

**ENFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION  
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 13, 2010**

The Enfield Board of Education held a Special Board meeting on Saturday, February 13, 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 8:00 AM.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

3. **ROLL CALL**

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

**Absent:** None

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

4. **BUDGET WORKSHOP #4**

Chairman Stokes informed Board members that we have a new Journal Inquirer reporter. Her name is Kala E. Kachmar. Christine McClusky will be moved to report on legislative happenings. Board members welcomed Kala.

Chairman Stokes stated we are here to continue hearing budget presentations from the Elementary Principals, Pupil Services, Head Start and Nutrition Services.

**Elementary:**

Mrs. Mazzoli stated that the elementary principals met as a team and have come up with recommendations for reducing 4 FTE elementary teaching positions. Mrs. Mazzoli stated that any reductions will impact on learning. We looked for the area that would cause the least amount of impact in class sizes. We looked to maintain class sizes at the lower grades.

Mr. Van Tassel reviewed the 4 FTE elementary teaching positions they are looking to reduce for FY2010-11 – grade 6 at Henry Barnard; grade 5 at Henry Barnard; Grade 5 at Prudence Crandall and Grade 4 at Hazardville Memorial.

Mr. Grady asked what is the safest number of students in a classroom. Dr. Gallacher stated based on the square footage the number is extremely high – around 60. Mr. Van Tassel further stated that Fire Marshall Jack Flanagan reviewed this with him this year and it is well above 30.

Ms. Hall asked if increasing class sizes will interfere with SRBI initiatives. Mr. Van Tassel stated it will present challenges but our goal is early intervention with the lower grades.

Mrs. Cavanaugh stated that we are committed to providing early intervention to small class sizes in the primary level. As students progress through the grades, it is our plan they will need less intervention. Ms. Hall is concerned that we are starting a new program and there may be problems in the intermediary grades that we have not anticipated. Mrs. Cavanaugh stated we are concerned with class sizes but the SRBI initiative is still encompassing BEST

practices and we have been successfully providing class room interventions for years. It is a different way of looking at strategies. Ms. Hall believes this should be focused differently. Mr. Van Tassel stated the instruction will be delivered in tiers. Students that are struggling the most will receive tiered II small group intervention by the classroom teacher. If the students are still struggling they would move into a tiered III instruction that would be delivered by the math or language arts consultants. Mr. Van Tassel stated we are shifting and focusing on elementary students with needs.

Mr. Jonaitis asked why we can't move a few streets in the Memorial district over to the Hale district to help balance some of the class numbers. Dr. Gallacher stated the administration proposed doing that and parents addressed Board members about this and the Board reversed this. Chairman Stokes stated last year it was unfair to only try to balance class sizes with a few students. The last Board decided against doing this, unless we were going to redistrict the entire district. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated it is not always that easy of a fix. You can not target certain houses. It is not always clean cut. The out of district students were the focus last year. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated we need to redraw the lines across the district.

Mrs. Szewczak would like the configurations of the elementary schools looked into. Mr. Jonaitis believes redistricting is worth discussing.

Chairman Stokes thanked Mr. Van Tassel, Mrs. Mazzoli and Mrs. Cavanaugh.

#### **Pupil Services:**

Chairman Stokes welcomed Mrs. Stamm and Mrs. Carroll. Mrs. Stamm reviewed special education projections based on Dr. Gallacher's recommendations for elementary and secondary special education services while keeping in mind State and Federal compliances and SRBI initiatives. Mrs. Stamm reviewed the number of Special Education teachers and service hours and is projecting a .5 FTE reduction at Alcorn and a .5 FTE reduction at Enfield Street School.

Mr. Jonaitis asked what service hours are. Mrs. Stamm stated the student's IEP dictates how many service hours a student may need per week. Mr. Jonaitis asked if any of the service hours are co-taught. Mrs. Stamm stated yes and they are calculated in the service hours.

Ms. Hall asked about the autistic program at Parkman. Mrs. Carroll stated we have 14 children enrolled in the ASD program at Parkman. We have received positive feedback. Students receive their specialized instruction and some students participate in inclusion class time as well. It has been a very successful program. Ms. Hall stated these students come from all over Enfield. Chairman Stokes stated last year we started an autistic program at Parkman. Mrs. Stamm stated most of these students would have been outplaced, which can be costly.

Mrs. Stamm reviewed the number of Special Education teachers and service hours at JFK and is projecting a 1 FTE reduction. This will reduce the total number of Special Education teachers 2 FTE positions for FY10-11.

Ms. Hall asked about the case loads at JFK. Mrs. Stamm stated a case load of 15-20 is manageable. Mr. Grady asked if there is a mandate for case loads. Mrs. Stamm stated there is no certain number but if you go over 20, it becomes more difficult.

Mr. Grady asked what SED means. Mrs. Stamm stated SED is socially emotionally maladjusted classes. Every school has one.

Mr. Jonaitis asked how many resource classes are there at JFK. Mrs. Stamm will look into this and get you the information.

Mrs. Carroll reviewed preschool caseloads at Enfield Street and Eli Whitney. Mrs. Carroll explained peer partners to Board members.

Mr. Jonaitis asked if the peer program is the same as the 504 program. Mrs. Carroll stated the State Department of Education is now expecting school districts to maintain a 50/50 ratio in our preschool program. The State Department of Education requires the APR (annual performance report) that contains indicators. Indicator 6 concerns the 50/50 ratio. So to be in compliance we strive to maintain that ratio. They will monitor districts. Our goal for next year is to maintain that ratio.

Mrs. Carroll stated we are actively searching peer partners for next year. Ms. Hall stated the parents of the peer partners pay for the cost of materials. Mrs. Carroll stated the cost for peer partners is \$600 per child per year. The tuition received goes into a preschool account which we draw from to purchase materials. Ms. Chemerka stated there is a surplus in the account. We are covering the cost of materials. Ms. Hall stated other towns charge more, that is why she is asking this. Ms. Chemerka stated we need to review this further.

Mrs. Carroll stated we need to monitor the peer costs closely. Parents drive their children to school.

Mrs. Szewczak asked how the peer program different from the Head Start program. Head Start has certain criteria to be eligible for their program. The peer partner program provides mandated special education services for 3-5 year olds. We include the peers to strive for the 50/50 ratio. Mrs. Szewczak stated that Head Start also has peers. Mrs. Carroll stated some of the students in Head Start have special needs and IEP's. Mrs. Clement stated the Head Start program encompasses a more detailed program that monitors the student's health and physical development.

Mr. Jonaitis asked if the peer program is mandated. Mrs. Carroll stated it is a State expectation that we maintain a 50/50 ratio. In February 2010, the State will develop targets that districts must meet like indicator 6. If we don't reach our 50/50 goal, we will be placed on focused monitoring. We would need to develop an improvement plan. If we fail to do this, the State is telling us our IDEA grants could be impacted.

Ms. Hall asked if the preschool program is an extension of the States Birth to 3 program. Mrs. Carroll stated it is an Enfield Public Schools program and yes, this is the next step.

Mr. Sirard asked why aren't we at 50/50 now. Mrs. Carroll stated we are constantly screening for this program. This is the first year the State set the indicator 6. We anticipate that we will be able to recruit enough peers for next year.

Mr. Johnson asked if there is a limit. Mrs. Carroll stated there are no class size limits. Mr. Johnson asked if there would be a problem raising the cost for peers to \$700. Mrs. Carroll stated that would be the Board decision.

Chairman Stokes asked if Enfield needs to do this and what is our net cost that comes out of our budget. Mrs. Carroll stated this is something we must do as a public school system for students that are identified with disabilities at 3 years old. The costs to the district Mrs. Carroll would need to check with Ms. Chemerka and Dr. Gallacher. Chairman Stokes would like that information.

Mr. Jonaitis asked if more than one para is being used for these classes. Mrs. Carroll stated based on the students needs dictates the number of paras. Enfield Street has 2 paras in each class and at Eli Whitney you have 2 classes with 2 paras and 1 class with 1 para.

Ms. Hall asked if the paras are working with other students. Mrs. Carroll stated yes, they work with more than 1 student. Mrs. Stamm stated students must have an IEP in place by the day of their birthday or we would be out of compliance.

Mrs. Stamm reviewed Speech/Language projections. Based on projections, staff numbers will remain the same.

Mrs. Stamm reviewed PT/OT and Social Work projections. We will try to contract out for OT services. Ms. Chemerka stated at this time she would recommend outsourcing for OT and PT for 2010-11. This way we will not have to pay for liability services. Dr. Gallacher stated we were receiving services from Johnson Memorial Hospital, but due to their financial difficulties they were unable to provide this service. Last summer, we ran into this problem.

Mrs. Stamm is recommending reducing Social Work hours at JFK for .5 FTE and at Stowe for .5 FTE based on service hour projections.

Mrs. Stamm reviewed developmental guidance projections. Mrs. Stamm is not recommending reducing any staff numbers based on service hours.

Mrs. Stamm reviewed secondary guidance counselor projections. Mrs. Stamm is not recommending reducing any staff numbers based on service hours.

Mrs. Stamm reviewed elementary guidance counselor projections based on Dr. Gallacher's recommendation to reduce 4 FTE. Mrs. Stamm based her recommendations on student numbers. Some elementary schools will have either a .4 FTE; .5 FTE; .6 FTE or 1 FTE elementary guidance counselor.

Ms. Hall asked how will the load compare to the strive to language in the contract. Dr. Gallacher stated there is no strive to language for the elementary guidance counselors.

Mr. Torre stated the elementary guidance counselors have taken on the task of being the schools Title IX Coordinator.

Ms. Hall stated we currently have 1 elementary guidance counselor at each school. We will now have to allow for travel time for them to get to one school to another. This will reduce their total numbers even more. Dr. Gallacher stated we could arrange for an elementary guidance counselor to be at a school 2 or 3 days.

Mr. Grady asked what we would do if something happened on the day the elementary guidance counselor was not scheduled to be there. Mrs. Stamm stated we would arrange for coverage based on an emergency.

Chairman Stokes thanked Mrs. Stamm and Mrs. Carroll.

### **Head Start**

Mrs. Clement reviewed the Head Start Budget and the proposed cut of \$30K to next year's budget. Mrs. Clement reviewed Head Start performance standards. All students have an educational plan, not just IEP's. Ongoing assessments are done every two weeks. We need to have at least 10% students with disabilities in the program. Last year, we had 14%. We have 104 students in the program with a waiting list of around 80 children. Head Start is open 10 hours a day, all year long. We try to work the most at-risk population. When the students leave Head Start, they are ready for kindergarten.

Mr. Johnson asked about the assessments that are done. Mrs. Clement stated they use a combination of assessments and they also have a checklist. They look at social and emotional development. It is very time consuming, but necessary to track progress.

Mrs. Clement stated she learned at a Head Start meeting that we will continue to receive a cola increase of 1.84% or \$13,978.

Mrs. Clement reviewed her proposed cuts.

Mrs. Clement stated Head Start has received accreditation from NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children and we received a "strength" for going above and beyond in our Mental Health Area in our Federal Review.

Mrs. Szewczak asked how the Head Start program integrates with the parenting classes at the Alcorn Resource Center. Mrs. Clement stated we have strong collaboration with the resource center. Our parents are invited to day and night programs. They receive information on parenting. We work closely with FRC and DCF not to duplicate services.

Chairman Stokes asked about the number of days Head Start is open. Mrs. Clement stated the grant must list the exact number of days you will be open. If you change this, you can jeopardize your funding.

Chairman Stokes thanked Mrs. Clement.

#### **Nutrition Services:**

Dr. Gallacher presented information prepared by Diane Edwards. Dr. Gallacher stated Nutrition Services have been losing money. Dr. Gallacher is recommending taking \$30k from the nutrition budget. Mrs. Edwards will dip into her reserve funds and is proposing an increase for FY11-12 of \$.25. Dr. Gallacher reviewed lunch participation numbers. Alcorn is the only school that has a breakfast program.

Chairman Stokes stated Mrs. Edwards will need Board approval to increase prices. Dr. Gallacher stated it is not required but he recommends the Board approving any increases.

Dr. Gallacher stated we receive funds from the State for free and/or reduced lunches. This is where we can make a profit.

Ms. Hall asked if we should offer breakfast at the other two Title I schools. Dr. Gallacher stated we would need to look into this to see what the costs would be. Dr. Gallacher stated we did offer this at other schools but the participation numbers were not there to make it worthwhile. We were actually losing money. Ms. Hall believes the need is there now due to economic times. Dr. Gallacher will discuss this with Mrs. Edwards.

Mr. Grady stated that Whitney would also be interested in this.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches asked about a breakfast program at JFK. Mr. Neville stated we serve them lunch starting at 10:30 AM. Mr. Neville stated having a breakfast program would require changing the bus times. Currently 1 out of 3 students receives lunch assistance.

Mr. Sirard asked about the price for lunches. He believed it was supposed to be cost neutral. Why are we charging so little? Dr. Gallacher stated we try to reach the break even point. Ms. Hall stated new equipment is what caused the recent drop. Dr. Gallacher stated Mrs. Edwards is required to purchase certain equipment out of her budget. Ms. Hall stated we should request equipment purchases in a CIP account.

Mrs. Szewczak stated she recalled the reason JFK lunches are served so early is because years ago, we brought in an expert that told us if you do not have a breakfast program, you will need to serve lunch earlier.

Ms. Hall stated she recalled the entire report was extremely controversial.

**Recess:**

Board members took a brief recess at 9:25 AM, returning at 9:35 AM.

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 today. The 4<sup>th</sup> Budget Workshop has been very productive. Chairman Stokes stated the next meeting will be held on Wednesday February 17<sup>th</sup> to approve the budget that is due to the Town Manager on February 28<sup>th</sup>. They will then let us know what our final allocation will be in May. Chairman Stokes stated if Board members are not ready to deliver our budget, we can use the special meeting as another workshop.

Chairman Stokes, Dr. Gallacher, Matt Coppler and Scott Kaupin met with Representative Kathy Tallarita. She asked us what our 3 top priorities were and how they could assist us. Chairman Stokes asked how long the crunch will be in our State. Representative Tallarita stated from all economic indicators they do not see a recovery until 2013. Chairman Stokes then asked for relief that will not be short lived and will run parallel until at least 2014.

Chairman Stokes and Dr. Gallacher's top priorities were unfunded mandates to be put on hold until 2013. This includes the in-school suspension and graduation requirements. Around 8% of our budget is for unfunded mandates. This will give us back some local control. Dr. Gallacher mentioned that we conduct Radon Testing and asked if this is necessary to do every year or can it be modified. These mandates tie our hands. By waiving these items, it will help us until the economy turns around.

Chairman Stokes stated the State is facing a \$500 million dollar deficit and by 2012 a \$2 billion dollar deficit in the State. Chairman Stokes spoke to Senator Kissell and he will hold an economic summit in town like he did last year to inform community members of developments.

Chairman Stokes stated because of everything we know and how we have done things before, it is not getting us anywhere. Cutting is not improving education. A systemic change is needed. The Board has a 2 year term. If we wait to make change, we will not be able to do this. Chairman Stokes is looking at a 0 – 1% Budget. Chairman Stokes stated that we need to create change. We can talk in tiers or strategies to reconfigure the entire district. This may mean closing 1 or 2 schools and the reduction of curriculum at secondary schools. Class sizes are not balanced. Elective classes with only 7 students is unacceptable. Chairman Stokes stated we are doing good work for some and not for all students. Redistricting will balance class sizes. We can begin to correct this in the district.

Chairman Stokes stated this will take a tremendous amount of work from Board members to stand against the pressures of community members that do not want to see changes being made. The Board has the ability to make changes. Information has been shared with both parties.

Mr. Grady asked if Chairman Stokes is proposing to close 2 schools this year. Chairman Stokes stated yes, in September. Mr. Grady stated aren't you concerned that the time period is not there. Chairman Stokes stated if something happened tomorrow and 2 schools needed to be closed we would do it. Mr. Grady agrees and we have the will to do it, but even Dr. Gallacher stated there is not enough time to do this when we discussed this last week to put a

plan together in a month. Chairman Stokes stated nothing was voted on, it was just discussed.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated that we all agree that a systemic change is needed. What concerns Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches is that we need to get our budget down to a 1% budget. We are picking a number first. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches would rather put a plan in place that puts the district in perspective and then find out what the number is. Look at the goals first. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches is not sure closing 1 or 2 schools will get us to the number we are looking for. Our priority is to provide quality education in a fiscally responsible manner. We need to start there.

Ms. Hall asked how this can be done in two weeks. Chairman Stokes stated we have until May to initiate anything we plan to do.

Mr. Jonaitis stated we can look at the entire budget, programs and staff in Enfield and make decisions on what Board members think should be cut. We can give this back to the administration and give them a number and have them make the changes needed. Ms. Hall stated that is what they have done. Mr. Jonaitis stated they have to a degree. They would need to go farther. Mr. Jonaitis stated we could form a special committee to look at restructuring at a crash level to implement in our second term.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated she has a problem with setting a number. Something needs to be put into place. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated we need someone from the outside without any emotions. They can look at the structures and make assessments.

Mr. Sirard does not care how we make the changes; we just need to do it. We don't have a choice anymore. Every year we do the same thing. By cutting, we are just putting band aides on our budget. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated no one disagrees on doing it. The disagreement is on the approach.

Mrs. Szewczak asked if we have a demographer that can do this. Dr. Gallacher spoke to Pete Prowda on Monday. Mr. Prowda is a retired demographer from the State of Connecticut and he has done demographics for us in the past. We asked him if he could talk to us about reorganizing and he said he would not be comfortable taking on this kind of work. He recommended HMA (Harrall Michalowski Associates). They are a Milone McBroom company. Dr. Gallacher spoke to them on the phone. They stressed the importance of going slowly and taking your time. Dr. Gallacher reviewed some scenarios with HMA and they gave him a ballpark figure of \$70K. They would look at going from 9 elementary schools to 7 with some kind of a grade configuration. They do not do bus routing. Dr. Gallacher asked about closing 1 school in September. That would cost around a \$20-25K.

Dr. Gallacher would like to know if we could propose to the Town Council a biannual budget. This year may be high, but we can make up savings next budget. Dr. Gallacher stated making the cuts needed to get to 1% will be a lot of cuts.

Mr. Grady stated Dr. Gallacher did a good job on his recommended cuts. Any reduction will have an impact on the school system. We are supposed to be proactive and not reactive. Let us be proactive. By stating we are going to close 1 or 2 schools, we are being reactive. Chairman Stokes understands what Mr. Grady is saying. Board members need to begin the steps for change.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches asked what the plan will be for a 1% budget. Specifics are needed. What schools, how much will we save, curriculum at the secondary schools, what will that look like, Mr. Jonaitis mentioned giving it back to the Administration.

Mr. Jonaitis stated if you want quality education you need to look at your core classes. Make sure they are balanced and sound in the core areas. Then you branch out and look at what we can afford. Principals know the areas. Tweaking can be made.

Chairman Stokes stated he does not believe we will get 3.6 or 3%. The responsible thing is to do this now.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated she still wants to see a budget at 1% budget. What will be eliminated?

Mrs. Szewczak stated Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches wants to know what the budget will look like and we want to know what the school system will look like first. Mrs. Szewczak stated by knowing what the school system will look like, we will be able to make the additional cuts needed.

Chairman Stokes asked where Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches would start. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated we need to fight for what we believe is right. Mr. Johnson asked if the cuts in Dr. Gallacher's proposed budget are the way we should do it. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated there are a lot of things that she does not agree with. Mr. Johnson stated the big difference is we need to look at what we really need verses what we have to do. Then we can start to develop what we want to do.

Ms. Hall stated we are moving in a negative direction.

Mr. Jonaitis would like to look at the course selection booklet at the secondary levels. Look at the core class and class sizes. Choices will need to be made.

Chairman Stokes stated we need to prioritize our educational system and make the necessary cuts that are needed. Ms. Hall stated it is our priority to advocate for education. Chairman Stokes stated he is advocating for education. It is time to fix the problem for change. We have the opportunity to do something that will have lasting value for this district. We are doing a disservice to our students. We need to do this now.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches does not believe that any Board member does not believe that change is needed. She does not believe that this Board will not rescind a decision that has been made. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated this is based on actions from past Boards. When push comes to shove, we capitulate.

Mr. Jonaitis stated we have not capitulated on anything yet except for a motion to rescind something that has not been done yet.

Ms. Hall stated most of the schools in the state are experiencing a similar problem of cutting their budgets. We have been cutting for a minimum of 10 years and have not had a fixed cost increase in years.

Mr. Johnson stated you are correct. The problem is we can not afford our infrastructure that we have built. Ms. Hall stated our infrastructure is weak compared to others. Mr. Johnson stated that is why we need to pull back and see what we really need. There are no more easy pickings out there.

Chairman Stokes stated his greater fear is if we do not start planning now, we will be cutting a lot of things in May. By planning we can save some items.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches and Mr. Grady stated no one is disagreeing that change is needed. Mr. Grady stated implementing the plan is what is being questioned.

Chairman Stokes stated we can do it better in Enfield. We need to submit a budget to the Town in 2 weeks.

Chairman Stokes stated we have some options, we can decide on a number and continue working today to present to the Town Council in two weeks and move on to our plan. We have a lot to chew on. We could adjourn or make Wednesday meeting a workshop. What is the Board's desire?

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches does not want to waste any time. Mrs. Szewczak would like the administration to decide on the grade configurations. Dr. Gallacher stated they can decide on any grade configuration the Board would like. All grade 6 will not fit at JFK. You could take the overflow grade 6 students and house them at Stowe. We can look at K-2 and 3-6 concept. Dr. Gallacher also stated you need to be careful at which buildings you are planning to take. Your smallest schools are what the demographic committee looked at. Dr. Gallacher would like someone to look at the buildings to see which one will need repairs down the road. You will also need to look at full day kindergarten. This will become another unfunded mandate down the road. Dr. Gallacher would like to warehouse the buildings and not close them. Dr. Gallacher stated we don't have a lot of time. We need to know what the community will support. We need the Board to make a decision and we will support that decision.

Mr. Sirard stated we are all on the same page. Mr. Sirard believes this will get delayed.

Mr. Jonaitis would like to form a committee with teachers, administrators, Board members and PTO presidents and have something in place for 2011/12. Mr. Jonaitis stated cuts will be needed this year.

Chairman Stokes stated to form a committee you will need to notify everyone. They wouldn't start before March or April. This would not help us for September. Mr. Jonaitis stated the administrators are the professionals and they know what is going on. They can tell you what is good in a classroom. Chairman Stokes would disagree with the PTO presidents being on the committee because if it affects their school they will be biased and will want to protect their turf.

Ms. Hall stated Dr. Gallacher suggestion of working on a biannual budget with the Town makes sense.

Mr. Jonaitis asked what was done with the demographic presentation the Board received previously. Ms. Hall stated it created a mess within the Board of Education and the public. Mrs. Szewczak stated the new Board members do not know what it said. Ms. Hall stated it was not a recommendation; it was an indication of what might be possible if the Board decided they had to do it.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated we are elected. The target is supposed to be on our backs not the teachers, the administrators, the parents or the PTO President's backs. We are supposed to make the decisions. The demographic advisory committee did not want to make any recommendations because they did not want to be held responsible. To put that burden on them is difficult for any committee. Every parent, teacher and administrator has a vested interest. By using an outside third party is a different scenario. The demographic reports from the past two committees are available. Closing a school did not show a significant amount of savings and it depends on which school you are closing. At that time, the only school that we did not owe the State any money on was Alcorn. Closing two schools got you to a better number. Going to an outside person is the way to go.

Mr. Jonaitis disagrees. When was the last time you went to the administration and asked them for help? Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated they were part of both demographic advisory committees.

Mr. Jonaitis stated by getting people that are actively involved in the school system can help. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated last year, we could not agree on a school to close. Everything was personal. We did not have anyone to tell us if there were any structural issues or geographical issues.

Mr. Sirard stated we have 2 years of demographic reports and an audit committee report. That is a lot of information for any professional we use. This is a good head start. Mr. Sirard does not want to see this go by the wayside.

Mr. Grady does not believe this will go by the wayside. You have a Board that is proactive in redistricting the school district. Our backs are up against the walls. Our bus software is not up and running yet. This key piece is needed for transportation. How can we do this without this key piece of information?

Chairman Stokes stated the Board is in agreement for a systemic change. We all agree we need to start now. The elephant in the room is that we have to provide the Town Council a budget in three weeks. If we didn't have to do that, we could plan conservatively for long term change.

Mr. Grady suggests that leadership sit down with the Town Council and ask for a ball park figure. Are we close? Chairman Stokes does not believe they are ready to answer that question yet. Chairman Stokes does not believe they will give us anything more than zero.

Ms. Hall asked if we can discuss Dr. Gallacher's suggestion of a biannual budget. Chairman Stokes stated we would need to see if the charter would allow this. Ms. Hall stated she is asking to see if they would consider using our current 3.5 budget with the sincere expectation that our next years' budget will be lower because of the anticipated changes the study will provide us with. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated she does not know if the Town Council would trust us. Ms. Hall stated trust goes both ways.

Chairman Stokes stated they do not have the funds to give us a 3.5 budget. Ms. Hall stated the grand list has increased. It is not all negative. Chairman Stokes believes some of the change was due to the stimulus packages. Nothing is guaranteed. Ms. Hall stated we need to look at the details from all sides. Chairman Stokes stated they are not predicting the economy will improve until 2013. We need to plan for the worst. Ms. Hall stated education is being given some positive attention at the Federal and State levels. Chairman Stokes stated he will believe this when they give us a waiver for four years for unfunded mandates.

Mr. Johnson stated we are looking for relief from some of the unfunded mandates. We are not saying we will not do them all, but for them to give us a choice. Ms. Hall does not believe that will happen.

Dr. Gallacher stated some of the mandates are extremely cumbersome. A good example would be school suspensions.

Mrs. Szewczak asked about our diversity in the schools. Dr. Gallacher stated he believes this year Alcorn will be above 25% imbalanced and will have to develop a plan. We will need to submit a plan within 90 days to the State. You are compared to the other elementary schools.

Mr. Sirard asked if there are other schools that are under-represented that do not have a significant minority population. We do not have diversity in our schools. Dr. Gallacher stated all of the other schools have diverse populations. If the balance gets past 25%, they consider you to be imbalanced. Mr. Torre stated Dr. Gallacher and he have discussed this. We need to be able to project how the schools will look down the road.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated our neighborhoods are not equally diverse. There are sections of Towns that have more minority or income challenged.

Mr. Jonaitis suggested breaking up into groups and then comparing lists. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches would not advocate splitting up on party lines to plan our budget and meet back later to discuss it.

Mr. Sirard stated in a perfect lab setting and perfect world, we can set class sizes at 25. That would be \$1.5 million savings to start off. Mr. Grady asked how this can be done when we don't have the busing software that is needed. Mr. Sirard stated Alcorn was closed in the 90's and we did it.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated this does not include the additional costs of busing. There are other things to do.

Mr. Jonaitis would like to have the course of study booklet and class enrollments to review.

Dr. Gallacher stated that he has been working with Mr. Russell and we can reduce the budget by \$132,357. Dr. Gallacher stated that yesterday was the deadline for retirements. We have received 7. During the course of the year we will receive a few more. Dr. Gallacher believes the MBR (minimum budget requirement) is still in place. We need to find this out. Dr. Gallacher agrees with everyone, next year will be more difficult.

Mrs. Szewczak asked if Board members can give Dr. Gallacher a directive to get figures for an outside demographic consultant for timeframe and costs for implementation for the reconfiguration of Enfield school system. Mr. Torre stated we should include the Town in this decision.

#### **5. REMINDER – Special Meeting on Wednesday, February 17th**

Chairman Stokes would like to turn the Special meeting scheduled for Wednesday, February 17<sup>th</sup> into a workshop to be held in the Board conference room. We will need information that Mrs. Szewczak requested regarding figures for an outside demographics consultant, the course selection numbers and the program of studies for the secondary schools. If there is any additional information requested, please give it to the administration for Monday.

Chairman Stokes stated we will continue our discussion Wednesday night. Then we will set up a time to present our budget to the Town Council.

Ms. Hall asked if we could meet on Thursday so Board members can attend the bullying presentation. Chairman Stokes stated he is unavailable on Thursday. Dr. Gallacher distributed copies of the Bullying Presentation with Mr. Halligan. Dr. Gallacher stated the parent presentation is different than the student presentation.

#### **6. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Grady moved, seconded by Mrs. Szewczak to adjourn the Special Meeting of February 13, 2010. All ayes, motion passed unanimously.

Meeting stood adjourned at 11:00 AM.

Joyce P. Hall  
Secretary  
Enfield Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary