator	Special Services
27018	Printer	Special Services
28926	Desktop	Technology
31717	iPad	Technology
33363	Video Magnifier	Special Services
33388	Desktop	Technology
33396	Desktop	Technology
33404	Desktop	Technology
36852	Laptop	Technology
36920	Laptop	Technology
37069	Laptop	Technology
37128	Laptop	Technology
37373	Laptop	Technology
37407	Laptop	Technology
37492	Laptop	Technology
37525	Laptop	Technology
37541	Laptop	Technology
37563	Laptop	Technology
37606	Laptop	Technology
37619	Laptop	Technology
37674	Laptop	Technology
37690	Laptop	Technology
37710	Laptop	Technology
37919	Desktop	Technology
38030	Laptop	Technology
38851	Laptop	Technology
40559	iPad	Technology
40577	iPad	Technology
199965	Bus	Transportation
200008	Bus	Transportation
200008A	Transmission	Transportation
210142	Bus	Transportation
210172	Bus	Transportation
210180	Bus	Transportation
210188	Bus	Transportation
210194	Bus	Transportation
210195	Bus	Transportation
A1376	Laptop	Technology
S10012	Laptop	Technology
S10224	Laptop	Technology
S10243	Laptop	Technology
S10412	Laptop	Technology
S10460	Laptop	Technology
S10580	Laptop	Technology
S10601	Laptop	Technology
S10630	Laptop	Technology
S10812	Laptop	Technology
S10821	Laptop	Technology

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S10824	Laptop	Technology
S11144	Laptop	Technology
S11147	Laptop	Technology
S11178	Laptop	Technology
S11378	Laptop	Technology
S11380	Laptop	Technology
S11469	Laptop	Technology
S11618	Laptop	Technology
S11636	Laptop	Technology
S11939	Laptop	Technology
S12135	Laptop	Technology
S12286	Laptop	Technology
S12337	Laptop	Technology
S12388	Laptop	Technology
S12467	Laptop	Technology
S12478	Laptop	Technology
S12556	Laptop	Technology
S12676	Laptop	Technology
S12750	Laptop	Technology
S12778	Laptop	Technology
S12897	Laptop	Technology
S12986	Laptop	Technology
S13398	Laptop	Technology
S13410	Laptop	Technology
S13464	Laptop	Technology
S13591	Laptop	Technology
S13730	Laptop	Technology
S13754	Laptop	Technology
S13917	Laptop	Technology
S13987	Laptop	Technology
S14106	Laptop	Technology
S14117	Laptop	Technology
S14130	Laptop	Technology
S14290	Laptop	Technology
S14323	Laptop	Technology
S14584	Laptop	Technology
S14634	Laptop	Technology
S14668	Laptop	Technology
S14690	Laptop	Technology
S14991	Laptop	Technology
S14993	Laptop	Technology
S15044	Laptop	Technology
S15113	Laptop	Technology
S15371	Laptop	Technology
S15426	Laptop	Technology
S15646	Laptop	Technology
S15910	Laptop	Technology
S15946	Laptop	Technology

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S15995	Laptop	Technology
S16177	Laptop	Technology
S16216	Laptop	Technology
S16378	Laptop	Technology
S16585	Laptop	Technology
S16708	Laptop	Technology
S16712	Laptop	Technology
S16814	Laptop	Technology
S16839	Laptop	Technology
S16958	Laptop	Technology
S16962	Laptop	Technology
S16972	Laptop	Technology
S17025	Laptop	Technology
S17063	Laptop	Technology
S17106	Laptop	Technology
S17114	Laptop	Technology
S17182	Laptop	Technology
S17275	Laptop	Technology
S17278	Laptop	Technology
S17389	Laptop	Technology
S17393	Laptop	Technology
S17581	Laptop	Technology
S17583	Laptop	Technology
S17614	Laptop	Technology
S17627	Laptop	Technology
S17680	Laptop	Technology
S17712	Laptop	Technology
S17726	Laptop	Technology

SECOND – Seconded by Mr. McDonald

ROLL CALL – Ayes: Mrs. Berding-Miller, Mr. Clark, Mr. Cline, Mr. McDonald & Mr. Napier

Nays: None

Motion Carried: 5-0

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Legislative Update – John Cline

Mr. Cline reported monitoring pending legislation impacting education funding.

B. Butler Tech – Abby Berding-Miller

Mrs. Berding-Miller reported Advanced Manufacturing Hub ribbon cutting, aviation program updates, BPA qualifiers, and Dunk & Donate event.

C. Student Achievement – Kevin McDonald

Mr. McDonald recognized Scholastic Art award recipients, senior athletes, and Athletes of the Week.

D. Parks and Recreation – Scott Clark

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Mr. Clark reported upcoming 250th celebration activities.

E. Planning Commission – Billy Smith

Mr. Smith reported next meeting scheduled February 25.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

February 21, 2026 – Father-Daughter Dance, 7:00 – 9:00 PM, Fairfield Senior High School Arena

February 22, 2026 – Fairfield Athletics Hall of Fame Banquet, 5:00 PM, Oscar Event Center

March 5, 2026 – Board Meeting (Work Session), 6:30 PM, Fairfield Senior High School, Catherine D. Milligan Community Room

March 7, 2026 – Crystal Classic, 8:00 AM – 11:00 PM; Fairfield Senior High School, PAC and Arena

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Napier - He thanked the community members who spoke during public participation and expressed appreciation for the engagement sessions held throughout the district. He noted pride in the Board's thoughtful discussion and emphasized the importance of continued community involvement and legislative advocacy.

Mr. McDonald - He expressed appreciation to the administrative team for their transparency and extensive preparation. He acknowledged the emotional weight of the financial decisions before the Board and reflected on the real impact that potential reductions would have on students, families, and community programs. He emphasized that the district's current challenges represent a structural financial issue rather than a spending problem.

Mr. Cline – He thanked the administrative team for the clarity of the financial presentation and the structure of the community engagement process. He noted the importance of protecting core academic programming and student services to the greatest extent possible while recognizing the difficult realities associated with balancing the budget.

Mrs. Berding-Miller – She expressed gratitude to the administration for creating meaningful opportunities for community input and for carefully analyzing feedback before bringing recommendations forward. She reflected on the district's long-standing commitment to serving the whole child and acknowledged the personal and community impact of potential reductions. She encouraged continued advocacy efforts at the state level regarding public school funding.

Mr. Clark – He commended the administrative team for their leadership, transparency, and commitment to student-centered decision-making. He emphasized that the Board does not take potential reductions lightly and reaffirmed the Board's commitment to thoughtful, responsible stewardship of district resources while prioritizing teaching and learning.

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ADJOURNMENT

MOTION – Moved by Mr. Napier to adjourn the meeting.

SECOND – Seconded by Mrs. Berding-Miller

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ROLL CALL – Ayes: Mrs. Berding-Miller, Mr. Clark, Mr. Cline, Mr. McDonald & Mr. Napier
Nays: None
Motion Carried: 5-0

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m. by the President, Mr. Clark.

President

Attest: _____
Treasurer