

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
September 12, 2017**

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 September 12, 2017.

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

MEMBERS PRESENT: Walter Kruzel, Tina LeBlanc, Tim Neville, Stacy Thurston, Rich Regnier, Charlotte Riley, Lori Unghire and Tom Sirard

MEMBERS ABSENT: Vin Grady

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Christopher J. Drezek, Superintendent; Mr. Andrew P. Longey, Deputy Superintendent; Student Representatives Meghan Connery and Matt Campo

6. **BOARD GUEST(S)**

a. **Unified Sports**

Mr. Drezek welcomed Enfield High Principal Erin Clark, EHS teachers JoAnne Cardell and Armando Ramos to the Board meeting.

Mr. Ramos gave the Board an update regarding the Unified Sports team and how they have been recognized as an official Special Olympics National Banner Champion School. He presented a slide show of the students. He thanked the students involved in this program – Brittany, Gabby, Emily and John.

Brittany spoke about the Unified Sports program and how this program has given her such confidence. She loves all the sports, but basketball is her favorite. Before every game they say - let me win and if we cannot win, let us be brave in the attempt. She is proud to be part of the Unified Sports program and hopes this program continues so other students can experience this like she has.

Taylor spoke about how great it is to be part of Unified Sports. You form a bond with the students and share wonderful memories that will never be forgotten. We walk out together as a team before each tournament. It is such a wonderful feeling when you hear our school name being announced. Trying, having fun and being confident is what Unified Sports is all about. Winning is not what this is about. Trying your best and encouraging each other is what Unified is all about.

Mr. Ramos stated were nominated in June by the Special Olympics. It is a team and school-wide accomplishment. We have such support in Enfield. Our practices are built into the student's school day. It also allows our varsity sports athletes to be involved. He thanked

Marilynn Cressotti for her support and getting him involved with Unified Sports. This is one of the most important things he has done and it touches him deeply.

Mr. Neville thanked you for your commitment to Unified Sports. This touches us as much as it touches you. People like Marilyn and Bob Cressotti have supported you and helped this program grow. We will always support your program. Thank you all for coming.

Mr. Regnier also supports you and the students. You are a unified team and he can't wait to see what you do this year as a team.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated that not all of us have jobs that give us the joy that your job brings you. She is envious of what you are doing. She is proud as a Board member, a parent and a resident to see what joy Unified Sports are bringing to our students. Good luck this season. She will try to get to some of your games this year.

Mr. Ramos thanked JoAnne Cardell for what she does. She helps me reach out to the students. She is a wonderful teacher.

Mrs. Thurston stated she remembered when Carl Ohlin started this program. We are so proud of all you for what you accomplished. She has had the privilege of working with Mrs. Cardell for one year. Her students are very lucky to have her in their lives. She is a wonderful teacher.

Mrs. Unghire also congratulated the Unified Sports students and Mr. Armando for coming tonight. She is very proud of your CIAC nomination. We are all extremely proud of your accomplishments.

Mrs. Riley also thanked the students and Mr. Armando for coming and congratulation on your team accomplishment. It is great that you can practice during the day. Keep up the good work!

Chairman Sirard stated you are all champions. This represents how well of job you are all doing. You all make us proud and you represent us well. He has never doubted what you can do.

Mr. Drezek stated the Unified Sports Team will receive the banner on December 15th. Both Mr. Longe and I plan to be there.

Mr. Neville would like them to come back when they receive their banner.

Mr. Drezek spoke to Mr. Ramos today and told him they have an open invitation to attend any Board meeting or Town Council meeting. He is sure we will be seeing them again real soon. They were our first Board guest during this school year.

7. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- a. Student Representatives – as presented
- b. Career and Technical Education Secondary Supplemental Enhancement Grant Update – as presented
- c. Family Day 2017 – as presented
- d. Rachel's Challenge – as presented
- e. September Events – as presented

Mr. Drezek distributed a grants estimate for FY2017, FY2018 and FY2019 from Senator Kissel's office. The Governor is presenting his alternative budget today. It lists estimates town by town. He will pass along any additional information he receives. He thanked Senator Kissel

for sharing this information with us.

Mr. Drezek stated he met with Lori Gates who has been part of the Wreathes Across America program. She started a campaign for students in the elementary and middle school to write notes to first responders. He notified the principals and they collected 933 cards and letters thanking the first responders in Enfield. This was a short turnaround. He thanked the students and administrators for participating in this worthy program. She also gave me a letter thanking the students and us for supporting her cause. Unfortunately, the presentation did not work. He will send this out to the Board.

Mr. Drezek gave the Board an update on the PowerSchool rollover transition. We started this rollover on July 1st. Our next step is making sure the teachers have access in the database for student records, attendance, medical records etc. Currently, we are at 95% with the rollover process. We will turn the parent portal portion to the database on once the teachers are up to speed. Once we are at 100%, we get the information out to the parents with reminders about how to login. The student database system is up and running internally.

Mr. Drezek added that we have received many questions about IEP's and transcripts. We are still running a dual platform. If a student has a transcript request, all transcripts from last year have been saved as a pdf and the guidance counselors, administrators and teacher have access to them if they are needed. Any transcript changes after September 5th will be produced in PowerSchool.

Mr. Drezek added the same scenario applies for IEP's. Students with IEP's that do not have any changes with their current IEP's can be accessed through IEP Plus for special education teachers and administrators if needed. Any changes or new IEP's from this school year on, will be generated within PowerSchool.

Mr. Drezek stated the parent portal will be up soon. We will send out a SchoolMessenger message once it is available. He can assure you that once the transition is complete, you will be satisfied with the end result. His children's schools use PowerSchool. It is a stronger vehicle for student information. He thanked Guy Bourassa, Fred Lesiak and Dr. Kerry Wiley for their dedication taking on this transition. We are on-target with the rollout plans from PowerSchool.

Mr. Drezek added the first day of school was wonderful. He thanked the Board for their support. He didn't see any students crying. Mr. Bourassa's first day of school video showed everyone smiling.

Mrs. Leblanc asked Chairman Sirard to Mr. Drezek about students needing transcripts who are applying for early college decisions. Can the transcripts from last year can be sent as pdf document to the colleges? Chairman Sirard motioned for Mr. Drezek to respond to Mrs. LeBlanc. Mr. Drezek stated the transcripts can be obtained from the guidance counselors. Any changes from this point forward will come from PowerSchool.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated there is misinformation out there about this. There is a way to get these transcripts out if needed. Mr. Drezek stated he has a letter in front of him stating transcripts can be sent out.

Mr. Neville appreciates the updates. He would like future updates. Parents want to see what this is when we are ready to go live. He would also like to have a presentation on the parent portal at an upcoming Board meeting. A lot of people watch this broadcast. He asked Chairman Sirard to place this on a future meeting and would there be any problems doing this.

Mr. Drezek stated we will implement this the best way we can. We know parents have anxiety

over this. We have plans in place for the rollout of this new database.

Mr. Neville added sharing this information will help everyone out who has questions.

Mrs. LeBlanc added people are thinking they missed something. The more information we can share the better.

Mr. Drezek sent a message to Faculty and Staff on what direction would we go this year moving the district forward. We tend to make things more complicated than needed. We kept coming back to why are we here and why are we doing this and what do you believe in. The administration discussed this at our summer ADCO meeting and we came up with a slogan "We make a difference in Enfield, every child, every day.

Mr. Drezek stated he shared this with the entire staff at convocation and asked them why are doing this, what makes you tick and why do you come to work every day. It is important to remember why you are here especially when times get tough. He also wanted to receive their feedback. He sent everyone in the district an e-mail with this slogan. He has received over 250 responses from employees. The responses were all positive. He had 4 grammatical responses. He knows staff make the difference in many of our students lives. We have a lot of great people that work for us. He had the privilege of hearing why people want to be here with their responses.

Mr. Drezek asked the Board why you are here. He knows it is not for the money. You all are volunteers and give up your personal time from your families to be part of the Board. When times get tough, we need to remind ourselves why we are here. He knows you signed up because you wanted to support the kids. He welcomes your feedback.

8. AUDIENCES - None

9. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mrs. LeBlanc stated she is focusing on the positives. She attended the EHS sports information night. She also attended the EHS football game with everyone else from the Town of Enfield. These athletes are playing with their hearts. The score does not reflect how well they played. She is so proud of these athletes and how well they are playing in this conference.

Mrs. LeBlanc congratulated Mr. Ramos for the work he is doing with the Unified Sports Team. You are making a difference. She is envious of the work you are doing with our students.

Mrs. Leblanc congratulated Mr. Drezek and the administration for reaching out to the teachers. This was a great step. Employees want to be heard and understood. We are moving our school system in a positive way. Teachers want to be recognized. She thanked the teachers for the positive connections they have made with her children. Our teachers are selfless and dedicated.

Mrs. LeBlanc liked Mr. Drezek statement – why are we doing this. She recalls something she heard a long time ago – I didn't say it would be easy, but it will be worth it. This applies to the tough decisions she has made and being a Board member.

Mr. Neville stated he attended the 9/11 memorial service at the Weymouth Fire Station. Deputy Fire Chief Paul Januszewski did a fantastic job with the memorial service. He was impressed by the number of young kids that were present. It is important for them to know what happened. It is important to have these rituals honoring those who lost their lives. He agrees with Chairman Sirard that we all came together on September 12th. What we do for our kids is important. We are on the Board because we want to do good for our kids.

Mr. Neville agreed with Mr. Drezek that there are many good things that are going on in our schools and town. Concentrating on the positives is important. He appreciates what Mr.

Drezek and Mr. Longey are taking on. Our kids are great. He remembers a poster he had that sums it up – No Whining. What happened on 9/11 was awful.

Mr. Neville welcomed back the students and teachers. He liked the idea about Day One.

Mr. Neville asked Chairman Sirard to Mr. Drezek about enrollment numbers and how did Day One go. Chairman Sirard asked Mr. Drezek to respond. Mr. Drezek stated we are still working on the numbers. We have received many positive comments about the Day One signs that were posted at our schools.

Mr. Neville attended the Kite meeting. At the Kite meeting, the PEP (People Empowering People) were there and they are trying to identify problems for the Spanish speaking community. There are also many other different languages that need translation when it comes to filling out school forms. This group is doing an amazing job. He commended Lorena Cisneros for her involvement with this program. He would like to make this part of our opening of school procedures for families dealing with language barriers.

Mr. Neville asked Chairman Sirard to Mr. Drezek if we can invite the PEP group to attend an upcoming Board meeting. Chairman Sirard stated we can invite them to attend an upcoming BOE meeting.

Mr. Neville stated the next KITE meeting will be held on October 4th. They are looking for advice.

Mrs. Thurston congratulated Mr. Drezek and Mr. Longey for their approach to the new school year. She does not have any children in the school system and is here for all the kids. Seeing the Unified Sports team here is great. This means the world to her. We are here as Board members to see them go through our school system and she them walk across the stage as they graduate. She is honored to have been able to do this for the past 6 years.

Mr. Regnier visited Hazardville Memorial on the first day of school. It was great to see the familiar faces from Nathan Hale. The Memorial staff did a wonderful job unifying the school. There was no difference for any of the Hale or Memorial students. He met with the teachers before school started. The teachers were all so excited about meeting their new students. The staff helped the kids have a great first day. He congratulated Mrs. Hunter for an outstanding job.

Mr. Regnier congratulated Mr. Drezek on a wonderful convocation. He watched the convocation at home. He looks forward to you joining the singing next year. The first day of school concept was a great idea.

Mrs. Riley welcomed back everyone. She wished everyone a happy first week of school. She attended Henry Barnard's first day of school and it was awesome. The school was running like a well-oiled machine. She went into the former administration wing that has been dedicated to helping students with special needs. This transformation is phenomenal. We are offering so much to our kids to help them. This was great to see what we have for our students.

Mrs. Riley thought the idea from the PEP group helping families filling out forms is a great idea. We can have the PTO's share this information with families.

Mrs. Riley asked Chairman Sirard to Mr. Drezek if we can put a notice about the student database on our website using a ticker when it is ready to go. Chairman Sirard motioned for

Mr. Drezek to respond to Mrs. Riley's question. Mr. Drezek stated this information is already up on our website.

Mrs. Unghire stated she attended the CREC ribbon cutting ceremony. They opened the Museum Academy in Bloomfield. Asnuntuck Community College will hold their ribbon cutting ceremony at the Tower on September 13th at 3:00 PM.

Mrs. Unghire congratulated all the students going back to school. She heard many positive things about the convocation. She congratulated Mr. Drezek for his convocation speech. She agrees with Mr. Neville about focusing on the positives. A great saying she heard is "they don't build monuments for critics".

Mrs. Unghire encouraged parents and students to attend the Rachel's Challenge presentation on September 20th at EHS. This is a powerful presentation.

Mrs. Unghire stated the graduating class of 1977 celebrated their 40th reunion at Grassmere Country Club. They dedicated half of the 50/50 raffle to Rachel's Challenge. The person that one the raffle gave his winnings to Rachel's Challenge. The amount was donated to Rachel's Challenge was well over \$300. Kudos to the class of 1977.

Mrs. Unghire stated the 9/11 memorial ceremony was great. We will never forget what happened. It is good for us to never forget

Mrs. Unghire likes Mr. Drezek's saying we make a difference in Enfield, every child, every day.

Mr. Kruzel echoed the comments about the convocation. He agrees with Chairman Sirard about everyone coming together on September 12th. He recalls 16 years ago how quiet it was days after 9/11. We were all unified on September 12th and we got a lot of work done together. That unification is needed again.

Chairman Sirard stated that nothing worthwhile is ever easy. As Board member's everything we do angers half of the town with our decisions. We are all involved for the right reasons. He agrees with your saying. This is the motivation we needed. This has motivated us and we have every reason to be proud of our school system. He is proud to be part of the Board of Education and proud to be your colleagues. He will remember this always.

Chairman Sirard congratulated the Unified Sports team for everything you have accomplished. They always say the proof is in the pudding. You can see this by what you have done.

Chairman Sirard stated the convocation was great. We changed the direction we were going in 4 years ago. We are vested in our school system and have come a long way. He is extremely proud of the job Mr. Drezek is doing. More of our employees are happy now. We have great dedicated employees working with our students. He has faith in our community.

Chairman Sirard congratulated Mr. Dague for obtaining a \$100K grant for technology growth. Our staff members are dedicated. This is another example of us shining up that diamond.

Chairman Sirard stated this has been the smoothest running start to the school year. You were thrown some interesting curve balls, but you handle them in a professional manner. We have faith in Mr. Drezek and Mr. Longey and back you strongly.

Chairman Sirard agrees with Mrs. Riley about the special education center at Henry Barnard. This is a vision we had and it changes things for the right reason.

Chairman Sirard thanked Mr. Drezek for explaining about the associated costs about the

Central Office move from Henry Barnard to the Alcorn building to the media so eloquently.

Chairman Sirard stated he extended an invitation to the legislative delegation and they were not able to attend tonight's meeting. They will come to an upcoming meeting regarding the budget. He has not heard from Governor Malloy or his office regarding his invitation for them to attend a meeting.

Chairman Sirard expressed his concerns with the Governor's proposed budget plans.

Chairman Sirard stated that based on school policies, if you plan to visit a school, you need to have a child at the school, a good reason to be there, school business or receive permission from the Superintendent of Schools. Board members and Town Council members can visit schools but they will need to notify the principal of the building or the Superintendent. This is for the safety of our children.

Chairman Sirard congratulated everyone for the smoothest start to a school year. He wished everyone a great school year.

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

11. NEW BUSINESS

a. EHS SAFE Grad Contribution for the Class of 2018

Mr. Neville moved, seconded by Mrs. Thurston that the Enfield Board of Education approves donating \$1,000 to the Enfield High School Safe Grad Committee on behalf of the graduating class of 2018.

A vote by **roll-call 8-0-0** passed unanimously.

12. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Building Committee

Mr. Neville reported they will meet next week. They are looking into additional bike racks at Enfield High.

Mr. Kruzel reported there is a question regarding the stop light that will be addressed at the next meeting.

b. Curriculum Committee

Mr. Neville reported the Curriculum Committee will meet on September 20th.

c. Finance Committee

Mr. Kruzel reported the Finance Committee will meet on September 19th.

d. Leadership Committee - None

e. Policy Committee

Mr. Regnier reported the Policy Committee will meet on September 13th and we will continue to review the 9000 series policies.

f. Joint Facilities Committee

Mr. Neville reported the Joint Facilities Committee will meet after the elections on either November 12th or 13th.

Mrs. LeBlanc asked if there were any updates regarding the PCB's at JFK.

Mr. Neville stated once the PCB's were found, a plan is in place and must be followed out. If it doesn't get done as part of the referendum, it will come out of taxes.

Mrs. LeBlanc added the plan is the Joint Facilities Committee will meet after the election.

Chairman Sirard added the PCB's were found in the caulking. It will not pose any health problems if you are in the building. The school is safe.

13. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Kruzel moved, seconded by Mrs. Thurston that the Regular Meeting Minutes of August 22, 2017 be approved. A vote by **show-of-hands 7-0-1** passed with Mrs. Unghire abstaining.

14. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS PAYROLL - None

15. CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATIONS - None

16. AUDIENCES - None

17. EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

18. ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Thurston moved, seconded by Mr. Kruzel to adjourn the Regular Meeting of September 12, 2017.

All ayes, motion passed unanimously.

Meeting stood adjourned at 8:25 PM.

Tina LeBlanc
Secretary
Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary