

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MAY 11, 2021**

A regular meeting of the Enfield Board of Education was held in Council Chambers on May 11, 2021.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Walter Kruzel.
2. **INVOCATION OR MOMENT OF SILENCE:** Scott Ryder
3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Scott Ryder
4. **FIRE EVACUATION ANNOUNCEMENT:**
5. **ROLL CALL:**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jonathan LeBlanc, Bill Salazar, Janet Cushman, John Unghire, Tina LeBlanc, Stacy Thurston, Scott Ryder and Walter Kruzel

MEMBERS ABSENT: Joyce Hall

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

6. **BOARD GUEST(S)**

a. **EHS**

Mr. Drezek welcomed EHS students Alyzza Alicea and Kara Edwards. Hery Chavez was unable to attend tonight, but he was part of this collaboration. Assistant EHS Principal Connell Clark and EHS Science Teacher and Faculty Advisor are also here tonight.

Ms. Alicia and Ms. Edwards read the mission statement for their Enfield High School Mental Health Initiative. They thanked the many business that made donations for their project. They shared the process for assembling the self-care bags they made that were distributed to all EHS students as well as students learning remotely. Some of the bags had surprise gifts in them. Extra bags were given to EHS staff and all bus drivers. Thank you notes were sent out to all the donors as well as to faculty members that helped them with this project. These gift bags had a positive impact on our school community. They also held a mental health and spirit week during the week student council members distributed the gift bags which helped to raise school spirit. They also had daily announcements with tips and tricks on mental health. The physical education department also contributed tips and benefits for exercising. The overall impact of this initiative was very beneficial. They added that this project was a community effort that helped bring awareness and aid for many students and we hope to continue spreading this message in the future.

Ms. Alicia and Ms. Edwards distributed care bags to Board members.

Mr. Ryder stated that this is one of the few positive things have come out of COVID. He hopes this idea continues. No one knows what is going on in a friend's head. He knows this has taken a lot of work soliciting and collecting donations. Thank you for this positive program.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated your presentation was amazing. This has been such a rough year for everyone. This was done by the students for the students. This can open up dialogue with

students that might be struggling. You included everyone in this project. She thanked the students involved in this project and the administrators for allowing you to proceed with this project. She also thanked the student council members and advisors. She is very proud of you all.

Mr. Salazar added that you all did a bang-up job! Your presentation was great and the entire project. Good things will be forthcoming to you all. You have made us all very proud. Thank you.

Mr. Unghire stated ditto. You recognized and embraced a great idea. You can't see if someone is smiling with masks on. Your ability to recognize this should be congratulated. We are very proud of you. He also thanked the local businesses for donating so generously and urged everyone to patronize these businesses.

Mr. LeBlanc also thanked the students for doing this. This is exactly what was needed. Please keep up the great work.

Chairman Kruzel stated we are all very proud of your accomplishments. He also urged audience members to patronize these businesses that contributed to our student's project.

7. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT
a. EPS Update

Mr. Drezek stated he only has good news to report. We are still open, and things are going as scheduled. He thanked the work of our students. Tomorrow is National School Nurses Day. Send a quick note thanking your school nurses. We will hold our first student vaccination clinic at the Enfield Annex

Mr. Drezek stated we are working under the Governor's Executive orders this year and we needed to offer remote learning to our students this year. Restrictions are currently being relaxed. We need to start planning for next year. The next school year, we will not offer a remote learning option. We do not anticipate needing to have a remote only option. We do have some students that require using a remote option that is being handled by our Special Education Department. Everyone knows that in-person learning is more beneficial for our students and we will go 5 days a week starting in September.

Mr. Drezek congratulated our new Nursing Supervisor Jess Spera. Trish Vayda can finally retire. He thanked both Jess and Mr. Bourassa for setting up the student vaccination clinic for our Enfield students as well as Trinity Health.

Mr. Drezek stated the Governor announced a partnership with TeachRock to Connecticut school districts. We applied for this partnership and were 1 of 10 districts that will meet with Steven Van Zandt. We have a meeting set for Thursday. He thanked Ms. Middleton for applying for this partnership that will benefit our music students.

8. AUDIENCES:

Amanda Pickett – Guild Street – Ms. Pickett urged for open and transparent communication with parents. She would like an update on the Board's equity and diversity work with CABE. We need to make comprehensive plans that will benefit the needs of all our student's well-being. Funding will be coming to our schools. She would like to see us help our students social and emotional needs. She would like to know what our plans are for the future. When these decisions are made, families should be included in the process. Thank you.

9. BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS:

Mr. Ryder thanked the members of Enfield High School Student Council for their presentation and for the care bags. He thanked the students that are currently taking SBAC tests and wished them good luck.

Mr. Ryder stated the First Readers will hold a drive thru ceremony on May 24th at Asnuntuck Community College. He added that Memorial and Eli Whitney student end-of-year events have been added to the EnfieldPTO.com websites.

Mr. Ryder stated our school PTO's will be looking for volunteers for the next school year. If you are looking to get involved, you can go to the EnfieldPTO.com school websites for the PK-8 schools and for the high school booster clubs, you can contact your child's dean of students for students in grades 9-12.

Mr. Ryder thanked our PTO parents for events they did during Teacher Appreciation week. He has seen so many great pictures that were posted thanking our teachers for everything they do for us. Thank you for making this a special week for our teachers.

Mrs. Thurston stated ERfC will hold their Toast of the Town fundraising event on Friday, June 4th from 6:30 – 10:30 at Twin Hills Country Club. Tickets can be purchased at erfcinc.org. Mr. Drezek will be the emcee for this event. They will have a silent auction, raffle prizes and dinner. She encourages you to attend this event. Past events have been a lot of fun to attend and it is for a worthwhile cause. Please attend.

Mrs. LeBlanc asked about iPad returns for students. Mr. Drezek stated we are currently formalizing these plans to collect iPads.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated if the remote option goes away, there could be some challenges for us as well as the space constraints.

Mrs. LeBlanc thanked our school Nurses and congratulated Jess Spera for her new position as our Nursing Supervisor.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated she has started attending the EHS track meets. It is nice to see the high school being busy again. When she saw the agenda and the student council was going to be our guests, she was excited. She was deeply touched by their presentation. It was done by the students for the students. Some of our students have been suffering in silence. This has created an opportunity for them to connect with their peers. She loves to see our students providing peer support for each other. This district continues to make her very proud.

Mr. LeBlanc asked Mr. Drezek to elaborate on any summer plans. Mr. Drezek stated we sent our surveys to parents about summer school options. If you are interested to teaching summer school, please contact us. We have heard back from 130 K-2 primary school parents, 95 intermediate school parents, 65 middle school parents and several high school parents that are interested in summer school enrichment programs for their children. The high school program will look different with our credit recovery programs also being offered. Transportation will be provided for those that need it. We will offer a program for 6 weeks - Monday through Thursday for 3 ½ hours each day. In the past, we have only offered summer school for the high school students for credit recovery. We are expanding this enrichment option to elementary and middle school students. We are still looking at buildings to use for these programs and staffing needs. If we do not have enough in-house staff, we have a plan in place for just in case.

Mr. LeBlanc had the opportunity to speak to Reverend Greg Gray last week. Mr. Ryder is planning to talk with him during the summer. We discussed some really great topics and the work that his congregation is doing for the Enfield community is incredible. He thanked them for everything they are doing.

Mr. LeBlanc thanked the Enfield Teacher's Association for donating 500 books for our First Reader Celebration on May 24th. He is looking forward to this event.

He added that KITE is holding their Enfield Unplugged event until May 14th. They are encouraging you to post pictures on Facebook that does not include any electronics to enter your child in the contest. KITE and Asnuntuck Community College are holding their "Dive Into Diversity Events" on Fridays. All these events can be found on KITE's website.

Mr. Salazar also thanked the members from the Student Council for their presentation and added that he was surprised to hear about the impact this had on our students.

Mr. Salazar stated he is a mentor, as well as Mr. Ryder and we just started meeting with our mentees again. It was very emotional seeing the students again. We are making an impact with these kids by being a constant with them for just one hour a week. Get involved and make a difference. He became a mentor and was seeing his mentee on a regular basis before the pandemic. You do not need any special training to do this. It is an extremely rewarding experience. You can make a huge impact on someone. He encourages you to join next year. You can call Jenn Howell at 860-253-4737 or 860-253-6557. Thank you.

Mr. Unghire thanked Mr. Salazar for highlighting the mentoring program. He is not involved in this program, but he liked what you just said. He is going to make a phone call.

Mr. Unghire toured JFK with Chairman Kruzel. He thanked Dr. Berrios for the tour. It was great to see what is going on at JFK first-hand while the building project is underway.

Mr. Unghire is encouraged to hear that we will be back 100% in-person next year for our students. This is exactly what we need.

Chairman Kruzel stated he has been very busy visiting our schools over the past two weeks. It was great to be at each of the schools and our principals are all doing a great job. The teachers are glad to have their students back.

Chairman Kruzel provided the Board with a slide presentation of the progress being made at JFK.

Chairman Kruzel showed a photo from April 30th of a tree that was planted at Eli Whitney. Unfortunately, the tree was cut in half. He thanked the grade 5 students for the presentation they gave at the tree planning. They are planning to replant another tree in its place. The EPD is currently investigating this.

Chairman Kruzel stated he has been volunteering at the Enfield Annex for the vaccination clinics. They are now taking walk-ins. He added that 70% of Connecticut residents have been vaccinated. He would like to see Enfield reach 95% by July 1st so we can open up our schools in the fall without the need for masks.

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

a. Approve 6000 Series – Second Reading

Mr. Ryder moved, seconded by Mr. Salazar that the Enfield Board of Education approves the

6000 Series presented as a Second and Final Reading.

A vote by **Roll-Call 8-0-0** passed unanimously.

11. NEW BUSINESS:

a. Approve School Readiness Grant

Mr. Ryder moved, seconded by Mr. LeBlanc that the Enfield Board of Education approves the School Readiness Grant.

Discussion:

Mrs. Morales gave the Board an overview of the continuation grant.

Mr. Ryder asked about the number of slots this will provide. Mrs. Morales stated this will provide 28 pre-school slots.

A vote by **Roll-Call 8-0-0** passed unanimously.

Chairman Kruzel thanked Mrs. Morales and everyone at the Family Resource Center for everything they are doing.

b. Family Resource Centers (FRC) Summer Funding Opportunity

Mr. Ryder moved, seconded by Mrs. LeBlanc that the Enfield Board of Education approves the Family Resource Centers (FRC) Summer Funding Opportunity.

Discussion:

Mrs. Morales gave an overview of this summer funding opportunity.

Mr. Ryder asked if this would take place at the Stowe Early Learning Center. Mrs. Morales stated we are hoping this will be held there. We are still waiting to finalize programs being offered at the Stowe Early Learning Center during the summer.

Mr. Salazar asked if the funding is available to anyone that applies for it? Mrs. Morales stated it is only available for Family Resource Centers that apply.

Chairman Kruzel added this facility and the programs held there are amazing. He is impressed every time he visits.

A vote by **Roll-Call 8-0-0** passed unanimously.

c. Approve Adult Education PEP Grant

Mr. Ryder moved, seconded by Mrs. LeBlanc that the Enfield Board of Education approves the Adult Education PEP Grant.

Discussion:

Mr. Drezek stated this is a continuation grant for our Adult Education program.

A vote by **Roll-Call 8-0-0** passed unanimously.

d. Approve FY2021-22 Budget

Mr. Salazar moved, seconded by Mrs. Cushman that the Enfield Board of Education approves the FY2021-22 Budget.

Discussion:

Mr. Drezek stated the Board would be voting on what the Town Council has appropriated for us which is \$72,109,522 or 0.58% increase over our current fiscal budget.

Chairman Kruzel added if the State funding allocation changes, the Town Council will adjust our final number like they did last year and send us any additional funding they receive.

A vote by **Roll-Call 8-0-0** passed unanimously.

Chairman Kruzel thanked everyone from the Superintendent down for the great job they have done with our budget.

Mr. Drezek added we will be receiving grant funding in the form of two grants – SR2 which is a continuation of the Cares Act and ARP which is the American Rescue Plan Act. We are still waiting for all the rules for these grants. A minimum of 20% from each grant allocation must go toward specific items including remediation for learning loss. You will see us posting for these positions that we have allocated funding for. The Board does not need to approve these positions.

Mr. Drezek stated when our students come back in September, we are anticipating their needs. We are proposing to have social workers in all schools. We are also including behavior technicians. We are doing everything we can to fill these positions. We will also reach our ELL student needs by hiring certified TESOL staff. Our priorities align with the Board's priorities to meet our student's needs. The grants will fund these positions.

12. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Curriculum – Mr. LeBlanc reported the Curriculum Committee meet on May 20th.

Finance – Mr. Unghire reported the Finance Committee did not meet on May 10th. Our next meeting is scheduled for June 14th.

Policy – Mr. Salazar reported the Policy Committee does not have any meetings planned at this time. We have completed reviewing the policies that were recommended by CABE.

Leadership – Chairman Kruzel stated we met on Thursday, May 6th at 5:00 PM with CABE. We started our discussion regarding equity. We will set up additional meetings.

Joint Facility – Chairman Kruzel reported the Joint Facility Committee will meet on Thursday regarding the plans for the Memorial/Whitney roofs.

JFK Building – Chairman Kruzel reported the Building Committee met on Thursday, May 6th. We are moving along with this project and we are still on schedule. They are working really hard. He thanked Chairman Randy Daigle for volunteering his time and for all his hard work making sure things are being done correctly without receiving anything financially from the Town. The members of the JFK Building Committee would like to give the Board a formal presentation of the project.

Joint Security – Mr. Ryder reported the Joint Security Committee meeting will meet on June 2nd.

Joint Insurance – Chairman Kruzel reported he does not have a date for the next Joint Insurance Committee meeting.

Youth Mental Health – Mr. LeBlanc reported the Youth Mental Health Joint Committee will meet on Wednesday, May 19th.

13. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mrs. Thurston moved, seconded by Mr. Ryder that the Regular Meeting Minutes of April 27, 2021 be approved. A vote by **show-of-hands 8-0-0** passed unanimously.

14. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS AND PAYROLL - None

15. CORRESPONDENCE & COMMUNICATION – Nothing to Report

16. EXECUTIVE SESSION – None

17. ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Thurston moved, seconded by Mr. Unghire to adjourn the Regular Meeting of May 11, 2021.

All ayes, motion passed unanimously. Meeting stood adjourned at 8:16 PM.

Tina LeBlanc
Secretary
Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary