

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 5, 2021**

A special meeting of the Enfield Board of Education was held virtually on January 5, 2021.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 6:03 PM by Walter Kruzel.
2. **INVOCATION OR MOMENT OF SILENCE:** Walter Kruzel
3. **ROLL CALL:**

MEMBERS PRESENT REMOTELY: Bill Salazar (Participated Remotely), Jonathan LeBlanc, Tina LeBlanc, Joyce Hall, Stacy Thurston, Scott Ryder, John Unghire (Participated Remotely), and Walter Kruzel

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

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

Chairman Kruzel stated that Mr. Salazar and Mr. Unghire will participate remotely by telephone per BOE Policy #9325.43 Participation at Board Meetings by Remote Methods.

4. **SUPERINTENDENT EPS UPDATE**

Mr. Drezek expressed his deepest sympathies to the family of Enfield High School student Estefany Gomez Funes. Ms. Clark has been in close contact with the family. We have supports in place for any students and staff at Enfield High School, John F. Kennedy and Eli Whitney schools.

Mr. Drezek discussed the distribution of vaccines. At this time, we do not have any definitive information regarding vaccine plans. Vaccines are still being given to those in category 1A. Teachers are in the category 1B and he is not sure where we fall in this group or when we will be able to receive the vaccinations.

Mr. Drezek discussed the offensive e-mail that was sent out to students, staff and town employees. He reviewed the timeline and steps that were taken. This is an active policy investigation now. He received many e-mails and phone calls from parents about this. He was limited with what he could say due to the ongoing investigation. That is why he didn't return phone calls or e-mails. We are doing the best we can to remedy this from ever happening again.

Mr. Drezek read a statement from the Chief of Police Alaric Fox.

Mr. Drezek added that he was disgusted by how offensive and vile this e-mail message was. We have resources in place for students. He thanked Mr. Bourassa for everything he has done assisting with this ongoing investigation.

Mr. Drezek stated the Board agreed last year to work on an Equity Framework Toolkit. This program uses an independent moderator to facilitate our equity and diversity conversations. The Board knew the conversations could be uncomfortable but were needed to make the necessary changes in our community. We had a moderator in place, but this was put on hold due to the pandemic. In light of events, it is time to reignite these conversations and restart our work here in Enfield. He has reached out to Mr. Radar at CAFE and is waiting to connect with him about starting this again. He will start with Board leadership even if it is remotely.

We will move forward with this program as a district. He feels it is more important now than ever to start these conversations.

Mr. Drezek stated over the break, he received information about our numbers. Throw everything we have discussed previously out the window. The matrices we were using are no longer being used. The recommendation now is to try to get our kids back in school. The CDC has changed the definition of quarantine from 14 days to 10 days. This will help when it comes to staffing as a district.

Mr. Drezek apologized to staff for not informing them about this, but he decided to tell everyone at the same time. We will start on Monday, January 11th with our previous Hybrid plan for students in Cohorts A & B, with Asynchronous learning on Wednesdays for the month of January.

Mr. Drezek stated starting on February 1st, we will transition to a 3/2 Hybrid Plan. He decided to phase our students back into school. Bringing all our kids back at the same time is not feasible. He knows we will not be out of the woods and this plan is subject to change. Starting in February, we will have Cohort A start attending school on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday - Cohort B will attend on Thursday and Friday the first week. We will flip the amount of days the next week and so on for the month of February.

- Cohort A will attend school on February 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 17, 22, 23 and 24.
- Cohort B will attend school on February 4, 5, 10, 11, 18, 19, 25 and 26.

Mr. Drezek added students in Cohort A & B will have attended in-person learning for 14 days starting on January 11th through February 26th. He will send out more information about this.

Mr. Drezek added assuming everything is good and starting on March 1st, students in grades Pre-K through grade 5 will go back to school fully. Grades 6-12 will be determined. The reason for this is we are not sure that we could bring all students back to in-person learning if every student decided to return fully. We know we can do this at the elementary levels. We will reach out to parents at JFK and EHS to see if they will commit to bringing their children back fully in March. We will still need to keep social distancing in place when we go back 5 days a week. We want to give parents the opportunity to decide if they would like to bring their children back to in-person learning.

Mr. Drezek stated our special needs students and English Language Learning students will be able to come back full time starting on March 1st.

Mr. Drezek stated we have been doing this a year in March. Some parents will like this plan, and some won't. He needs to take into consideration that our kids have been doing this for a year. Nothing has changed when it comes to safety and health of our students and staff. He would love to bring everyone back, but he is not sure we can. We need to bring back our youngest learners and our special needs students. He wished that things could be different. In order to accommodate social distancing, we needed to remove desks and set our buildings up. He gives our principals and Building and Grounds crew credit for everything they have done.

Mr. Drezek added hopefully, we can all get vaccinations for those that want them. Group 1A now includes nurses. All our nurses were given the opportunity to get them if they wanted them.

Mr. Drezek stated we knew our numbers would increase after Thanksgiving. We are waiting for the Christmas and New Year's numbers. He hopes they will be lower. We owe it to our kids to let them know there is a light at the end of the tunnel. We have tried to protect everyone, but it is now time to start with a plan to get us back to some kind of normalcy. We have been in

turmoil for a year. He feels we have done this right. This is our plan for now and if adjustments need to be made, we will address it along the way. He will send out a message about all of this in a couple of days. Brighter days are ahead of us.

Chairman Kruzel stated that 252 people are watching us. This is great. He would like to put off any Board member questions until our next meeting on January 12th. You can always e-mail us with questions. We are going back to our Hybrid Plan on Monday, January 11th.

5. NEW BUSINESS

a. Approve BOE Regular December 8, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Mrs. Hall moved, seconded by Mrs. Thurston that the Regular Meeting Minutes of December 8, 2020 be approved. A vote by **show-of-hands and voice 8-0-0** passed unanimously.

b. Approve BOE Special Virtual December 22, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Mrs. Hall moved, seconded by Mrs. Thurston that the Special Virtual Meeting Minutes of December 22, 2020 be approved. A vote by **show-of-hands and voice 8-0-0** passed unanimously.

Chairman Kruzel wished everyone a Happy New Year. Our next meeting will be held in Council Chambers at 7:00 PM on January 12th.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Thurston moved, seconded by Mr. LeBlanc to adjourn the Special Virtual Meeting of January 5, 2021.

All ayes, motion passed unanimously. Meeting stood adjourned at 6:37 PM.

Tina LeBlanc
Secretary
Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary