

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 14, 2023**

A regular meeting of the Enfield Board of Education was held in Council Chambers on March 14, 2023.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 7:01 PM by Madam Chair LeBlanc.
2. **INVOCATION OR MOMENT OF SILENCE:** Scott Ryder
3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Scott Ryder
4. **FIRE EVACUATION ANNOUNCEMENT:**
5. **ROLL CALL:**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jean Acree, Dr. Gerald Calnen (arrived at 7:17 PM), Janet Cushman, Joshua Hamre, Jonathan LeBlanc, Amanda Pickett, John Unghire and Tina LeBlanc

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Christopher J. Drezek, Superintendent and Mr. Andrew B. Longey, Assistant Superintendent

6. BOARD GUEST(S)

a. Armando Ramos

Mr. Drezek welcomed Mr. Ramos. Mr. Ramos introduced EHS students Shaelyn O'Farrell and Lily Bellucci. Mr. Ramos stated they were asked to represent Connecticut at Capital Hill Day on February 14th – 16th at the capital. It was a chance for athletes and partners to advocate for Special Olympics and our Unified program. We spoke about our unified program and as a champion banner school.

Ms. O'Farrell spoke about the amazing time she had visiting the capital. She made many new friends from across the country that are also part of Special Olympics and Unified Sports. She has a new pen pal from Georgia now. Everyone she met was very nice and very happy. She also enjoyed meeting congressional representatives. She read her speech to them. She gave them a special commemorative coin. The logo on the coin was designed by a Special Olympic athlete. She also was able to eat in the Capital Cafeteria, ride on the Capital Subway and walk through the tunnels. We also visited the Lincoln Memorial and the Martin Luther King, Jr. memorial. This trip was awesome.

Ms. Bellucci stated this was an amazing experience where we met different people and hear about their stories. The first day we met with everyone and got to know each other a little. It is really amazing to hear what some of these people have gone through. Our second day we visited 5 buildings and met with the aides. She hopes that we get what we asked for. She thinks Special Olympics and Unified Sports deserves it. These kids are so compassionate and being a part of this you see how much they really love it.

Mr. Ramos added these are two of Enfield's finest students and they did an amazing job representing Connecticut and Enfield Special Olympics. He just wanted to thank them for a great job.

Mrs. Pickett loved hearing about your trip to DC, this is one of her favorite places to visit. What did you ask for? Ms. Bellucci stated we asked for \$65 million in total (\$20 million for health support and \$45 million for Connecticut Champion Schools).

Mrs. Pickett stated she would love to support your requests and reach out to our legislators for their support. It is awesome that you are advocating, and she would love to help you. Let us know if we can do anything else to support you. Thank you for what you are doing.

Mr. Ryder would also like to help them. This was a fantastic trip. Please keep us in the loop with anything you might need. What did you eat for lunch in the Capital Cafeteria? Ms. O'Farrell had a buffalo chicken salad.

Mr. Hamre thanked them for being here tonight. You have deeply touched him. What sports are you involved with. Ms. O'Farrell stated a lot of sports. Mr. Hamre added there is a lot to see and do in DC. How were the meetings you attended and were you comfortable or nervous? Ms. O'Farrell stated she was very comfortable talking to them and nervous at the same time.

Mr. Hamre thanked them for talking about your experience.

Mrs. Acree congratulated Mr. Ramos for taking the students on this trip in Washington DC. This was a great undertaking. She also congratulated Ms. O'Farrell and Ms. Bellucci for representing Enfield and doing an amazing job. You both are very well spoken. Thank you.

Mr. LeBlanc stated this is affiliated with the unified sports basketball game that is held at Enfield High School.

Mr. Drezek stated they will hold different unified sports events throughout the school year. We will place their next event on your calendars. This is one of the best ways to support them is by attending these events.

Mr. Ramos added we have events throughout the school year. We already had flag football, cornhole tournament, basketball, and are planning volleyball and track. We are planning our April events and will finish with a huge track and field meet that is held in June. The track and field meet is our flagship event. Enfield Allied Stars, JFK Unified team and teams from East Hartford also attend this event with our Enfield Unified team. It is a big event for all age groups, and we end the event with ice cream and medals. He will make sure you are receive notice about this event. Now we are planning volleyball and cornhole.

Mr. LeBlanc added he knows Board members would love to support them at their next events.

Mr. Ryder asked Ms. O'Farrell if she had more fun at lunch in the Capitol or when we had lunch at JFK. Ms. O'Farrell stated she had more fun at JFK. She knows Mr. Ryder from JFK. Mr. Ryder added we used to hang out together at lunchtime. He will come visit you at EHS and have lunch with you.

Madam Chair thanked them all for coming. Mr. Ramos has come before the Board previously and has spoken about Special Olympics and Unified Sports. Taking our students to Capitol Hill and bringing both Shaelyn and Lily here tonight is amazing. We are very proud to have you represent Enfield and Enfield Public Schools. Teachers jobs are not just from 7-3:30. You put in many extra hours, and we appreciate what you are doing.

Madam Chair added when she went to the Capital, she didn't get to see the tunnels. It was amazing to visit. Thank you and keep us updated on your next upcoming events. If you need extra people to play, she is pretty good at cornhole.

Mr. Ramos added Ms. Bellucci was our champion at cornhole. Ms. O'Farrell added she just

walks up to it and puts it right in the hole.

Madam Chair thanked them for coming. Mr. Ramos thanked them for the invitation.

Mr. Drezek thanked the families of our students for helping with these trips. You see the family and community connections at these unified events. Thank you.

Dr. Calnen arrived at 7:17 PM.

b. PK-5 School Presentation

Mr. Drezek welcomed John Dague, our Director of Strategic Development and Partnerships. When he presented his budget, he let the Board know about some of the challenges we are dealing with our facilities. Over the last 6 months, our dialogue has led up to this presentation you will see tonight. Mr. Dague will discuss some of the challenges we have been dealing with and the needs of our kids.

Mr. Dague presented the Board and audience with detailed information about our PK-5 schools. He reviewed our current PK-5 school structure and timelines. He also reviewed impacts for families and students, enrollment data for high needs and non-needs, designed building use and current use. Mr. Dague reviewed capital improvement costs and what is not included.

Mr. Drezek added we used to have art kilns at each elementary school. The art kilns were purchased but never were installed because of the lack of power to run them. We reutilized the existing power for other items that Mr. Dague mentioned. Our electric panel is full and could not support running the kilns.

Mr. Dague added our JFK and EHS renovation projects were done on time, under budget and has provided Enfield with state of the art buildings. He reviewed renovation and restructuring opportunities and next steps.

Mr. Drezek stated Mr. Dague just did around 2 years of work in 5 months. He has provided us with a level of detail including QR codes. This presentation was important for the Board and community to see. He was being polite with the \$36 million figure. We all know this will be a much higher number. There are certain systems that are due to be replaced over time. We know there are pipes in the walls that will need to be taken out. This is really as far as we can go. At some point, the Board and Town Council members will need to make a decision about moving forward. The Town Manager was planning to attend tonight but had a prior commitment. I have had ongoing conversations over the past few months with Mrs. Zoppo.

Mr. Drezek stated we just presented our budget to the Town Council. One of Mr. Dague's charts showed Capital Improvement costs. That is money the town needs to support our schools in addition to what we ask for. The Town Manager needs to know before we start with our CIP projects in our very old buildings. This a conversation for the 20 of you to have about planning for the future. Over the next several years, the community is going to need to invest in these projects in order to keep what we have. This has immediate implications to our budget process. There is only so much money for the Town Council to allocate. If this is something you would like to pursue with the Town Council, there may be a better way to invest those capital improvement funds since we are exploring other options. We are at a crossing point where we need you to make a decision for our next steps.

Mr. Drezek stated the first step would be to form a committee to look at the PK-5 School Modernization Committee. The membership of this committee should have 2 Board members, 2 Town Council members. We have done this before, and you have been here for some of these transitions. We have knowledge from doing this. This time we should include our teaching staff. Last time we listened to our administrators and elected officials. If we are looking at how

we operate, we need that voice at the table. If Board decides to start this tonight, he can make a recommendation, but he would like to hear from our staff first. We need to know should we keep everything the same or should we make changes. The Town needs to figure out how much money is needed for capital improvements. These conversations need to happen. We know our facilities are old and are not meeting our needs. The needs of our kids have transitioned beyond 10 years ago. This is a systemic change that has happened based on our kids and family's needs. We haven't changed the way that we are operating.

Mr. Drezek stated Mr. Dague addressed teachers that travel between buildings. He added our teachers by contract have 1 lunch period and 1 prep period. Teachers that travel also have 1 period to travel. We need to give them time to travel between buildings. There are a lot of inefficiencies that have developed over time.

Mr. Drezek stated our plans were interrupted by a pandemic. So we are rolling this out now. He thanked Mr. Dague for his presentation. It is on your agenda if you would like to form this committee tonight.

Mr. Ryder asked about reimbursement rates at EHS & JFK and now that we are an alliance district will this change our reimbursement rates for projects? Mr. Drezek stated yes, they are in the process of determining this for alliance districts. We also discussed Nathan Hale which the Board just returned back to the town. This is the same State office. They need to confirm this before they give us a percentage. There is a chance this number would be higher than 60% reimbursement rate.

Mr. Ryder stated this is possibility and a lot of work goes into this. If we are going to pay \$36 million as taxpayers and that is without any surprises that might pop up. If we put that money towards something new, what are we not looking at? How much would we get for \$36 million. Mr. Drezek stated we don't know. There are many hypotheticals. What is it going to look like and how many are we rebuilding? It is important to call this PK-5 because we are out of room at Stowe. Stowe needs to be included in our conversation. We are discussing 7 buildings. Building 7 new buildings at \$36 million would not even scratch the surface. It is impossible for us to know costs at this point because we don't know what the end game is. This is an opportunity for us to look at how we are currently doing things. Do we want to reconfigure? We spoke about the challenges we are having with our current configurations.

Mr. Drezek stated he will address the elephant in the room. When your kids start with us, they can potentially transition from 5 different buildings starting with preschool, elementary, intermediate, JFK & EHS. We know there is regression during transition years. Is this the time to look at this. We need to get input from a lot of stakeholders in this community.

Mr. Dague stated this would be very similar to the pre-referendum process. We cannot do the value analysis ourselves. We will need a demographer report and input from the professionals. When we looked at Fermi it came back that we would need \$40 million to also correct ADA compliance and soil issues. We could give you recommendations now but when site analysis are done, they might come back and say no to this location or that location. We need to run that kind of a pre-referendum process and bring back a range of solutions.

Mr. Ryder stated are we asking to create a school modernization committee to look into this. How do you see this committee being structured? We would want family and staff input.

Mr. Dague stated it would be similar to the pre-referendum committee. He would suggest having 2 Board and Town Council members, 2 teachers and 2 parents and student representation. We would also need an architect or design team to help with cost estimates and come up with a preliminary design. The committee can have as few as 10 or 12 people or more if that is what you decide. The committee would also need to meet regularly at each of the school sites to get a sense of what is happening at each building.

Madam Chair stated she was on the pre-referendum committee for the high school, and we had student representatives, parents, Board and Town Council members and we met weekly. We had cost comparisons and held community conversations so people could come and ask questions and receive information. This is the way this committee should be modeled after.

Mrs. Pickett thanked Mr. Dague for the presentation and the history detail. She is in favor of a Pre-K 5 model and is pretty protective of Stowe. Our pre-school program is extremely important, and many towns are modelling our program. She agrees that staff need to be involved in this process. Reconfiguring will impact our staff. Community collaboration, school based partnerships and health centers space needs to be considered within our schools. We need to look at our current structures and vertical alignment. She loves the QR code. Both you and Dr. Wiley are a dynamic duo.

Mr. Drezek added this is not something that will happen overnight. We just know this is as far as we can go without the support of the Board, Town Council and community. Some of our kids in those transitions years are doing targeted interventions. This is another issue when we get these kids ready for the transition, we are offering transportation to the students attending our Monday program. We are limited with transportation until buses are available after their regular deliveries. We have a 4-1/2 tiered bus system. They start at the high school runs around 5:30 AM, then they have the middle school runs, then the intermediate and primary runs. During this time they are also doing the preschool runs. When you are talking about inefficiencies, we have staffing and bussing shortages. There have been times when we did not have enough bus drivers to transport students to athletic events. We would love to expand interventions for our students beyond the traditional school day but are limited. Our teachers are the ones that asked for these targeted interventions. They know what our kids need. They also need to be included in this committee as well as clerical staff. We know some of the gaps that need to be addressed.

Mr. Hamre thanked Mr. Dague for the presentation that is very eye opening in a lot of ways. You have demonstrated inefficiencies clearly. It has also demonstrated our creativity. We are holding classrooms in the gym at Stowe. We are the first step in a very long process. The voters will have the final say and nothing will happen without a referendum.

Dr. Calnen added this is an eye opener. We can't continue to use our CIP funds to maintain our building. You are looking for us to form a committee to investigate this project to see if this is something that should be pursued further. If you get everything you are asking for, what is the timeline?

Mr. Dague stated the timeframe will depend on what the committee wants.

Mr. Drezek stated we all have opinions. We have had many conversations with people that would be impacted like families and staff. We do not know what this will look like. Forming the committee is the first step. If you would like to explore something besides putting band aides on our buildings. We will be part of this committee and having staff members and families part of this important. The committee will be comprised of 10 or 12 members and will make a recommendation similar to what we did for the high school consolidation. The charge would be to come back to the Board with a recommendation. You also need to include the Town Council members as part of the process. The Town Council will be the ones to place a referendum item on the ballot. Our partnership with the Town is very important part of this process. He would love to do more, but eventually there will be a money issue. We will be part of this process with other stakeholders.

Mr. Drezek added we have all heard recommendations and wishes. A recommendation will be made to the Board. A process will then need to be followed ultimately going out to the voters to support this plan. Before you go out to referendum, you need to know how much this will cost.

We have some rough numbers as mentioned by Mr. Dague of around \$36 million just to maintain. We will need the professionals to tell us the cost just like they did at Fermi, Enfield High and John F. Kennedy. There are other factors to consider like the grade configurations and lot sizes. The original site for the high school is not where we ended up. Once the committee decides what they want to do, they will need to come up with what it will look like and how much will it cost. Then we will need to go the State Department of Construction and let them know how much it will cost and they will let us know if we can receive a reimbursement rate. That will be the number that goes on the referendum. The conversations need to start now.

Dr. Calnen stated once we have the number the State will let us know what they will reimburse us. What is the process, will the budget be re-examined each year or are we given a lump sum for a referendum project?

Mr. Drezek stated this is unique because you are dealing with so many schools. When we renovated JFK, we knew what the costs were to maintain the build. We hired a design professional, and they gave us a cost. We then went to the State with the rendering of the building and the amount. Then we will receive a formal letter from the State with what they will allow for reimbursement and what the town commitment would be. If the referendum question passes, we would have a certain amount of money to build our building. The design may change, but the amount will not. The first JFK rendering is different from the final JFK design. The State will approve the amount. The taxpayers will approve the project. We would be committed to that number.

Dr. Calnen added regardless of how long the project takes. Mr. Drezek added other communities that have projects have seen the affects from Covid and prices have increased. So what would have been a \$20 million dollar project is now a \$30 million dollar project. The taxpayers only approved \$20 million dollars. They had to get special permission from the State to adjust numbers. We cannot do anything until we tell the State, the referendum passes with the amount they will allocate for this project.

Madam Chair stated the charge of the committee would look at if we should we keep the current grade configuration or go to a K-5 structure, and how many schools do we need. We would meet with departments and hear about what they want including all stakeholders. We would also bring in architects. First, we need to decide on the configuration. We will have staff included in the committee. The community is going to want to know. It was amazing when the departments presented their wants at the high school. Our staff know what is needed.

Mr. Dague added the design at Enfield High was also changed.

Madam Chair added the committee will need to look at configurations. We do not want empty school buildings. The Town will need to let us know how they plan to repurpose any buildings if they are not being used. This is going to be a long, exciting conversation. We need to look at what we did 10 years ago. Our students needs have changed, and the population has increased. They told us our population was going to decline.

Mr. Hamre added a lot was said 10 years ago in an attempt to predict. Enrollment was supposed to decline. They could not have predicted the change in socio-economic status, our student needs and increased State mandates that we are required to adhere to.

Mr. LeBlanc stated we all have our own ideas. We are looking at 7 schools with multiyear projects. The CIP amounts are at a bare minimum to keep our buildings going. If we invest money into one school and three years later, we commit to a renovate to new project, people will not be happy investing money if we are going to renovate.

Mr. Dague stated we can have the Town hold back money for repairs until a decision is made.

If roof patches are needed, they can be done, but hold off on any full roof replacements. If a decision is made that a particular school will not be renovated, funds can be re-allocated.

Mr. LeBlanc stated that is exactly what he was trying to say. Using the bare minimum in case of a longer bigger game plan. Mr. Dague added the roofs that have been repaired were on a plan. The roof repairs go out to bid. That money can be re-allocated.

Mrs. Acree asked if the end game plan is the have 3 or 4 Pre-K – 5 buildings and would Stowe still be open? Mr. Dague stated that is the decision of the committee.

Mr. Drezek added we need to make some decisions and have a dialogue with the community as a whole. We have some pretty large scale projects that will be coming up. We need to look at our needs and include the Town Council in our discussions. This ultimately will need to go out for a vote. The committee meetings will be open to the public. This is an opportunity to see if we can enhance our opportunities. It might just be cleaning up our 7 buildings. We know we need to do something because we do not fit in our existing buildings. We need to do this soon in order for the Town Manager to allocate how much she will place in CIP projects and for funding the Board and Town as a whole. These conversations need to start happening now.

Mr. Unghire thanked Mr. Dague for the presentation and will this be placed on our website. Mr. Dague stated he will post the power point presentation on our website tomorrow. The school data is there now.

Mr. Unghire stated the committee would need to make recommendations regarding the costs and the committee would need to make recommendations. What is the time frame for this. Mr. Drezek also discussed exploring other options. You are being careful not to go beyond the modernization part of this. Can you discuss what some of those other options might be?

Mr. Dague stated the committee can make a recommendation within the next few months on the model. That will give us time to hire a design professional, begin the demographic study and start the design work. This will inform the town of the direction we are looking at so they can hold off on any projects. We will get the specifics as soon as possible.

Mr. Drezek stated our current structure is K-2 and 3-5 or would we move back to a K-5 model. There are pros and cons for everything. We need to address our space issue, failing infrastructure and enhancement opportunities. We need to look at using enhancements with a different model. As a community, we need to explore this. We have one chance to do this. We need to keep our minds open to anything. This is a generational decision. We need to make sure that all stakeholders have an opportunity to express this. There are many things that we would like to do differently. Our bussing model is one of them. It is not efficient. That is what I was referring to.

Dr. Calnen asked about the committee and who will decide on the membership? Will you share this with the mayor? Mr. Drezek stated Madam Chair will decide on the membership. The Board will vote tonight to form a committee. She would put out the application for community members to apply to be on this committee. Part of this committee will have Town Council representation. The Town manager knows we are having this conversation tonight. This is the way this process has been done in the past.

Mr. Ryder he agrees with Mr. Unghire and Mr. LeBlanc. We have many band aide areas that need to be addressed. Whatever this committee decides, we will still need to address some areas of concern. Our youngest building is 56 years old, and our oldest building is 70 years old.

Mr. Dague added they did many clever things at JFK like adding garage doors. The systems now over the life, can be changed easier especially when you are looking at the future use of

these buildings. We need to think about what will be needed in the future.

Madam Chair stated she had kids in 3 different schools at the same time. It can be very difficult for parents and families to juggle. We need our staff included in these discussions. When we reconfigured the grade levels, we never really saw any cost savings. Bussing costs have increased. There will be cost savings if our buildings are running more efficiently. Our buildings are running very inefficiently now. JFK used partitions in a classroom before the renovation. We are converting closets for teaching spaces. We cannot continue to teach this way. There are no spaces left to use in our buildings.

Madam Chair added Ellington also changed their K-2 and 3-5 configuration back to a K-5 model. The committee will look at our 6 elementary schools and Stowe. After Covid, our teachers wanted collaboration. We will need collaboration from our teachers and to hear their input and ideas. This is an exciting time for these great discussions. Thank you.

7. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- a. Student Representative Update** – they were unable to attend the rescheduled meeting.
- b. National Jr. Honor Society Induction Ceremony** – as presented
- c. Upcoming Music Performances** – as presented
- d. EPS Update**

Mr. Drezek stated the last day of school is now June 15th. We still have one additional day built into our calendar in case of any additional weather related issues. Our graduation date is set for June 16th.

AUDIENCES

Madam Chair read a prepared statement about expectations for audience participation. She reminded audience members about [Policy #9325.2 Order of Business and Meeting Conduct](#) and explained about audience participation. We will utilize a 3-minute time limit for audience participation tonight. Thank you.

[Walter J. Kruzal, Charnley Road](#) – Mr. Kruzal stated you will also need a feasibility study done along with the square footage that is needed for the State besides the costs. This was a great presentation. He is here as a volunteer for the First Readers. He thanked both Mrs. Cushman and Mr. Ryder. Mr. Ryder was awesome as our DJ at our first readers Trivia Night. We raised a lot of money for this event. He also thanked our kid Mayor for the great job Tristin did at our First Readers Ceremony. Our next First Readers Ceremony will be held on Monday, June 5th at the High School.

[Ginny Higley, Sapphire Street](#) – Mrs. Higley stated she is the Democratic Town Committee Chair. She is here in support of the Board. You all work very hard. We need to keep in mind you are all volunteers and are here to serve our children. No one should ever be threatened and receive hate mail. This is not acceptable, and we should come together and support our Board members.

8. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mrs. Acree gave an update from Prudence Crandall Principal Andrew Duperre. The grade 5 students have completed their literary essay projects. He encourages families to order your year books and include your special messages. You can contact PTO president Jen Wheeler for more information. On March 4th eleven students participated in the Invention Convention at JFK. Crandall's Kid Mayor Tristan attended the First Readers Ceremony. Barnard and Crandall will have a special person dance on March 25th from 12-2 PM at the Enfield Annex. The cost is \$5, and you must rsvp by March 20th.

Mrs. Acree attended the Heritage Fair, and she enjoyed her trip around the world on February 25th. The exhibits and presentations were all nicely done and were very informative. The dancing performances were amazing to watch. She also learned about some helpful family genealogy from a presentation made by Enfield Public Library. She thanked everyone involved in this wonderful program.

Dr. Calnen gave the Board an update on Kite and ECDC. ECDC has just been reaccredited by NAYEC. We have a top notch team of programs at Stowe. Stowe will have a quality enhancement assessment done later this month at Stowe. Parents have registered to participate at the Head Start Community Conversation focus group on April 6th. The first diversity, equity and inclusion community conversation will be held on March 29th at Asnuntuck Community College. He reviewed the Kite budget expenditures for January and communications that were posted. FRC and Enfield Food Shelf held a Sparkler party on February 18th. They will hold another event on March 25th. To date, 67 families have signed up for the Sparkler program. The Family Educator Program held an Apps for Chaps on March 14th and childcare was provided. Enfield Public Schools and Kite are sponsoring a family engagement night with the Gazelle Institute about how we can best communicate with families. Kite held another Dine and Discuss meeting on February 9th. They will post a message board on the Kite website to exchange information and ideas with providers. They will hold another Dine and Discuss event in May. An information transition to kindergarten night will be held on April 20th for families with children that will be entering kindergarten in the fall. The Rocking Chair Readers program started reading to Stowe students in February. So far, we have 9 volunteers that are reading to the children.

Dr. Calnen added First Readers held their first ceremony on March 6th at JFK. The 2Gen Committee met on March 2nd and are making plans to address affordable childcare. The legislation is considering passing a childcare bill to provide subsidies for working families. Kite leadership will meet with Beth Bye from the Commissioner's office of Early Childhood to see how they can help to address with this issue. The Chamber of Commerce will work with Kite and will hold a breakfast to bring together childcare providers and area businesses to address the topic of high quality childcare. 2Gen will develop questions to address this topic for the community to discuss. Child First would like to strengthen their commitment with the Enfield community and how it can work with the Enfield school system. They would like to meet with the Board.

Dr. Calnen gave an update about Head Start and Ready Rosie.

Mrs. Cushman also attended the Heritage Fair. It was a great opportunity to learn about our community and the different cultures in Enfield. She thanked everyone involved with the planning of this event.

Mrs. Cushman congratulated all of the First Readers that were acknowledged on March 6th. This was such a great event. Many staff members and families were there to celebrate this milestone.

Mrs. Cushman reported Parkman held a math extravaganza event with ERfC where 167 people attended. ERfC also provided dinner. This was a very successful event with many fun math activities for families. She thanked the Parkman staff and ERfC staff for planning this wonderful event.

Mrs. Cushman reported that Buzz Robotics starts their competitions on March 17th at Western New England. She wished them all good luck and thanked Mrs. Marr for this information.

Mr. Hamre stated JFK will hold a mattress fundraiser event on April 30th from 10-5 PM at JFK. For additional information, please check out the JFK website and contact them with any

questions. He is hopeful to attend the Chorus music events. He also congratulated all of the JFK National Honor Society students that will be inducted.

Mr. Hamre is very glad we have our own unified sports and unified sound programs for our students to participate in. He congratulated Mr. Ramos, Ms. O'Farrell and Ms. Bellucci for representing us so proudly.

Mr. Hamre also thanked all of the volunteers at the Heritage Fair. This event was a huge cultural success. It was a great opportunity for our community.

Mr. Hamre also congratulated all of the students that participated at the Invention Convention. He was a judge and was quite impressed by their projects.

Mr. Hamre is glad to hear First Readers is back in person. He thanked Mr. Ryder for being the DJ at the Trivia Night.

Mr. Hamre thanked Mrs. Higley for her comments and your support that prevented us from holding our last Board meeting.

Mr. Hamre read the book Homerun for Bunny. He thanked Ms. Middleton for this. It is a great book about a baseball player from Springfield, MA in the American Legion Baseball League. There is a very strong possibility that his grandfather would have been playing in that league.

Mr. Hamre gave a shoutout to everyone that is doing your best. Every once and a while, take a breather. Self-care is very important.

Mrs. Pickett stated she will ask her kids if there is anything she can share with the Board. Dr. Calnen spoke about play based learning and that is what her kids mentioned. There are new centers in their classrooms, and they enjoy this kind of playful learning.

Mrs. Pickett also attended the Heritage Fair with her family. She thanked everyone involved with this. We have such a diverse and welcoming community. This is such a great event.

Mrs. Pickett stated at Enfield Street School they are holding a read-a-thon. She encourages all families to sign up using the QR codes. Flyers will be sent home about this, and information will be included in the newsletter. They are looking for 100% participation. Since they have reached their first milestone, tomorrow will be crazy hair day.

Mrs. Pickett thanked Mrs. Higley for her comments. She takes her position on the Board very seriously. We are volunteers and she is here as a mom, and she wants to help our schools. She spoke about the letter Board members received on February 15th with intimidating and racist remarks. She read a prepared statement. No one should be threatened, and racism does exist. She is advocating for change. Everyone deserves to be safe. We know better and need to do better because our children are watching. She thanked Madam Chair for her unwavering leadership and support. She also thanked her family and friends for their support. This was a difficult time for her and her family. We need to make Enfield a better community for everyone.

Mr. Unghire also thanked Mrs. Higley for her comments, and they are appreciated.

Mr. Unghire added Hazardville Memorial has elected a student council comprised of grade 2 students that were nominated by classmates. Two students from each of the six classrooms were selected. They are role models, and they will help to promote positive behaviors and will be a voice for the entire student body.

Mr. Unghire added Buzz Robotics will compete in their second competition this weekend on

Friday and Saturday at Western New England University in Springfield, MA in the Alumni Healthy Center. If you plan to attend you must wear closed shoes, front and back. The robot this year is called Meatball II Electric Buzz-aloo. They are hoping to qualify for the New England Championship.

Mr. Ryder stated Eli Whitney will hold a blood drive on April 26th from 1-6 PM. This event is sponsored by the American Red Cross. They will also hold a Principal for the Day essay contest. Students will submit their typed essays by May 11th and the students will vote on their favorite essays. The grade 5 winner will be a principal for a day, the grade 4 winner will be the assistant principal for a day and the grade 3 winner will be the chief of the staff for a day. The Humane Society will also come on March 28th for an assembly for grade 4 students. They will also start their first Lego League Robotics program next week after school for students in grades 4 and 5. Forms for participation were sent home and should be returned.

Madam Chair asked if the Humane Society is bringing animals with them. Mr. Ryder stated yes. Madam Chair stated she will also be there.

Mr. Ryder stated the last day of school is now June 15th. He has updated the enfieldpto.com website and the last 2 days of school are early release days with lunch.

Mr. Ryder stated the Whitney PTO has added a second date for the Yard Goat game on June 25th. We sold out our first date. This is for all Whitney and Memorial families to attend. This event is also open to anyone else that would like to attend. Additional information can be found on enfieldpto.com. After the game, the kids can run the bases.

Mr. Ryder added he attended the Invention Convention, First Readers Trivia Night and he also read at Hazardville Memorial and received so many thank you drawings and letters. He has been involved with our PTO's for many years and has saved all of the letters he has received. He was not part of the rocking chair readers. He was an invited guests. The thank you letters are amazing. The students just want us to visit them.

Mr. Ryder stated this is Board appreciation month. He has been on the Board for 6 years. He appreciates everyone he has served with on this board and past boards. He misses Joyce Hall. Thank you.

Mr. Ryder also wanted to congratulate our student representative Kayla Surprenant for being nominated for an Act of Kindness award from NCCC.

Madam Chair attended the United Sound presentation with our State Department of Education Commissioner Charlene Russell Tucker and other State representatives. Ms. Shell explained the grant writing process and the students explained how they advocated for United Sound and how it was voted on by the EHS students. There were 7 competing grants. United Sound will hold a concert for staff on April 26th during the day. This is also an early release day. The Board will be invited to attend. She wanted to share this date with the Board so you can all plan to attend. She is very proud of United Sound but Ms. Shell's story as a former student and coming back to us to teach. She has given so much back to our Enfield community.

Madam Chair also attended the Invention Convention. Being a judge at this event must have been really challenging. There were so many great inventions like the gel comb, setting up a secure box for package deliveries from porch pirates, and the etch-a-sketch with a stress ball were great ideas. You needed to leave a positive message on the etch-a-sketch. She congratulated all the participants, and all your inventions were awesome.

Madam Chair attended the Heritage Fair. She thanked Sherri Winans who connected her to a former student Muhammad. He is a graduate from 2017 and is from Somalia and runs a restaurant in Springfield. He would like to provide an outreach to other Somalian families in

Enfield.

Madam Chair thanked Ms. Bruce for inviting her to read to the students. She also read them Homerun for Bunny. She was not in a rocking chair either. This is an amazing book, and she likes that Springfield is so close to Enfield and it is a biography. This book is very relatable. It is a touching story about acceptance.

Madam Chair stated at the Invention Convention she learned about GEMS. GEMS stands for Girls and Engineers in Manufacturing and Steam. This program is at JFK. Mr. Drezek will bring this to one of our Board meetings so we can learn a little bit more about this program.

Madam Chair stated the EHS Junior Prom will be held on April 6th at Crestview Country Club. This information can be found on the EHS parents page.

Madam Chair stated both Mr. Unghire and Mrs. Cushman mentioned Buzz Robotics and we had Mr. Ramos here tonight. The Buzz competition will run on Friday and Saturday. Mr. Unghire went on the field trip with the students. We have these amazing teachers that are doing so much for our students. They receive a stipend, but it does not cover what they are really doing. They are going the extra mile and are doing so much for our students. Thank you.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

a. Policy Revisions – Second Reading

Mr. Hamre moved, seconded by Mrs. Pickett that the Enfield Board of Education approves Policy #5113.2 Truancy as a second reading.

A vote by **roll call – 9-0-0** passed unanimously.

Mrs. Pickett moved, seconded by Dr. Calnen that the Enfield Board of Education approves Policy #5141.4 Reporting of Child Abuse, Neglect and Sexual Assault as a second reading.

A vote by **roll call – 9-0-0** passed unanimously.

Mrs. Pickett moved, seconded by Mr. Hamre that the Enfield Board of Education approves Policy #5145.511 Sexual Abuse Prevention and Education Program as a second reading.

A vote by **roll call – 5-4-0** passed with Mr. Unghire, Mrs. Acree, Mrs. Cushman and Mr. LeBlanc in dissent.

Mrs. Pickett moved, seconded by Mr. Hamre that the Enfield Board of Education approves Policy #9325.2 Order of Business and Meeting Conduct as a second reading.

A vote by **roll call – 9-0-0** passed unanimously.

10. NEW BUSINESS:

a. Action if any regarding establishing a PK-5 School Modernization Committee

Mr. Ryder moved, seconded by Mr. Hamre that the Enfield Board of Education establishes a PK-5 School Modernization Committee.

A vote by **roll call – 9-0-0** passed unanimously.

Madam Chair will be in contact with Mr. Unghire as we previously discussed.

11. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Curriculum – Mrs. Pickett reported the Curriculum Committee met on February 23rd. We reviewed the JFK Program of Studies, and it now aligns with the high school. We also discussed TAG and will need to have further discussions regarding our policy and financial implications. She will follow up with Madam Chair and the Superintendent about programming. Our next meeting will be held on March 23rd.

Finance – Dr. Calnen reported the Finance Committee met on March 6th. We reviewed the budget, end of year financials, nutrition financials and Tag Investments. We will not make any radical changes with our Tag investments, and we discussed how much we can use. Our next meeting will be held on April 3rd.

Madam Chair is glad we are having conversations about our TAG program and hearing from our investors about how much we can increase towards our curriculum. We know we need to discuss policies. This process is going to take some time.

Policy – Mr. Ryder reported the Policy Committee will meet on March 21st.

Leadership – Madam Chair reported Board Leadership did not meet due to a scheduling conflict.

Joint Facility – Mr. Ryder reported the Joint Facilities Committee will meet on March 23rd.

JFK Building Committee – Mr. Ryder stated that meeting was supposed to be held tonight in Council Chambers and was bumped. He is not sure where they are meeting. He does not have the date for the next meeting.

Joint Security – Mr. Ryder reported the next Joint Security Committee meeting date has not been set yet.

Enfield Mental Health Wellness & Workgroup – Dr. Calnen did not have anything new to report regarding the Enfield Mental Health Wellness & Workgroup.

Madam Chair mentioned she had seen on Facebook a grade 5 dance will be held through social services. This is something we were looking to partner with the Town so we could also communicate this at our Board meetings.

Enfield Cultural Arts Commission – Mr. Hamre reported ECAC met and they are working on their monthly jam. They are also working on the mural project. He is looking forward to holding concerts at an outside facility. The Enfield Woman's Club Arts Festival is coming up. He is looking forward to the soup bowls. PFlag support group meets the first Monday of the month at Asnuntuck and the next Enfield Pride meeting will be held on March 19th. Both groups will hold events during June which is Pride month. You can find more information about both groups on Facebook.

13. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Ryder moved, seconded by Mr. Unghire that the Regular Meeting Minutes of February 14, 2023, be approved. A vote by **show-of-hands 9-0-0** passed unanimously.

Dr. Calnen moved, seconded by Mr. Ryder that the Special Meeting Minutes of February 24, 2023, be approved. A vote by **show-of-hands 8-0-1** passed with Mr. LeBlanc abstaining.

Mr. Ryder asked if we should add Jonathan LeBlanc's name to the minutes. Mrs. Zalucki will check into this.

14. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS AND PAYROLL

Dr. Calnen moved, seconded by Mrs. Pickett that the Enfield Board of Education accepts the superintendent's certification for:

- The month of February 2023 the total expenditures amount to \$7,672,665.96, broken down between payroll totaling \$4,671,462.81 and other accounts totaling \$3,001,203.15 and;
- All payments have been made in accordance with the approved budget and are properly accounted for within the books of accounts. Copies of approval for check invoices are properly document.

A vote by **show of hands 9-0-0** passed unanimously.

Dr. Calnen moved, seconded by Mr. Pickett that the Enfield Board of Education accepts the superintendent's certification for:

- The month of February 2023 total Grant and Head Start expenditures amount to \$891,417.53 broken down between payroll totaling \$608,413.37 and other accounts totaling \$283,004.16; and
- All payments have been made in accordance with the approved budget and are properly accounted for within the books of accounts. Copies of approval for check invoices are properly document.

A vote by **show of hands 9-0-0** passed unanimously.

Line Item Transfers if any - None

15. CORRESPONDENCE & COMMUNICATION

Madam Chair stated Eric Griffin e-mailed her about the Strings Festival and Chorus Concert. They were mentioned by some of the Board members previously tonight. Mr. Ryder has posted these events on enfieldpto.com. She also wished her husband a Happy Birthday.

16. EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

17. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Hamre moved, seconded by Mrs. Pickett to adjourn the Regular Meeting of March 14, 2023.

All ayes, motion passed unanimously. Meeting stood adjourned at 9:40 PM.

Jonathan LeBlanc
Secretary
Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary