

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 10, 2020**

A regular meeting of the Enfield Board of Education was held in Council Chambers on November 10, 2020.

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

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

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

6. **BOARD GUEST(S)** - None
7. **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**
 - a. **Veteran's Day - NS** - as presented
 - b. **EPS School Update**

Mr. Drezek updated the Board about our partnership with ERfC and the adjustments they will be making to their before and afterschool programs. They will move all their programs to the Annex due to lower participation numbers and staffing concerns. All parents have been notified about the temporary change that will occur on November 16th. We will continue to transport students from and to the annex. We will place this information on the website and will share with Mr. Ryder for the PTO's.

Mr. Drezek stated we lost a long-time employee last week – Lisa Foy-Dupuis. She has taught children in a couple of our buildings and lastly at Hazardville Memorial. Mr. Ryder may have some additional comments. He met her family today at the celebration service they held. They shared with me how much teaching meant to Lisa. Her immediate family is grieving as well as her work family. Please keep Lisa and her families in your thoughts.

Mr. Drezek gave the Board and TV viewing audience members an update regarding COVID data and its impact. He reviewed the leading and secondary indicators color coded charts with a 14-day rollout. He reviewed the indicators for the State and the data through 10-31-20. We are now at 19.8 or at moderate rate. He reviewed the Hartford county indicators. We have gone from 10.4 to 17.8. He reviewed Enfield indicators and we have gone from 5.3 to 6.3. He added that the activity over the past 10 days will result in our numbers will going up and we may change categories. We are seeing more cases in our district.

Mr. Drezek stated we are trying to do what is in the best interest of our kids. He reviewed staffing and student absences due to COVID related issues. This does not mean 83 staff members and 262 students have COVID. We are asking staff members to cover classes which

is something we did not want to do. We do not have substitutes. Other districts are also dealing with issue also. Thanksgiving is coming up. He needs to ask staff members what their plans are. We cannot stop staff from traveling. Today, 49 states are on the list to quarantine. This will mean if a staff member leaves the state, it is 48 to 72 hours before the test will come back. The airports are open. If enough people travel, we might not have enough staff to cover classes the week after Thanksgiving. At any moment, one of our schools are on the brink to close.

Mr. Drezek added our principals and assistant principals are trying to keep the buildings open. Our hope is people will be able to return to work. It has gotten a lot worst since the last time we met. We are hanging in. Our priority is to stay open and keep our buildings open. Our principals, staff, paras, cafeteria workers are amazing. We have closed some cohorts in some of the buildings, but we have been able to keep our buildings open.

Mr. Drezek stated reviewed our Hybrid model by buildings – cohort A is colored blue; cohort B is Green cohort D is yellow and cohort D is for remote learning students. When we started at the beginning of the year, we had around 25% of the students learning remotely. Today we are around 33% of the students learning remotely. This information is based on how the students are registered.

Mr. Drezek stated we are doing everything we can to stay open.

8. AUDIENCES:

Trish Neild Barry, Buchanan Road – Mrs. Barry stated the Board will discuss policies tonight and have removed several recommended CABE policies. State mandates might not be enough to support our children. These policies will give the Board and schools needed support. It was made clear that not all Board members support the policy for transgender and non-conforming students. By doing this, you are not supporting every child, every day. These are students that need our support and are worth protecting. CABE’s full time job is to assist Boards of Education and they felt these policies are needed to provide the best education for all kids. You are also considering removing several other policies. Shame on you for taking out these policies that will protect our kids. She urged Board members when you vote, to protect all our children. She thanked Mr. Drezek and Mr. Longey for the great job you have been doing. Hybrid has been working.

Gina Sullivan, Spier Avenue – Ms. Sullivan thanked Mr. Drezek and Mr. Longey for the great job you are doing for the kids and staff. Her son is distance learning. She appreciates the updates you are giving us. She watches the meetings just to hear your updates and what you are sharing with the public. Don’t let the pressure get to you. She asked about the vacancy on the Board. When you go to the Town website, the open position application is not available for the Board of Education.

Joshua Hamre, New King Street – Mr. Hamre feels 3 minutes is not enough time to address our concerns. He trusts our elected officials to do what is best for us. Not protecting our students with the necessary policies, he does not know how you can live with this. How can you make these decisions? Cyberbullying and transitioning students is real. He questions the conversation where you are making a difference, every day for every child. This should not be an issue and we should not be addressing this. Why do we need to question these kinds of categories? How can these individuals feel protected if you eliminate necessary policies for our students?

Marcy Taliceo, Coolidge Street – Ms. Taliceo stated both Mr. Drezek and Mr. Longey are doing a great job. You are putting our kids first. You are doing an amazing job. She thanked the teachers and paras for the jobs you are doing keeping our kids engaged. She does not want to

see policies taken away that protect our students' rights. There are laws about these rights but how do parents and teachers know this without us having the policies to refer to when needed. Parents need to know where to go regarding laws. Being afraid of potential lawsuits is not a good enough reason to limit our policies. We should include information about our policies that protect all our students. There is a lack of transparency. You should not be here if you cannot protect all our kids.

Liz Davis, North Maple Street – Mrs. Davis also thanked Mr. Ryder for providing her with a policy overview since the meeting was not virtual. We are having issues with several policies. She is requesting for item #11b, for you to read all these policies. When she first looked on the website all the policies were listed at your September meeting. Now the policies we are questioning have been removed. She thanked Mrs. LeBlanc for responding to parents' questions. You are always helping every parent. We appreciate what you are doing. Tonight's vote will show who stands for every child, every day in Enfield public schools and who doesn't. There are laws to protect our children. The policies list the laws, and it is clear to see. She asked if the Board spoke to people in the LGBT community about these policies. Do not table these items. She thanked Mr. Drezek and Mr. Longey for the job you are doing. She asked for everyone to respect and represent everyone.

9. BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS:

Mr. LeBlanc asked if Mr. Drezek can get the meeting notes from the Superintendent meetings? Also, how are other districts doing with shortages? Mr. Drezek stated the area superintendent meetings are not public meetings and the conversations are private. Other districts are doing what we are doing. Some districts have virtual teachers and in-person teachers (alliance districts). This would be impossible for us to do due to associated costs. Superintendents are doing many creative things to get substitutes. We are all piecemealing things together. The substitutes are not there. Retired teachers do not want to put themselves in a risky category.

Mr. LeBlanc asked if the requirement change for substitutes has made a difference. Mr. Drezek stated using college kids could pose additional problems. In the past, we have used many college students. There are many contribution factors to consider now. We are hopeful we will turn a corner soon.

Mr. LeBlanc asked about the staff that are out due to COVID related issues and how many have tested negative but can't come back due to state guidelines. Mr. Drezek stated quarantine is for 14 days. Yes, we have staff in this category. He added that you can be asymptomatic and carry the virus even if you get tested.

Mr. LeBlanc stated he is impressed with how you are keeping our buildings open. We are fighting to keep Hybrid learning in place. He wants all our kids back. Some districts are going to full distance learning. Patience is the key. Continuing with the Hybrid plan to keep this train going is best. Now everything is changing, we will see how this goes. He does not want us to go fully remote. He knows there are factors you need to consider and might force this. Thank you for keeping us with in-person learning.

Mr. LeBlanc clarified what was said about the 5000 series – we are not removing any current policies. These are recommendations from CABE.

Mr. LeBlanc asked if we have any Youth Vote numbers? Mr. Drezek does not have them but will look into this.

Mr. LeBlanc expressed his concern regarding some winter sports and extra-curricular activities being placed in the high-risk category. He read the definitions of the categories. Some of these sports have been played since the summer successfully. Taking this away from our kids is

going to affect the mental health of our students. He is concerned with wrestling, cheer and dance. Our students need something to look forward to. Athletes will be wearing masks to play basketball. The definitions for each category do not make sense. He would like some scientific information about this. Our band and theater students will also be affected by this. Other school districts are letting them perform virtually. We need to think outside of the box for our kids. Would we be able to use a COVID waiver for students to sign so the school district would not be liable? He had to do this at his gym. We need to figure out what we can give our kids. They are the most vulnerable.

Mr. Unghire asked about the rationale from going from the State 7 days to 14 day rolling average. Mr. Drezek stated using 14 days it gave a better average. This decision was made by the department of Public Health.

Mr. Unghire expressed his condolences to Lisa Dupuis family and friends. Losing someone so young is difficult and she cared deeply about her students. He did not know her personally. He can understand the pain they are experiencing. The loss of a family member is always difficult.

Mr. Ryder stated he did know Lisa Dupuis and he went to her service this afternoon. He brought something on behalf of the Board and Administration. He thanked her family for her service to the Enfield students and community. He shared a message he gave to her family with the Board. As a PTO dad, he got to know her very well. He asked the Hazardville Memorial Huskies to wear their PJ's proudly to honor Mrs. Dupuis for CCMC PJ Day in honor of her valiant fight with cancer. He read a letter Mrs. Dupuis had given him. Her favorite saying was "teamwork makes the dreamwork". If you have any questions about addressing this with your child, please reach out to Mrs. Hunter or any of your children's teachers. Thank you, Mrs. Dupuis for everything.

Mr. Ryder stated Eli Whitney is raising money for acts of kindness this week – raise craze. The students are also writing notes and drawing cards to send to an actively deployed service men and woman. We are working with Lori Gates and Enfield Hooyah. Thank you, Whitney Wolves and Memorial Huskies.

Mr. Ryder stated JFK grade 7 parents will receive an e-mail about parent/teacher conferences and instructions on how to sign up for the conference. The JFK students and staff will wear camouflage for Veteran's Day for both cohorts this week. We will also hold a virtual turkey trot. There is also a link on the JFK website to order a yearbook.

Mr. Ryder wished everyone a happy Veteran's Day. He has family that are in the Marine corps. The Marine Corps was founded 245 years ago today on November 10, 1775. He stated all schools K-8 have a link on the PTO school websites for Wreaths Across America for you to purchase wreaths to be placed in a cemetery in Enfield.

Mr. Ryder stated the Enfield green eagle masks have been ordered for the PTO's. We hope to have them in before the Thanksgiving break.

Mr. Ryder thanked the audience members for speaking tonight. He also thanked Michele and Emily for being here tonight.

Mr. Ryder stated addressed audience members about the policies. The 18 policies in question were included on August 10th Board meeting. The policies were posted on the website. We met again on August 25th and the 18 policies in question were pulled out. This is what we will discuss later.

Mrs. Thurston welcomed Michele and added her heart is breaking for both you and Scott. She thanked Mr. Ryder for mentioning the Marines birthday. This is an important day in her family that has former members of the Marines. This was also an important day for a former colleague of theirs. This day meant so much to him. She thanked all our Veterans for their service and the sacrifices they made. We would not be here if it wasn't for you. Happy Veteran's Day and thank you.

Mrs. Hall stated statewide there are fewer students in school than previously. She is jumping to the conclusion that homeschooling has something to do with this. How many students are being homeschooled? Mr. Drezek stated he has had many families reach out to him about homeschooling their children. He does not have the number available but will share this information with the Board.

Mrs. Hall stated we can request a portfolio of the work the homeschoolers are doing. Is this something we have done? Mr. Drezek stated we have requested this information occasionally.

Mrs. Hall stated in Suffield, they have made a scheduling change and have divided rooms into 4 parts to help with reducing students that may be affected by COVID lessening the amount of students that would need to quarantine. She does not see how this could work based on most classrooms do not have multiple entrances into a classroom. Do you know anything more about this? Mr. Drezek stated no.

Mrs. Hall asked about our Hybrid plan continuing through Thanksgiving and if you are considering extending it through the end of the year.

Mr. Drezek stated the decision he made is through Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving will garner what our next decisions will be. Seymore and Shelton are doing this through January 1st. Hampden is going through Martin Luther King Jr. day. He is just looking at Thanksgiving for now. Many conversations will take place and the State has not given any formal information or guidance on this yet. We are considering everything. He wants to keep us open as long as we can. Having our 3 plans in place is important. At some point, we will be forced to go remote for a period of time. He is hoping they are wrong.

Mrs. Hall stated KITE has a new community resource guide which includes information about housing, food assistance, family support, and COVID testing.

Mrs. Hall stated ERfC will hold a fundraiser event where you can purchase a cup cake for National Cup Cake Day on December 15th. Some of the cup cakes will have color coded prizes that go along with them. You can purchase a six pack of cupcakes until December 11th. You can pick them up at ERfC on December 15th. You can find additional information about this fundraiser event at the erfcinc.org website. ERfC always has entertaining fundraisers.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated at the high school level, more and more students are opting out and are going to remote learning due to fear of increasing COVID numbers. Class sizes are low. We will continue to teach as long as students are coming.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated it is very confusing when you quarantine, you can have a negative test and then you become positive later. You are most contagious within 48 hours. If you are a close contact, you will need to stay home for 14 days. You will need to quarantine if you travel to another state. Mr. Drezek stated if you are positive, you will need to stay home for 10 days.

Mrs. LeBlanc thank Mr. Drezek for the numbers at our schools. She thanked our teachers, staff, paras, lunch aides, administration, and aides. It was hard before and it is even harder now. Please know that you are appreciated, and she supports you. She has teachers in her family, and she talks to them daily about what they are experiencing. You are all appreciated.

Mrs. LeBlanc thanked our school bus drivers. They are great and have made a tic toc messages about the Wednesday cleaning the buses.

Mrs. LeBlanc expressed her sincere condolences to the Dupuis family. She did not know her personally. She was a well-loved person based on the outpouring of messages. She made Enfield Public Schools a wonderful place to learn.

Mrs. LeBlanc attended the memorial service for Elijah Swanson. When tragedy happens, Enfield comes together in tough times. It was a sad day, but it restores your faith in humanity. They held the service at a little league baseball field, and it was very touching. They did a 26-bat salute in honor of him. How we all come together makes her very proud of Enfield.

Mrs. LeBlanc attended a parent/teacher conference via zoom. She like the zoom option. It will give more parents the option to attend conferences. It was amazing and the teacher also enjoyed it.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated EHS Safe Grad will be selling calendars in December. They will pull a prize each day in December on Facebook. The Wood-n-Tap Restaurant is opening in Enfield. They have selected the Enfield Safe Grad to contribute a portion of sales to. They will hold this opening event on November 20 and 21st. Please go to the link and you can buy a table. They also list how they will keep you safe.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated mental illness is a concern this time of year and adding COVID is even more concerning. Enfield High school sent out an e-mail about this and supports are available.

Mrs. LeBlanc also thanked our Veteran's. She thanked Mrs. Davis for her service. She appreciates everything you have done for us.

Mrs. LeBlanc appreciates the comments you made about our policies. She does not believe what is being submitted by the Policy Committee represents her beliefs. As elected officials, we need to represent all students.

Mr. Salazar stated as the chair of the Policy Subcommittee we are moving forward with quite a few policies. Many of these policies have been in existence and address some of the concerns that were brought up by audience members. He reviewed some of the policies being presented tonight. The transgender policy is not being presented regardless of his beliefs and is a moot point. Those protections are already being provided by the State and we as a town and school district need to abide by these protections that are provided by the State and Federal Government. We are not removing any current policies. There were policies that were submitted on our website and were removed and are excluded tonight. He just wanted to clarify this.

Chairman Kruzel stated applications for vacancies will go to the party not the Town and will need to be submitted to the Republican party for the open Board position.

Chairman Kruzel stated Councilman Kiner announced that he is retiring from the Town Council. He will be missed. He thanked him for his service in Enfield.

Chairman Kruzel stated the Town Council approved changes to our parks. He thanked the Town Council for this.

Chairman Kruzel stated we were previously promised a traffic light on Enfield Street by Enfield High School. He is looking for a plan for this by next November. They are putting up traffic lights everywhere. He is asking our State representatives to get this done.

Chairman Kruzel was unable to attend the service for Mrs. Dupuis. He expressed his condolences to the Dupuis family. She was a great teacher for the Enfield Public Schools. He also thanked Mr. Ryder for representing the Board at her service this afternoon. He was unable to attend.

Chairman Kruzel stated there was a gathering held on Sunday on the Town Green supporting our Veteran's. Semper Fi for all the Marines. He thanked Veteran's for their service. We would not be here if it wasn't for you.

Chairman Kruzel thanked everyone for voting on Election day. He was at the Senior Center and then he went to Enfield Street School. He does not know why they moved the entrance to the back of the school. He will discuss this with the registrar's office. We had a great turnout.

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

11. NEW BUSINESS:

a. Approved FY2021/22 Federal Head Start Grant

Mrs. Hall moved, seconded by Mr. Ryder that the Enfield Board of Education approves the FY2021/22 Federal Head Start Grant as presented.

Discussion:

Mrs. Hall gave an overview of the Federal Head Start Grant and Program Goals.

Mr. LeBlanc thanked Ms. Valley for answering his questions. She went above and beyond clarifying his questions. They are trying to increase their school readiness partnership for families to engage. The numbers are pretty good, but they are looking to increase family participation up to 85%.

Mrs. Hall added the daily attendance is great. Mr. LeBlanc stated considering COVID, the numbers are extraordinarily very good considering everything.

Mr. Unghire questioned something in the application budget for \$961K and wanted to know what the non-Federal Share is \$333K? Mrs. Hall stated we provide space and transportation.

Mr. Unghire asked if this comes from the Board's budget? Mr. Drezek added we provide this, and we supplement them.

Mr. Unghire stated he looked at our budget but could not find this itemized amount. Mr. Drezek stated you were looking at our current budget. This will be for next year's budget. We have appropriations in our budget to offset these amounts. There will also be State grants that Mrs. Hall has previously mentioned. Ms. Valley has provided us with a very comprehensive grant compared to what previous Boards have received. Ms. Valley is awesome.

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

b. Approve 5000 Series Policies – First Reading *(This item was tabled on 09-29-20)*

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

5000 Series Policies for a First Reading.

Discussion:

Mr. Salazar stated the policies being presented tonight are the fruits from the past Policy Subcommittee meetings. My approach is to review and accept the policies that are required. We are keeping the current policies even though they might not be required. This approach will give us the most effective and efficient proactive way to address the remaining policies that need to be reviewed. This is a pretty comprehensive package that include some new policies and our current policies. This will allow for the administration to effectively carryout this work.

Mrs. Hall stated you referred to the policies in the book. What book are you referring to? Mr. Salazar stated the Enfield Public Schools Policy book. We were asked to review the policies

that are not required but are recommended. Those policies have been previously adopted by the board. Those policies will remain and will not be removed.

Mrs. Hall stated the package of policies the Board will vote on tonight is this in addition to what already exist, or will it replace the 5000 series with this set of policies. Mr. Salazar stated this is in addition. We are not removing any policies that currently exist.

Mr. Ryder stated the 5000 series of policies that were e-mailed to us and what the Board will vote on tonight is the current 5000 series. Mr. Salazar stated what Mr. Ryder stated is correct.

Mrs. Hall stated she was told the Board will vote on the 5000 series tonight. Not any additions to the 5000 series. This will be the 5000 series.

Mr. Salazar stated that any policy that was already in existence will not be removed.

Mr. Longey stated this is confusing. He believes this is the 3rd Policy Subcommittee membership that has worked on the 5000 series. Different Policy Subcommittee members have looked at the policies differently. Board members have received the most current 5000 series of policies for the Board to vote on tonight for a first reading. Our current 5000 series that was last adopted by the Board can be found on the website. What you have before you would replace the policies that are currently on our website and what we are using. When our administrators and parents need to look at policies, they will go to the website and look at the old 5000 series policies. The Board will vote on the first reading of the new 5000 series policies.

Mrs. Hall added there is not any other 5000 series assuming the Board approves this tonight. Mr. Longey stated that is correct.

Mrs. Hall stated that is not what Mr. Salazar stated. Mr. Longey added we have had other policy sections that were very large, and we would send them to the Board in a chunk each time to review and approve. The 5000 series you received is from start to finish. This is what the Board will vote on tonight for a first reading.

Mr. Ryder stated we currently have 37 policies that are posted on the website for the 5000 series. Those 37 policies are incorporated into today's packet of policies with some exceptions. We will be voting on the new 5000 series tonight and they will replace what is currently on the website.

Mr. Salazar stands by what he said, there are policies in the 5000 series that previously existed that are included in this packet of policies.

Chairman Kruzel asked this question, but he did not interpret it this way.

Mr. Salazar stated we have kept all our current 5000 policies and they are included in the new packet of policies.

Mr. Longey added this can be confusing at times. CAFE has not reviewed our policies in a while. They provide a policy service where they make sure all the policy numbers align Statewide. This way, anyone can look up a number and they will align with other districts. Our policy numbers did not match up and were outdated. They look at the policy and compare it to what number is currently being used. This can be confusing.

Mr. Ryder added the number of the policy might have changed. Mr. Longey stated the content of the policy remained the same, the number of the policy could have been changed.

Mr. Salazar gave an example of a policy that changed numbers.

Mr. LeBlanc asked if that is the case with the policy for Homeless Students. Mr. Longey stated that is correct.

Mr. Ryder reviewed the timeline for Board and Policy Subcommittee reviewing the 5000 series including the 18 policies that were removed. The policy titles can be misleading. The policy that relates to military families, he asked Mrs. Gates for her opinion on it. Mrs. Gates felt the CAFE policy was very easy to understand compared to what is provided by State. He added that this policy is important to military families. It is a duplication of a State law. This is an important policy to have. He feels the 5000 series is one of the most important series of policies for parents. He does not want our administrators to have to look at State laws when something comes up. Some of the titles are misleading. There are several policies that are equally important in those 18 policies. These policies explain things easier than looking at State laws.

Mr. Ryder added the Board had a resignation in August. These policies would have already been put to bed if this did not occur. The members of the Policy Subcommittee approved moving these 18 policies and the remaining policies forward. One committee member voted against moving these forward and now this one person is deciding how we will proceed. This needs to be discussed in a larger sense because of the importance of these policies.

Mr. Ryder stated the policy regarding Transgender and Non-Conforming Youth is mostly definitions. These policies would be nice to include in our 5000 series. Certain groups will feel more welcome. They will give parents a guide to use. The Off School Grounds Misconduct policy lets students know what they should and shouldn't do. The blanket statement of if it is not mandated, we don't need it or need to discuss it is not fair to our students and administrators. We are not overburdening our administrators with all these policies. Parents will ask to see where these rules are. We need to have these discussions. He had questions and asked a military family. He also spoke to a LGBTQ family about questions he had. He does the research and the work. He shows up to our meetings prepared with questions. He takes being a member of the Policy Subcommittee seriously. He respects his fellow committee members but disagrees with them regarding these policies.

Mrs. LeBlanc also went through the policies that were removed. The Off School Grounds policy lists 13 State Statutes and 3 court cases. That will not help an administrator at all. In the long run, we will need a legal opinion. Looking at the Connecticut State Statutes is extremely confusing. You need to be an attorney to understand them. The student Off Ground Misconduct policy is extremely important. It lists what is expected of students on and off school grounds. She feels that what is coming out of the Policy Committee does not fairly represent what all Board members are feeling. These policies protect. These policies are here

because other districts needed to address these items. Some of the recommended policies do not fit into the Enfield Public Schools footprint, but some do. She is concerned because the 6000 series is instruction. The decision made in the Policy Committee will directly affect students and staff. Every child that attends the Enfield Public Schools should be protected. Reading the transgender policy was a learning experience for her because of the vocabulary. Reading the off school grounds policy is a no brainer. You would need to look at 13 State Statutes to get the same information that is provided in this policy. They are our students all the time especially when they go to another school district.

Mrs. LeBlanc added that our coaches teach our student athletes about Eagle Pride on and off school grounds before and after school. Represent this school well. This decision is simple.

Mr. Salazar stated there have been opportunities to discuss this at the Policy Committee meetings. Mr. Ryder stated he tried to discuss this.

Mr. Salazar stated the Policy committee is where to have these conversations. There are only 3 members that can vote on the items. This is how the system works.

Mr. Ryder added these conversations did take place. He was ignored and he would talk with you about this.

Mrs. Hall stated a motion was made and this topic is now open for discussion. She also has questions with some of the policies that have been omitted and based on her experience in education, that she finds to be extremely important. The Off School Grounds Misconduct policy and freedom of speech and expression are important for students to know what is allowed and not allowed. For an example, writing for a school newspaper or any other purpose relating to the school. Students need to know that it should not include obscene language or labial information. Students can get carried away at times. Nationally there have been cases where student newspapers have been removed from schools and students have been suspended because of what they wrote. Having a policy that clarifies freedom of speech and expression is important just as behavior off school grounds is important. The off school grounds policy has resulted in many lawsuits because they have misbehaved. She is not saying that any of this has happened in Enfield, but it could happen and has happened in the State of Connecticut.

Mrs. Hall stated she remembers sitting through many lengthy discussions about a policy relating to students with special dietary needs and peanut butter because a student that was entering school had such a severe allergy. This is mentioned in our policy that accommodates students with dietary needs. This policy is important and keeping schools clean in case someone ate peanut butter in a classroom that this child might be in. This was a critical issue.

Mrs. Hall stated the policy relating to First Aide Emergency Medical Care and Sudden Cardiac Arrest is also very important. We have had students that have suddenly collapsed and died, not necessarily in Enfield. This policy includes details for prevention and should be included in our policies and is important to our coaches.

Mrs. Hall added that these are the kind of things that have meanings and have been developed for a Board of Education. We need to know what to do under some of the worst circumstances.

Mr. LeBlanc asked about the Cardiac Arrest and First Aide and Emergence Care policy and if this something we discuss as a school district with our staff members? Mr. Longey stated our nursing staff will review policies with our staff yearly.

Mr. LeBlanc stated he reviewed the 18 recommended policies and some of them are not needed. He also looked at the legal references at the end of each policy. The legal references can be

lengthy and one or two of the State Statutes are what the policy is based on. This could be an example of a policy that we don't need. You could look up those 2 State Statutes and get the information that is needed based on State law. As he continued looking at the policies, some of the legal references were extremely lengthy. The policy that comes to mind is the one that has already been mentioned – student misconduct. The policy refers to the use of a firearm.

Mrs. Hall read the last paragraph from policy 5131.8 Off School Grounds Misconduct. Mr. LeBlanc stated that one paragraph caught his eye. There are also one or two legal references that refers to firearms. He tried to put himself in the shoes of our administrators that had a student that violated the policy. Where would I go from there. He would then need to look at the CT General Statutes. You are now getting into research and law that is not part of the administrator's job description. That would become burdensome and there is no clear guidance. For him, it came down to how lengthy was the policy and the legal references and if they are easy to understand. The CT State Statute does not give any guidance for discipline where the policy does. For these reasons he will vote a certain way tonight. He needs to go back through these policies again to see which ones should be included. We need to look at these again.

Mrs. Hall asked Mr. LeBlanc if he had been reading State Statutes? Mr. Leblanc stated that is where the language becomes a bit crazy to understand. People are lawyers for a reason. Mrs. Hall added when you look at a State Statute, you will find another reference that will send you to another reference. A clear well written State Statute is more than just a reference. The references can be modified each time the legislature meets. Not every statute, but a significant amount of them.

Mr. Leblanc stated if the legislature adopts or adapts a law based on our policy, we will need to look at that legal reference and you would then need to modify it. Mrs. Hall stated if the legal reference was modified. That is where CABE comes in.

Mr. LeBlanc agrees but it doesn't cover everything. This comes down to our legal references and how much trouble will the legal references give our administrators. Mrs. Hall stated clarity of the policies for the families is more important than a State Statute that might cover it. If they can read the policy and understand it, it is all clear. The clarity of the policy is most important than the statutes that are being referenced.

Mr. Ryder stated this comes down to occasionally kids getting into trouble and a parent will come in and ask what they did and to show them where it is written. The policies clarify things for parents and principals. Our principals use these policies as laws to run their buildings. This series has to do with our kids. This is too important to use a blanket statement that if it is not a State Law or legally required, we don't need to discuss it. Using this kind of philosophy as a blanket statement is doing a disservice to our kids, parents, guardians, teachers and administrators.

Mr. Salazar is not sure why these policies are so contentious. Not every Board member will agree on these policies. He does not believe we will all agree on these policies when we vote on this tonight. There is a process we need to follow. We need to pay attention to each policy that will be reviewed again. You need to be careful of what you ask for because some of these policies will put us in a legal bind, that is his personal belief. It will put us in a position that we will not want to be in as administrators and as a school board.

Mrs. Hall called for the question.

Chairman Kruzel stated Mr. Unghire had his hand raised to speak. We will allow him to ask his questions then we will call for the question.

Mr. Unghire stated he is new to the Policy Committee he is trying to understand what is before us. We have policies and optional policies. We do not need all these optional policies. Someone can make a case that we need all of them. Ultimately, he wants to make sure our kids are protected. He looked at the policies CABE said we need to have. Those are the ones that are being presented tonight. There are policies that do all these things and are currently in place. The new block of policies enhances and broaden our policies and addresses each situation that are being presented tonight. Why stop at 18 policies if they are currently being covered in our nondiscrimination policy. If our administration was faced with a situation that was not addressed in our policies, they would look at our current policies to see where it could address the situation and apply this.

Mr. Ryder responded by stating the Policy Committee had already approved these 18 policies. We were presented with over 100 policies and we whittled it down to what we have now. This summer the 5000 series including the 18 policies made sense to the policy committee members. He still believes the 18 policies should be included.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated we have a Policy Subcommittee and the chair of this committee needs to bring us together. From what she is hearing tonight, this first reading is going to fail. We will continue in this big circle. She feels dismissed and soon you will have the numbers to pass these policies. Our concerns are not being considered. Your mind was made up as to how this

would be handled. She has been a Board member for 9 years and she has never seen a chair of a subcommittee make this kind of a decision and have had so many issues coming out of the Policy Committee. The Policy Committee chair needs to take advice from senior members and the public and take this into consideration. This is going to continue to be the way we operate, and this is unfair and will not bring this Board together.

Chairman Kruzel asked to call for the question.

A vote by **roll call 2-5-1** failed with Mrs. Thurston, Mrs. Hall, Mr. LeBlanc, Mrs. LeBlanc, and Mr. Ryder in dissent and with Chairman Kruzel abstaining.

12. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Curriculum – Mr. LeBlanc reported the Curriculum Committee will meet on November 19th.

Finance – Chairman Kruzel reported the Finance Committee will meet on November 16th.

Mr. Ryder asked if Chairman Kruzel will chair the Finance meeting. Chairman Kruzel stated yes.

Policy – Mr. Salazar reported the Policy Committee will meet on November 17th and will discuss the 5000 series policies.

Leadership – None

Joint Facility – Chairman Kruzel reported the Joint Facility Committee will meet on November 12th and are finalizing invoices for the Phase III work at Henry Barnard. We are finishing up on the chimney work at Barnard.

JFK Renovation – Chairman reported the JFK Building Committee met on November 5th. We received a \$300K credit on steel as a change order. The project is continuing.

Joint Security – Mr. Ryder reported the Joint Security Committee is scheduled met in

December 2nd at 8:30 AM.

Joint Insurance – Chairman Kruzel reported they will also meet in December.

9. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mrs. LeBlanc moved, seconded by Mrs. Thurston that the Regular Meeting Minutes of October 27, 2020 be approved. Mrs. Hall has submitted a recommendation for changes. A vote by **show-of-hands 8-0-0** passed unanimously with the amended changes by Mrs. Hall.

10. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS AND PAYROLL - None

11. CORRESPONDENCE & COMMUNICATION

Mrs. LeBlanc wished Mr. LeBlanc a happy birthday tomorrow. Enjoy your day.

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

12. ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Thurston moved, seconded by Mrs. Hall to adjourn the Regular Meeting of November 10, 2020.

All ayes, motion passed unanimously. Meeting stood adjourned at 8:58 PM.

Tina LeBlanc
Secretary
Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary