

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 24, 2015**

A regular meeting of the Enfield Board of Education was held at Town Hall in Council Chambers, located at 820 Enfield Street, Enfield, CT on March 24, 2015.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Sirard.
2. **INVOCATION OR MOMENT OF SILENCE:** Tina LeBlanc
3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Tina LeBlanc
4. **FIRE EVACUATION ANNOUNCEMENT:** Chairman Sirard announced the fire evacuation announcement.
5. **ROLL CALL:**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Peter Jonaitis, Raymond Peabody, Raymond Peabody, Vin Grady, Tina LeBlanc, Timothy Neville, and Stacy Thurston

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dave Wawer & Lori Unghire

ALSO PRESENT: Dr. Jeffrey Schumann, Superintendent; Mr. Christopher Drezek, Deputy Superintendent; EHS Student Representative Christine Luksic and FHS Student Representative Thomas Vose

6. **BOARD GUEST(S)**

a. **Mentoring Program**

Mrs. Kari Monteforte, the new Mentoring Coordinator for the Enfield Public Schools gave an overview of the mentoring program. We currently have 23 students on waiting lists for a mentor and are especially looking for male mentors. We currently have 11 students with mentors. Our next training session will be held on March 31st. She is looking to recruit 30 potential mentors to attend this training session in order to grow our program. The Governor's Prevention Partnership will attend this training session since she is new to this position. Her personal goal is to place all students with a mentor by the end of the school year. If any Board member would like to be a mentor, please contact her.

Chairman Sirard asked if she has reached out to the seniors at the senior center. Mrs. Monteforte stated that she has been there once and needs to follow up with Mrs. Lather. Chairman Sirard added that from past experience, our seniors are very interested in our youth. This could be an untapped resource for you to use.

Mr. Peabody agrees that our seniors would love to work with our kids. He is at the center frequently and is more than willing to help you out in anyway.

Mrs. LeBlanc asked when the mentors meeting with the students. She added that you could also reach out to MassMutual and LEGO for their employees to volunteer to mentor the students. Her company has something like this where you can meet with the students once a week at her work. They bus the students into them. She can help you with some contact names if needed.

Mrs. Monteforte stated the mentors will meet with the students during the school day.

Mr. Neville stated the students really benefit from this program and it does make a huge difference with the students. Keep up the good work.

Mr. Jonaitis stated the only problem with this is the students at the middle school are pulled from their classes and are missing tests. The program does good work but is there a way to do this after school in conjunction with the ERfC program?

Mr. Neville added that the students have the option to take any tests prior to meeting with their mentor and they rotate the visit times so they are not always missing the same classes. The kids really benefit from this program.

Chairman Sirard thanked Mrs. Monteforte.

b. Building Committee Representatives

Members from the Enfield High School Building Committee Dean Petrucelli, Randy Daigle and Dr. Art Pongratz provided the Board with an update regarding the final plan specifications and cost estimates for Phase Three of Three for the “Renovate as New” project. Mr. Petrucelli stated the PCT meeting will be held on April 7th for the final approval process for the reimbursement process with the State. We need the Board’s approval and the Superintendent will need to sign-off on this as well as the Building Committee.

Mr. Daigle added that we saved money from the furniture line item and will use it on IT purchases. We are buying hardware and software as part of the project. We were able to put money back into the project and if there is anything left over we will by additional furniture with the money. We will put every penny into this building and will not give anything back. We have graded our current equipment and will replace items as needed. Each classroom will have 1 gigabyte of technology speed at their disposal.

Mr. Neville thanked the members of the committee for bargaining so hard for us. We have been able to deal with issues as they have occurred. If there are any problems you encounter along the way, are their any contingencies in place. Mr. Daigle stated yes, we have \$2.1 million set aside for contingencies.

Mr. Petrucelli stated we do not feel there are any threats to the FF&E. We do have some concerns about the demolition of the D wing and are not sure what we might uncover beneath the surface.

Mr. Jonaitis asked what will be done with the old furniture from the café. Dr. Pongratz stated per Board Policy #3260 Disposal of Educational Materials, any surplus equipment will be disbursed by the Town. Mr. Petrucelli stated we will have a lot of high school furniture that will need to be disbursed.

Mr. Jonaitis asked is the equipment in that bad of condition that it needs to be replaced. Mr. Petrucelli stated the old furniture will not fit the new configuration for the café. There is also wear and tear with the existing furniture.

Mr. Jonaitis asked about the office furniture. Mr. Petrucelli stated with the new office configuration, the existing furniture will not fit. We will need to purchase 4 new desks.

Mr. Jonaitis asked if any of the money can be used for other items. Mr. Petrucelli stated this part of the construction there is \$2.12 million set aside. He added that 71% of the \$2.12 million is eligible for reimbursement. Mr. Daigle added that any unused funds would need to be returned back to the State but we will not let that happen and plan to use it all.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated the construction at Enfield High is impressive since they started in November. The Building Committee is doing an amazing job and all of their work is done as volunteers. The construction company is taking many safety precautions. Three years ago, this was just a plan. She appreciates everyone's hard work and cannot wait to see the finished product.

Chairman Sirard also thanked everyone involved in the project and for the great job you are doing.

Mr. Daigle stated everyone on the committee goes above and beyond. We have great support from our liaisons. The parents and kids have been great. We have the "A" team working on this project and are very fortunate.

Suspend the Rules to move an Item on the Agenda:

Chairman Sirard stated we have the need to suspend the rules and move Item #11a before Item #7.

Mr. Neville moved, seconded by Mr. Peabody to suspend the rules and move Item #11a before Item #7.

A vote by **show of hands 7-0-0** passed unanimously.

Mr. Neville moved, seconded by Mrs. Thurston that the Enfield Board of Education approves the FF&E, Technology Package for Phase III of the Enfield High School Project No. 049-0138 EA/RR and Form ED042 as presented.

A vote by **roll-call 7-0-0** passed unanimously.

7. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- a. Student Representatives Report – as presented
- b. March/April Events – as presented
- c. Grants Update – as presented
- e. Personnel Report – as presented

Dr. Schumann thanked the Board for all of their hard work and dedication to the students, staff and community. March is Board member appreciation month. This year, each Board member was presented with a baseball cap with the new high school logo. Your work developing a world class high school should not go unrecognized. You are the first to receive these baseball caps. Thank you on behalf of the administration, staff and students for everything you do.

Mr. Jonaitis asked if any research has gone into the bus issue from the last meeting. Dr. Schumann stated we will review that but now we have been looking into removing the ice and snow from the current stops. It is on our radar screen and this issue will be addressed.

Mr. Jonaitis asked about the SBAC Letter from Jonathan Pelto. Dr. Schumann stated we are one of many districts that received this letter regarding compliance with State and Federal mandates for students. We are in complete compliance with the State and Federal laws for testing students. We have also contacted our attorney regarding the delivery of the SBAC tests.

8. AUDIENCES

Mary Scutt, Yale Drive - Mrs. Scutt agreed that the Building Committee has done an amazing

job. She is here tonight regarding the School Security Officers MOU not being renewed with the Town Council. She does not feel this should be continued. There are no goals with the program. They were brought in while we hardened our schools, which is important. We cannot put our kids in a bubble. We can use this money to continue this process or for classroom support. Please do not support renewing this.

Casimir Pawlowski, Cottage Road - Mr. Pawlowski thanked the Board members for their work. He is a graduate from Enfield High. The new building is stellar and he wished he was attending school again. He asked about the relationship with Suffield Vo-Ag and how are the students chosen to attend; do we pay for the students to attend this program; is there a cap for the number of students allowed to attend Suffield Vo-Ag and who sets the cap for this. Thank you for your service.

Liz Davis, North Maple Street – Ms. Davis thanked the Board for what you do. The parents and residents appreciate what you do for us. She is here tonight about the 61 letters sent to the teachers. She has been told this is what we do and this is the norm. This is unacceptable. We have some of the best teachers in Enfield that will not know if they have a job or not. We will ultimately lose some of these great teachers that will ultimately affect our kids. She stands behind our kids and our educators. The Board needs to fight for our educators so they don't go through this every year. She is against renewing the MOU with the Town Council. She attended all of the community conversations about the SSO's. The SSO's are great but they are giving us a false sense of security. We were told the SSO's were supposed to be here for 2 years while we hardened our schools. We are paying 10 times more for payroll for our SSO's instead of hardening our schools further. This \$1.6 million dollars is coming from our taxes. These guards also need to know if they will have a job for the next school year. We want to vote for the SSO's but we don't want to push and vote for our 61 educators – this is wrong. She thanked the Board and encouraged them to not support renewing the SSO's.

9. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mrs. LeBlanc attended the Two Moms on a Mission Quarter Auction for the EHS Safe Grad in February. It was a lot of fun and encouraged audience members to attend one of these events. She attended the Eli Whitney Grade 5 Band Concert. The kids did a wonderful job.

Mrs. LeBlanc explained that during her absence from the Board meetings over the past few months, she was attending the EHS Girls Basketball Games. It was exciting to see them play and proceed to the State games. Her daughter is on the team and they had a great season. There was a lot of school spirit and it was a fun experience.

Mrs. LeBlanc agreed with Ms. Davis that we have lost a lot of great teachers because of the budget process and non-renewals. Some teachers do not want to go through this process and we lose them. We are lucky that so many of our great educators have chosen Enfield.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated the SSO's are a big decision. The safety of our students is a top priority. There are many other ways that a school can be threatened. The money for the SSO's will not be used for education. The funds will go to public safety and this has been confirmed.

Mrs. LeBlanc addressed Mr. Powlaski by stating EPS pays for the Enfield students that attend Suffield Vo-Ag. There is a cap for the number of students that attend Suffield Vo-Ag that is based on the average attendance. The formula is from the State. Our students are eligible to apply because we do not offer a Vo-Ag program. We pay the tuition and transportation costs for Enfield students to attend Suffield Vo-Ag.

Mrs. LeBlanc added that she is back. While she was gone, she was informed about what was going. She is ready to work on the budget, the guards and to finish the year on a positive note.

Mr. Neville attended the Enfield Invention Convention. It was fantastic and the kids were wonderful. The students did a great job on their projects. He was one of the many judges along with Mrs. Thurston. Even Congressman Joe Courtney was in attendance. The student creativity and sharpness of student's projects were phenomenal. He extended kudos to everyone involved in the program. If you weren't able to attend this year, he encourages you to attend next year.

Mr. Neville encouraged everyone to attend the upcoming Arts Festival. It is an amazing event and our students are very talented.

Mr. Neville stated regarding the 61 letters for non-renewals, this is one of the Board's worst duties. We have wonderful teachers in Enfield. We understand why we do this but he would also like this process to go away. He would like to do our budget earlier. He hopes that we can produce a budget this will minimize the cuts. Our budget discussions are going well, as well as our security discussions. He encouraged audience members to get involved and know where we are in the budget process. The Town manager made his recommendation. We need to let you know our budget needs. Please come to our meetings and the Town Council meetings and speak. We need your help.

Mrs. Thurston stated she attended the Invention Convention. It was a phenomenal event. The students did such a great job with their projects.

Mrs. Thurston thanked Dr. Schumann and Mr. Drezek for everything you do for the Board. We take our hats off to you and appreciate everything you are doing. You work just as hard as the Board does. Thank you.

Mr. Jonaitis added that they work harder than us. The non-renewal letters are not meant to threaten or scare our teachers. It is a rite of passage that the teachers come to expect. He remembers the first year when he didn't receive a letter. Some of these teachers are third, second and first year teachers.

Mr. Jonaitis stated that he missed the budget presentation to the Town Council. He is not in favor of a 6.99% budget. We added positions over the last 3 years including all day Kindergarten and positions at C/O.

Mr. Jonaitis stated that we talk about our education system and how it could be compared to any other education system around the State. He does not believe that. We are delivering the best education that we can afford. We speak of a world class education that seems nice. He does not believe that we should have a school system that is like the rest of the world. The rest of the world will send their children to our country for education for the best education they can receive when possible.

Mr. Jonaitis stated that we spend a lot of money on technology and need to spend even more on it. Technology isn't the only way to teach our kids. We need to teach our kids how to use technology without over using it.

Mr. Jonaitis stated that we are spending around \$35 million dollars on approximately 5,000 students. Our contractual costs keep increasing. We will be opening an early childhood learning center at the old Harriet Beecher Stowe building at what cost. There is a large need for employable skills for our students. The new high school will not make a good school system. It will be attractive and if that is what you are looking for, you should send your children to a magnet school because they are pretty. The staff and students inside of the buildings will make a school good or bad. He personally believes we have a good school system that is filled with great teachers and students that are eager to learn.

Mr. Peabody stated he attended some of the EHS girls Basketball games and they are amazing to watch. He congratulated them for this year's success and added that they have a strong team coming back for next season.

Mr. Peabody addressed the student drop off parking lot at Nathan Hale and would like someone to contact Buildings and Grounds about the safety concerns

Mr. Peabody attended the public sessions regarding the security guards. It was interesting to hear the comments that were made. He agrees that education cannot come before safety. This is a decision that both the Board and Town Council are struggling with.

Mr. Peabody would like to add a couple of additional budget workshop session. The Town Council knows the impact of every cut that will be made to the budget. He appreciates Dr. Schumann's budget impact document. He would like the public to attend the April 8th meeting regarding the budget at Henry Barnard and the April 29th public hearing at JFK. Last year, no one came. If you can attend, please speak and let us know your feelings. Sharing your feelings on Facebook doesn't cut it.

Mr. Peabody also attended the Invention Convention. It was a lot of fun. He also attended the EHS Quarter Auction and enjoyed that also.

Mr. Peabody thanked Mrs. Monteforte for her presentation regarding our mentoring program. We have a good program and Mrs. Monteforte is doing a great job.

Mr. Peabody stated the Suffield Vo-Ag program is very successful and worthwhile. We do pay the Enfield student's tuition and for transportation costs. It is an application process and we are proud of our students that attend.

Chairman Sirard thanked Mrs. Monteforte for discussing our mentoring program tonight. He has always been concerned with our remedial rates. Our mentors help out our students by volunteering their time. It is a proven fact that the earlier we get involved with our kids learning, the better product we will have. Programs like the first reader and mentoring help our kids tremendously. Please volunteer your time if you can.

Chairman Sirard thanked Dr. Schumann and Mr. Drezek for the baseball caps.

Chairman Sirard stated the budget process and expulsion hearings bother him. We all know that our budget process is done backwards. If the process was reversed, then a lot of people would not be able to hide behind our budget.

Chairman Sirard was unable to attend the Invention Convention but he did talk to some of our legislatures. The rumor is that we may be cut \$1.2 million from our budget. That would bump us up to almost 15% of our budget or \$12 million dollars that we will not be funded. This is a lot more than the \$4 million we are asking for. The people that are ultimately responsible for us reading the 61 names are from Hartford and work under the gold dome.

Chairman Sirard stated we are proud of our students that attend the Suffield Vo-Ag program. We set a cap and we need to send at least 9 students. This program is very expensive.

Chairman Sirard is proud of our schools and the majority of the Board is in agreement with this. We may all have our personal opinions but as the Chairman, he gets to speak on behalf of the Board.

Mr. Grady stated he was interviewed tonight by a Boy Scout about the high school merger for a

project he is working on. He was not able to attend the Invention Convention. He spoke to one of the judges and he is amazed by the talent of our students. We have a good school system. He encouraged everyone to attend the Arts Festival to view the talents of our students. You will be amazed by their abilities.

Mr. Grady is shocked by what the Town Manager cut from our budget. He does not know where we will get the \$2 million dollars from. This year's list of 61 teacher names is the largest he has ever seen. We are trying to maintain a good school system. Cutting \$2 million from our budget will affect programs and class sizes. We have spent hours on our budget. We asked for a status quo budget to keep what we currently have and did not get it. We cannot keep doing this. We have no where left to cut from. He hopes the Town Council will come to their senses and realize this. He does not want to see any cuts that will affect our students. These cuts will affect everything. We need a budget that will be good for our students and staff.

Mr. Jonaitis stated the tuition for students attending Suffield Vo-Ag is not cheap.

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Continued Budget Discussion

Mr. Neville stated that both he and Mr. Peabody asked for this item to be placed on the agenda. The first cut to the budget was made by the Town Manager as a recommendation. Our job is to convey our needs to the Town Council. Conversations are happening about the budget and will continue. We wanted to provide the Town Council and the public with the facts about any potential cuts. People have questions about the needs and wants. We have the entire month of April to continue to discuss the budget.

Mr. Neville asked if the impact document has been placed on the website for the public to access. Dr. Schumann stated this document has not been placed on the website.

Mr. Neville asked if this document can be picked up at any school. Dr. Schumann stated this is a memo between the Board and the superintendent. They would need to FOI request this at C/O if they would like a copy of the document or the Board can vote to make this a public document.

Mr. Neville would like this document to be placed on line for the public to access.

Motion to Suspend the Rules to add an item to the Agenda:

Mr. Neville moved, seconded by Mr. Peabody to place the Budget Impact Document from the Superintendent to the Board on the website for public viewing.

Discussion:

Mr. Jonaitis stated you would like to place this document on the website even though it is available by Freedom of Information.

Mr. Neville added that by doing this, anyone can go and look at it without requesting a copy.

Mr. Peabody stated this is a working document but it is also a static working document. Nothing will change within the body of the document. This is just data to help with making a decision.

A vote by **show of hands 6-0-1** passed with Mr. Jonaitis abstaining.

Chairman Sirard asked for this document to be placed on the website for public access.

Mr. Neville stated this idea behind this document was for transparency purposes.

Chairman Sirard stated it is an ala cart menu of potential reductions or a guide to use during the budget.

Mr. Neville added that the list of reductions is not prioritized. We need to discuss this document with the Town Council and share the reasons for this as we move through the process and can be more specific with our numbers. We can discuss this item at a future date.

Mr. Peabody would like to discuss the memo that was put together by Board members that were given to the Superintendent previously. He would like a response from the Superintendent regarding these items.

Mr. Neville stated he discussed this with the Chairman before the meeting started. It would be up to the Chairman to request this item from the Superintendent.

Chairman Sirard stated that Dr. Schumann is authorized to address the requested items submitted on the letter from members of the Board.

Dr. Schumann stated the document asked for significant requests and he will need the resources from the administration to address some of these items. He is requesting that this item move to the Executive Committee to address. Chairman Sirard stated that this can be addressed via the Executive Committee.

Mr. Peabody asked if we could schedule some additional budget meetings. The Town Council needs more information to help them to make an educated decision regarding the budget. They do not have enough information at this point and time. The February 9th memo addresses this.

11. NEW BUSINESS

a. Approval of FFE & Technology Package for Phase III of the Enfield High School Project No. 049-0138 EA/RR and Form ED042

This item was previously addressed on the agenda.

b. Receipt of and Action upon Recommendation of Superintendent of Schools Concerning Teacher contract Non-renewals in Accordance with Connecticut General Statutes 10-151

Chairman Sirard moved, seconded by Mr. Neville that the contract of employment of:

Anthony Allegro, Lauren Andrews, Traci Artioli, Renee Baillargeon, Daniel Barrett, Adam Behling, Jessie Brown, Brianna Cacela, Aimee Cotto, Angela Courchesne, Amber Daigle, Alison Delphia, Kristin Deming, Jacquelyn Denapoli, Amy Dennis, Tara Discepolo, Linsey Eslinger-Searcy, Jeanne Horton, Kristen Fitzsimons, Melanie Finn-Scofield, Stevin Fix, Deborah Gaskell, Courtney Gearing, John Paul Gill, Steven Gorniak, Sarah Gothers, Donald Gumaer, Erin Hayes, Alyssa Ivanoff, Jane Karcz, Kathryn Kudlac, Allison Law, Bridgett Moriarity, Kelly Morrison, Kim Muggleton, Adam Mitchell, Matthew Murray, Joshua Ogradowski, Richard Onofrey, Dawn Parker, Amber Pascoe, Lee Piekos, Caroline Pierce, Nicole Ricci, Kelly Rossetti, Stuart Sanborn, Jacquelyn Sawn, Leigh Scordato, Jennifer Scully, Joel Senez, Kelly Shea, Rebecca Skrabely,

Bethany Souza, Samantha Sugrue, Bethany Sullivan, Heather Teraila, Justin Teraila, John Unghire, William Walpole, Mary Kate Walsh and Nicole Wright

not be renewed for the following year upon its expiration at the end of the 2014-2015 school year, and that the Superintendent of Schools be directed to advise such persons in writing of this action.

A vote by **roll-call 5-2-0** passed with Mrs. LeBlanc and Mr. Grady in dissent.

12. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Building Committee

This was already discussed.

b. Curriculum Committee

Mr. Neville reported that the Curriculum Committee met and we discussed the standards based report cards. We had a good discussion with several parents attending the meeting. We discussed different ideas and how to get the information out to the parents and how to educate the parents without costing us any money.

Mrs. Thurston stated the parents left the meeting with a better understanding about the report cards. The meeting was very informative.

Mr. Neville added it was a proactive meeting and including parents in the process is important. They made some wonderful suggestions and were appreciative for the opportunity to give input.

Mr. Jonaitis asked them to hi-light the big changes. Mr. Neville stated the language and the process were the big changes. Parents would like to receive the report cards prior to the report card conferences. They would also like us to put together a snap shot of the report cards on the website to help parents understand them better. We really had a good conversation. They understand why we are doing it and gave us feedback to make the report cards better.

c. Finance Committee

Mrs. LeBlanc stated the Finance Committee met tonight and we will approve accounts and payroll later on the agenda. It was discussed at the meeting about the increasing transportation costs for students being placed by DCF. We are required to provide transportation for these Enfield students. It is another unfunded mandate that we must deal with. This is very costly to the school system. Mr. Peabody wanted people to understand this.

Mr. Jonaitis stated we should address this with our legislators when they come to the next Board meeting.

13. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mrs. Thurston moved, seconded by Mr. Peabody that the Regular Meeting Minutes of March 10, 2015 be approved. A vote by **show-of-hands 5-0-2** passed with Mrs. LeBlanc and Mr. Grady abstaining.

14. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS PAYROLL

a. For the Months of October FY2014; November FY2014; December FY2014; January FY2015 & February FY2015

Mrs. LeBlanc moved, seconded by Mrs. Thurston that we accept the Superintendent's certification as follows and hereby certify the following months of total expenditures for October 2014 Payroll for \$5,993,455.45 and other accounts totaling \$2,355,451.90 for a total of \$8,348,907.35; November 2014 Payroll for \$4,010,975.28 and other accounts totaling \$1,535,941.98 for a total of \$5,546,917.26; December 2014 Payroll for \$3,944,472.83 and other accounts totaling \$1,385,652.44 for a total of \$5,330,125.27; January 2015 Payroll for \$3,852,740.05 and other accounts totaling \$2,550,356.00 for a total of \$6,403,096.05; and for February 2015 Payroll for \$3,810,160.23 and other accounts totaling \$2,705,676.33 for a total of \$6,515,836.56.

A vote by **show-of-hands 7-0-0** passed unanimously.

b. Line Item Transfers - None

15. CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATIONS - None

16. AUDIENCES

Tricia Wright, Oakwood Street – Mrs. Wright thanked the Board for their service. She would also like to not like to see the teachers being non-renewed each year. We need to stop playing the ping pong game with the Town Council and the Board. Does it really matter what we say at these budget meetings. The public hearing meetings are very frustrating because there is no back and forth dialogue with the Board and Town Council. Some people cannot attend the public hearings or meetings. She liked the meeting held last year with Mr. Peabody and Mrs. LeBlanc at Enfield High. It was a good give and take session. Can we e-mail you our thoughts to be read at the meeting? She needs Board members to fight for our kids and stop blaming each other about the process or budget format. When the high school combines, you will need to work on the curriculum. She likes the SSO's that are in our schools and feels it is money well spent. She likes some of the ideas that have come from the conversations about the SSO's. Thank you.

17. EXECUTIVE SESSION

18. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Grady moved, seconded by Mrs. Thurston to adjourn the Regular Meeting of March 24, 2015.

All ayes, motion passed unanimously.

Meeting stood adjourned at 8:43 PM.

Vincent M. Grady
Secretary
Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary