

**ENFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 2, 2010**

The Enfield Board of Education held a Special Board meeting on Tuesday, February 2, 2010 in the Board Conference Room located at 27 Shaker Road, Enfield, CT.

1. **CALL TO ORDER** The workshop was called together by Greg Stokes at 6:00 PM.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

3. **ROLL CALL**

Present: Judy Apruzzese-Desroches; Vincent Grady; Chuck Johnson; Tom Sirard; Greg Stokes; Donna Szewczak; and Stacy Thurston.

Absent: Joyce Hall and Peter Jonaitis

Also Present: John Gallacher, Superintendent; Tony Torre, Assistant Superintendent; and Chris Chemerka, Business Manager

4. **BUDGET WORKSHOP #3**

Chairman Stokes stated we are here to continue hearing budget presentations. Chairman Stokes asked if any Board members had any questions for either Dr. Gallacher or Chris Chemerka. Dr. Gallacher stated any questions they received from Board members have been addressed and can be found in the packets. Dr. Gallacher recommends starting tonight with Athletics, Middle School and finish with the High Schools.

Mr. Bernstein reviewed eligibility lists from 2008-09 and 2009-10. Mr. Bernstein stated athletic participation numbers have remained the same over the past two years at the high school and middle school level. Dr. Gallacher stated he has recommended some cuts in the area by reducing the activity fund one time for \$50K; reducing security guards - \$7K; JFK sports - \$60K; girls and boys Freshman Basketball - \$20K and Freshman Football - \$9K. Mr. Bernstein believes there may be a little bit more in the Freshman Football line item. Dr. Gallacher stated low participation numbers in some sports or activities have always been a concern. This might be something for Board members to think about. If a certain number is not attained, we can eliminate that sport or activity.

Mr. Bernstein reviewed sport costs and participation numbers from 2008/09 with Board members. Mr. Bernstein reviewed the number of paid coaches - 42 at FHS; 40 at EHS; and 9 at JFK.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches asked how much money is in the student activity fund as of today. Ms. Chemerka stated there is approximately \$90K. Dr. Gallacher believes it is closer to \$87K. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches asked how much revenue is generated from the Thanksgiving Day Game. Mr. Bernstein stated it was approximately \$10K from gate receipts. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches asked what the total percentage of the student body participation number for athletics is. Mr. Bernstein stated the State keeps this information and he will get it for Board members.

Mr. Grady asked about intramural sports at JFK. Mr. Bernstein stated if we removed sports at JFK where approximately 150 students participate and replaced it with an in-house

instructional activity we would be able to reach more students on a rotating schedule. It would be less costly than our current program.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches asked about the Freshman Football numbers at both high schools. Mr. Bernstein stated some of the freshman students also played on the JV and Varsity teams. Mr. Bernstein further stated the numbers were so low on the EHS Girls Freshman Basketball Team that we withdrew the program competitively. These students now play on either the JV or Varsity Teams.

Mrs. Szewczak stated West Hartford does not offer middle school sports. How many other schools do not offer sports at the middle school level? Mr. Bernstein stated less than half offer sports at the middle schools. Mrs. Szewczak asked if our Town program is large enough to take this over. Mr. Bernstein believes the only limit for the Town Park & Recreation program would be facility usage.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated there are other teams that middle school athletes could play on. The only sports that are not offered would be field hockey and volleyball. Most student athletes play on several teams. Mr. Bernstein stated that we do not currently offer a volleyball program at the middle school.

Chairman Stokes asked what sports students are looking to obtain scholarships from. Mr. Bernstein stated that most students that play high school sports have the opportunity to play at the next level. Many students believe they will receive scholarships. Division III will not give out any scholarships for athletics; Division II there are a limited number of scholarships given out; and Division I gives out most scholarships to Football, Basketball, etc. The chances for students to receive athletic scholarships are limited. Students that go to a Division III school can receive a work study program that will help them with their tuition.

Mr. Newton stated at Fermi over the past ten years, only 3 students have received Division I full ride scholarships.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches asked if it really makes a difference with coaches when applying to colleges. Mr. Bernstein stated coaches will go out of their way to help their student athletes. A well-rounded student will get pushed to the top of the application process.

Mr. Bernstein stated if you have any additional questions you can either call or e-mail him. Mr. Bernstein will get the participation rates for each high school for Board members.

Chairman Stokes thanked Mr. Bernstein.

Dr. Gallacher reviewed his recommendation for the middle school by eliminating an Assistant Principal - \$113,758; Assistant Principal Secretary - \$30K and 2 FTE Teachers - \$110K. Mr. Neville stated enrollments next year are projected to be around 888 for FY10-11. Dr. Gallacher stated the magnet schools have started their drives and we will not know until the start of the school year how many Enfield students will attend. Dr. Gallacher stated we currently know of at least 4 students that are looking at magnet schools.

Mr. Neville reviewed position and program losses since 2007-08. Any cuts made have adverse impact on students. Scheduling becomes a concern. Mr. Neville is recommending eliminating 1 FTE Reading Teacher and 1 FTE Librarian. Class sizes would increase in some classes. Eliminating our librarian would have less impact on students but we would not be in compliance with NEAS&C.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches asked if there would be any additional staff in the library. Mr. Neville stated there is a library aide. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches asked if it is required for our

certification to have a librarian in the building. Dr. Gallacher stated the certification requirement is if you have a librarian, they must meet State standards for a school that are different than a public librarian. Mr. Neville stated the NEAS&C would send us a notification stating that we are not in compliance and would recommend that we have a librarian.

Mr. Grady asked when JFK's certification would be up for renewal. Mr. Neville stated we just completed our 5 year renewal certification. Dr. Gallacher stated elementary schools used to be accredited, but we dropped it. Dr. Gallacher predicts you will see more and more middle schools dropping out of NEAS&C due to the costs, staff reductions and the standards. You would want to be accredited at the high schools but it is not required. Students can still go to college.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated there is no way that we could utilize the Town librarians with the schools. Dr. Gallacher stated if we are running a library during the day in a school, we are required to meet State certification.

Mr. Sirard asked if we do not have a librarian at the middle school, does this mean we will automatically lose our certification or would we get something stating we need to fix it. Mr. Neville stated the NEAS&C would look for us to fix the problem over time.

Mrs. Szewczak asked about classroom utilization at JFK. Mr. Neville stated all rooms are being used but not 7 periods a day. Mr. Neville stated we are not filled to capacity. Mr. Neville stated we have had class numbers at about 1,200 students and we were at 100% classroom utilization. We also had classes on carts.

Mrs. Szewczak stated she feels like we are just cutting programs and destroying everything.

Chairman Stokes thanked Mr. Neville.

Dr. Gallacher reviewed his high school recommendation by eliminating an Office Secretary at EHS - \$30K; an Office Secretary at FHS - \$30K; 3 FTE Teachers at EHS - \$165K; 3 FTE Teachers at FHS - \$165K and 2 FTE Career Guidance Aides at \$33K.

Mr. Newton stated both he and Mr. Duffy collaborated when they made their cuts. They looked at core and elective areas. Cuts will affect each school and were made to target non-tenured staff to the greatest degree possible. Mr. Newton suggests eliminating a 1.0 FTE English Teacher; 1 FTE Science Teacher; 1 FTE Technology Education Teacher and 1 FTE Business Teacher. These cuts would be shared at both schools. The affect would be larger class sizes. Mr. Newton is recommending eliminating 1 FTE Family Consumer Science Teacher at Fermi. The affect would be limited classes being offered at both schools. This would also be a shared position. Mr. Newton suggests eliminating a 1 FTE World Language Teacher by eliminating Latin 1. This reduction would phase out the Latin program. This phase out process would be completed in two years.

Mrs. Szewczak asked why Mr. Newton looked at non-tenured staff. Mr. Newton stated they would be the first ones we would have looked at. Mr. Duffy stated several years ago, we looked into the elimination of some elective and core programs that would do the least amount of harm. Mr. Newton stated any position eliminated will have impacts. Mr. Duffy stated we looked at ourselves as 1 school. Mrs. Szewczak commended both Mr. Duffy and Mr. Newton for thinking outside of the box.

Mrs. Szewczak asked if Department Chairs or head teachers can teach more. Mr. Newton stated that would have to be bargained with the ETA. Contract language sets their work day. Mr. Duffy stated our department heads do a tremendous amount of work. They actually have the largest class sizes.

Dr. Gallacher stated that is one of the reasons he did not touch the department chair positions. Without a secondary Curriculum Director, they are our point persons. When the Administrators gave their concessions last year, they did that so they could buy back the department chairs. The work they are doing is very important to the district.

Dr. Gallacher reviewed the State's next initiative for leveling students. Chairman Stokes stated a lot of the things the State is doing is going to encourage students to drop-out. Dr. Gallacher stated it is a downward push.

Mr. Grady asked how this will affect the students that are currently enrolled in Latin. Mr. Newton stated it will not affect them at all. They will not schedule any students for Latin I. Students going on to Latin II or III will still be able to get this course. Mr. Duffy stated we will be phasing out the program. Spanish can absorb some of the Latin students. Mr. Newton stated it will create some work for the counselors at JFK to reschedule classes.

Mr. Grady asked how will this impact the students going to college. Mr. Duffy stated you need upper level foreign languages like Spanish or French III, IV, V or VI. They also look for a well-rounded student.

Mr. Johnson stated we do not offer Latin at JFK, so by doing this we will eliminate the Latin program. Mr. Johnson asked what is the highest French or Spanish classes offered. Mr. Newton stated French or Spanish 6 or AP classes.

Mrs. Szewczak asked if any Spanish or French Teachers are certified in Latin. Mr. Newton stated no.

Mr. Torre stated these cuts will potentially impact the number of students in study halls. Mr. Newton agreed with Mr. Torre. We could have large classes in core areas and preserve some elective classes. We try to offer a large variety of courses for students to choose from. Mr. Duffy stated teachers will teach 5 classes, have 1 prep period and 1 study hall. Some are true study halls. Mr. Newton stated at Fermi we started a Math study hall. Enfield High is doing this, this year. They help students to do better with their math classes.

Mr. Sirard asked how many classes are offered with less than 15-18 students. Mr. Newton stated they are listed in the matrices, maybe 10%. Mr. Duffy stated around 10-15%. Mr. Duffy stated we combine some of the classes, so the numbers are not true like French 5 & 6. Mr. Newton stated the portfolio art class numbers are also low, but the course is needed for students going on to college for an Art Degree. Mr. Sargalski stated it is like a bell curve. You will have some very high and low numbers when you look at the matrices.

Mr. Sirard stated he has concerns when looking at class sizes and efficiencies with a class that has less than 10-15 students in it. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated you will have some classes that will have lower numbers. Mr. Duffy stated some elective classes will have lower numbers one semester vs. another semester.

Recess:

Board members took a brief recess at 7:20 PM, returning at 7:25 PM.

Chairman Stokes thanked Dr. Gallacher and the Administrators for their presentations. Board members have researched and asked questions and appreciate everything that has been provided.

Chairman Stokes has spoken to some Board members about the numbers and the economic times. We are not sure of the direction from the Town Council but are assuming the number will be low. Board members are aware of the minimum budget requirement that we will need to meet. Chairman Stokes stated doing this budget is like a blind person that cuts hair. We are doing the same thing again.

Chairman Stokes apologized for stepping over Dr. Gallacher for what he is about to say. Chairman Stokes is tired of piecemealing the budget together every year. The Superintendent and the Administration gave us their recommendations. Chairman Stokes asked if we are doing this process wrong. Is it time for us to look at how we can go smaller and stronger. Is it time to take the next 30 days and redo this and make it better? We need to take the time to do the job we are supposed to do.

Dr. Gallacher stated we have around 30-40 days to reorganize. Are you looking at all the grades or just the elementary schools? Dr. Gallacher does not believe there would be enough time to do this correctly. Dr. Gallacher is looking for guidance from the Board for the configurations.

Chairman Stokes stated you and the administration are the experts and he is looking for a better way to do this. Dr. Gallacher stated if you were looking for the next budget FY11-12 we would have enough time to reorganize but for the current budget, he does not believe there would be enough time to sit down and retool the entire system. Last year there was talk about closing an elementary school, but there was no discussion letting parents know where their children would go. You will receive tremendous response from the community on this topic.

Chairman Stokes stated we were in a holding pattern due to elections. It is the same budget as last year. Dr. Gallacher stated efficiencies can be made, but we need to notify the public about the process.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches agrees with Chairman Stokes. We are always going back to the same things and we need to do it different. Different may mean restructuring and changes will be needed. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated she would look to Dr. Gallacher to see if this can be done for September. Dr. Gallacher stated this would need to be done prior to September for the Town Council for the end of February. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches asked if we could come up with a number for the Town Council for February without the final configuration. Dr. Gallacher stated he would be very uncomfortable giving the Town Council a number and asking them to trust us.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated we need to do things differently and better. If that means 8 elementary schools with a 6, 7 and 8 grade middle school and 2 high schools with different focuses. We need to be able to deliver education more and better. There is the need to plan.

Dr. Gallacher stated Wallingford is going through upheaval due to their restructuring plans. There will be a lot of emotions. You need to plan for this. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated the public will need to be educated. This is always a challenge. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated she is tired of this. If reorganizing will put us in a position to allow us to grow and become stronger, so be it. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches became a Board member to do something good. All she feels like she is doing is treading water. We need to do what is right, not necessarily what is popular.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated if Dr. Gallacher does not believe this can be done for September, then we need to plan for the following year.

Mrs. Szewczak stated people are more resilient than you think. We are settling for mediocre. The more you demand from students the more you get from them. I don't believe we are

heading on the right track. Mrs. Szewczak's children went through it when Alcorn closed and they survived. My kids never had less than 27 in a classroom and they did fine. Mrs. Szewczak does not believe in coddling.

Mr. Johnson stated that Dr. Gallacher made a great presentation. Mr. Johnson is bothered that we are thinking about losing certification because we can not afford it. We need to pull back and rethink about what we really need. We are here for the students of Enfield. Mr. Johnson liked the idea of Mr. Duffy and Mr. Newton working together. We need to find out what is needed and start condensing programs. If we look at this realistically, we will be able to pull things together and will have a much stronger environment. Mr. Johnson agrees with Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches and stated it is frustrating to hear that next year will be worse. We need to address this now.

Mr. Sirard stated that he does not like the word can't. The high schools worked together as a team and thought outside of the box. We are all a team. Every year we do the same thing. How are we going to gut this program or how are we going to cut this program. We should not be cutting programs. We need to be more efficient. Mr. Sirard stated the administration knows what we can do. Next year will be even uglier. What will be cut next year? Mr. Sirard wants to give the best menu we can give to our students.

Dr. Gallacher stated we will not be able to do it in 30 days. We can deliver this for 2010 and implement it in 2011. Dr. Gallacher stated there are a lot of things you can do in businesses that we can not do in the schools legally. Dr. Gallacher knows that Board members do not like the word can't. We need to abide by many laws.

Mr. Johnson stated maybe 30 days is not practical. Would you be able to give us something in May, June or July? Dr. Gallacher stated we could probably give you something by July. You will need to run the bus routes. We can close one building and make the buildings very efficient. Mr. Johnson asked when would be a practical date for Dr. Gallacher. Ms. Chemerka stated we are in the process of implementing Munis for July 1st. This is the Town & Schools number one priority.

Dr. Gallacher stated we might want to bring in our demographer Dr. Prowda to review numbers. Mr. Johnson stated we need to look at this very practically. Mr. Johnson would rather spend some money to do this correctly. We need to do something. What will we do next year?

Mr. Torre stated you have given us a lot to digest. Chairman Stokes stated he was not sure if he was going to bring this up tonight. Normally, he would have spoken to Dr. Gallacher about this first. Mr. Torre stated it is great that Board members want to save programs. We need some time to mull this over and contact Dr. Prowda.

Dr. Gallacher stated we would like to know what the Board would like the organization to look like. Dr. Gallacher further stated that if Board members are going to trust the administration to produce an organization that we feel would be best, Board members might not like it. Dr. Gallacher has repeatedly suggested cutting some of the smaller athletic teams or programs with hard evidence. Board members will receive pressure from the public and past Boards have waffled on their decisions.

Mrs. Szewczak stated class sizes across the elementary schools are uneven. K-6 is not working. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated it is not working for the district.

Chairman Stokes stated this Board seems to be committed and unified to do something effective. You have a Board that will disagree on the little things but will agree on the big

things. We are willing to work together to implement something that is better for the district. Chairman Stokes stated this is something that speaks strongly about this Board.

Dr. Gallacher stated Board members do not want their legacy to be that you did something very quick and that it was the wrong thing to do. You want them to say, that was a smart thing.

Chairman Stokes stated we respect you as a leader of our district. This is healthy for us. This Board is willing to step up.

Mr. Sirard stated he will not leave the Administration hanging. He will not change his mind if people come crying to him. Mr. Sirard stated he has your back. He wants to do what is best for the kids.

Chairman Stokes stated we need to digest what was said tonight. Chairman Stokes apologized for not talking to Dr. Gallacher about this with him first. The Board realizes it is time to step up and do what is right and start a new direction for education.

5. DISTRIBUTE A DRAFT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDED CALENDAR FOR FY10-11

Dr. Gallacher distributed a Draft Calendar for FY10-11. Dr. Gallacher would like to put this on the next agenda. He has not followed Board Policy #6111. He is proposing that students will start after Labor Day. We need a 3-day window to review CMT and CAPT scores. He has followed this years' February vacation by adding 1 vacation day after President's Day and is recommending a full week in April with Good Friday. Passover also falls in this week. If there is no snow, students would get out on June 15th. Dr. Gallacher will explain the rest of the calendar at the next meeting.

Mr. Johnson asked about graduation dates. Dr. Gallacher stated to set firm graduation dates you would need 5 school days which is the 185th day.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Grady moved, seconded by Mrs. Thurston to adjourn the Special Meeting of February 2, 2010. All ayes, motion passed unanimously.

Meeting stood adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Joyce P. Hall
Secretary
Enfield Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary