

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 22, 2014**

A special meeting of the Enfield Board of Education was held at Henry Barnard Elementary School in the Board Conference Room, located at 27 Shaker Road, Enfield, CT on February 22, 2014.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 9:01 AM by Vice Chairman Wawer.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Vice Chairman Wawer
3. **FIRE EVACUATION ANNOUNCEMENT:** Vice Chairman Wawer announced the fire evacuation announcement.
4. **ROLL CALL:**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Peter Jonaitis, Ray Peabody (arrived at 9:06 AM), David Wawer, Vin Grady, Tina LeBlanc, Timothy Neville and Stacy

MEMBERS ABSENT: Lori Unghire and Tom Sirard

ALSO PRESENT: Dr. Jeffrey Schumann, Superintendent and Mr. Christopher Drezek, Deputy Superintendent

5. **Continue the 2014-15 Budget Discussion**

Vice Chairman Wawer stated we are here to continue the discussion from Tuesday night regarding the FY2014-15 Budget. Dr. Schumann was asked for information requested by the Board.

Dr. Schumann stated that both Mr. Drezek and he identified our educational needs and contractual obligations. We are still waiting for information from the Town and our agent of record. We made some adjustments to our needs and made some assumptions.

Listed below are the proposed FY2014-15 budget recommendations based on the Board's request getting to a 2% budget.

\$63,141,355	- FY2012-13 Budget	
\$71,920,166	- FY2013-14 Needs Based Budget Requests	13.90%
-\$ 5,002,027	- Superintendent Adjustments	
\$66,918,094	- Superintendent Budget Request	5.98%
-\$ 1,263,714	- BOE Adjustments	
\$65,654,380	- BOE's Proposed Budget	3.98%
-\$ 1,392,223	- Town Manager's Adjustments	
\$64,262,157	- Town Manager's Proposed Budget	1.78%
\$64,262,157	- Town Council Appropriation	1.78%
-\$ 718,154	- Town Council IT Adjustment	1.14%
-\$ 674,069	- BOE Adjustment Required	
-\$ 117,786	- Pension Adjustments not in Proposed Budget	
\$64,262,157	- 2013-14 Final BOE Budget Total	1.78%
\$64,262,157	- 2013-14 Budget	
\$73,028,876	- 2014-15 Needs Base Budget Requests	13.64%

-\$ 5,565,680	- Superintendent Adjustments	
\$67,463,196	- Superintendent's Proposed Budget	4.98%
-\$ 669,831	- Proposed 7 Elem. Assist. Principals	3.94%
-\$ 165,000	- Proposed 3 Elem. Counselors	3.68%
-\$ 100,000	- Retirement Adjustments	3.53%
-\$ 20,000	- Additional Retirement Adjustment	3.50%
-\$ 77,777	- Pension Assumptions	3.37%
-\$ 35,896	- Unemployment Assumptions	3.32%
-\$ 74,079	- General Liability Assumptions	3.20%
-\$ 21,674	- Workers Compensation Assumptions	3.17%
-\$ 31,243	- Life Insurance Assumptions	3.12%
-\$ 43,500	- Additional Benefits Assumptions	3.05%
-\$ 37,400	- Clerical Position at FHS	2.99%
-\$ 250,000	- Increase Choice Students by 25	2.61%
-\$ 387,500	- Reduce Programs and Personnel	2.00%
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\$65,549,296	- Proposed FY2014-15 Budget	2.00%

Dr. Schumann added that the principals will continue to look for additional cuts. He is sending home letters to the magnet students asking them to meet with him and look at Enfield Public schools first for their educational needs.

Mr. Neville stated you are looking at staffing and programs which will ultimately increase class sizes. Dr. Schumann added there are some ugly numbers when looking at class sizes. The transitional grades will be challenging.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated they do this every year trying to entice us to take additional Choice students. The Choice students will become eligible for services. Some of these students will receive services over the Enfield students.

Mr. Wawer asked what kind of services you are referring to. Mrs. LeBlanc stated any kind of service like reading and math.

Mr. Neville asked if we are cutting services to our kids based on the increase of Choice students. Dr. Schumann added that there is a possibility that some of the Choice students may not be on grade level and will receive Tier I, II and III services. He has not heard from the principals that they are stretched and cannot service the students.

Mr. Neville stated there are incentives to take additional Choice students. Some people feel they are a problem and he has not seen this. We have been taking them in the younger grades so they can buy into our system.

Dr. Schumann stated you need to meet and work with the families regarding the opportunities they will receive in our school system. He has taken them in all grades or transition grades like K, 3, 6 and 9 when he was in Newington. We get students in all grade levels when they move to Enfield. A transition is a transition.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated this is happening in all towns. Some students are teetering or fall just below the need for additional services. As a tax payer, this bothers her. We are providing services to the students that need it the most. We can barely afford to educate the students we currently have without bringing in more students.

Mr. Grady asked if the open choice kids are given preference. Dr. Schumann stated open choice is a lottery system. We do recruit them. The services are provided based on student needs.

Mr. Jonaitis stated this is a noble goal. Bringing more kids here will increase class sizes. We have kids that need services. We need to do the best for our kids in our town. These kids would also affect our test scores. He would prefer to keep it the way it currently is.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated she wanted the Board to be aware of this. If the Board wants to increase the Choice numbers, then so be it. Her daughter has gone to school with some Choice students from the start and they have all done very well here.

Mr. Neville stated the Choice program has evolved in Enfield. Transportation for the students is a concern. He feels taking the students in the earlier grades works better. They are working through our curriculum and they understand it. Some of the parents work with us and are very committed. They become very involved in our schools. His experience has been positive.

Mr. Neville stated our numbers are lower than where they were. Dr. Schumann stated we are currently at 1%. They would like us to have 3%. If we increase our Choice numbers, they will reimburse us at the 3% rate. They would like us to reach some of the benchmarks with the Sheff stipulation.

Mr. Neville asked if we have a choice of where they go. He does not want us to overload class sizes. Dr. Schumann stated we do have a choice where to place them.

Mr. Peabody stated that Mrs. LeBlanc presented some interesting information. He asked about the students needing services and looking at student information. We need to look at the data.

Mr. Jonaitis stated we cannot do this legally.

Mr. LeBlanc stated if they leave us to go to a magnet school, we are not responsible for them once they leave. Dr. Schumann stated that is correct. They would be considered a Hartford student if they leave us.

Mr. Neville stated the Choice students become our students until the leave or graduate. We cannot treat any student differently. Scores will be affected when any student moves to Enfield.

Mr. Peabody stated everyone is looking at school scores. This information is useful on how to address areas of concern.

Mrs. Thurston asked when the lottery takes place. Dr. Schumann stated in April. He is not sure of the exact date.

Mrs. Thurston agrees with Mrs. LeBlanc and does not want to see any of our students that need service to be put aside. She works in a facility where HIPA is huge. She cannot just go out and get information even if it is available.

Mr. Peabody stated when the students come here and are evaluated, we can review their progress to see what goals have been obtained. He is not looking for data before they come here. Only the data when they are here.

Mr. Neville stated we are provided with a lot of data when the students enter our school system. Teachers will conduct assessments with all students that come to us.

Mr. Neville asked what your contingency will be for complementary evaluators if we do not receive the percentage needed to fund this. Dr. Schumann stated he does not have a contingency plan. We will need to figure this out. He will talk with the bargaining units and

will try to change the classifications for next year for using complementary evaluators.

Mr. Neville would like us to leave something in the budget as a safeguard for this. We are doing this so the public will see the needs of these cuts. He is looking that we will see additional efficiencies when we get closer to May. He does not want to cut any needs.

Mr. Jonaitis would like us to identify the cuts without cutting programs. If some larger class sizes are needed he would prefer this like with TLC, Support Programs, Tier I, II and III. Keep the programs we currently have.

Mr. Neville stated we need to look at priorities like not increasing class sizes. We need to keep within our ranges.

Mr. Neville asked if by not adding the elementary counselors, will this affect the special education numbers. Dr. Schumann stated by adding the counselors it would lighten the load of the counselors and social workers. This will need to be absorbed by the current staff.

Mr. Grady asked where the counselors and social worker would be placed if this was left in the budget. Dr. Schumann they would be in the K-2 schools.

Mr. Neville stated this would bring us back to the way it used to be.

Mr. Wawer asked if we are required by law to have a social worker. Dr. Schumann stated we are not required.

Mr. Neville added we would be required if an IEP mandates this. This is done during the PPT process.

Mr. Jonaitis would like us to look into the PPT process. Maybe we are offering too many services. Can we scale back on some of these paraprofessionals. Some of them are one-to-one.

Mr. Neville stated this is something he would like us to audit. We need to look at how we are conducting PPT's and how we are using paraprofessionals. We need to look for economies of scale.

Mr. Wawer would prefer to call this a structural analysis, not an audit.

Mr. Neville asked about the medical, pension and benefits. Mr. Drezek stated 3% was for the entire district. They base the medical on a 12 month trend analysis review. We will know more in a couple of months. It will not increase more than 3%. We are self insured.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated it is hard being a parent and Board member. She knows why we are making reductions. We need counselors. Kids are faced with more now at an earlier age. Class sizes are a concern. In the K-2 grades there is more wiggle room. In the 3-5 schools they are maxed as well as the upper grades with students, discipline concerns and evaluations. She would like us to present a 3.5% budget.

Mr. Neville stated the Superintendent has presented us with a 3% and 2% budget so we can see what the budget would like. We now know what these cuts will impact. We will get more information in March through May as we continue to look for more economies. He would like us to present a 3.5% budget based on our needs.

Mr. Peabody stated some budgets are presented high and some are presented low. If we go with a 3.5% budget we will be covered for some of these concerns we are presented with. We need time to look for alternatives. We know everyone does not want us to hire 7 elementary

assistant principals. We are caught between a rock and a hard place. We need to communicate to the public regarding the State requirements. We may need to do this.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated that is why she wants us to present a 3.5% budget. She wants them to know where we are coming from. It may not be what we want but we have mandates that are requiring us to do this. We will still look for efficiencies. In the past, the Town Council didn't really know what we were trying to achieve. The Town Council is more involved in our Budget process now.

Mr. Peabody stated we need to explain the position we are in. This is a starting point and we need to craft a message letting them know. People are tired of hearing about reform, mandates and tax increases. This is a requirement. We do not know what we are going to cut. We will need to cut programs like the leadership program. We need more information this is a give and take. He believed Chairman Sirard wanted us to look at a number that we would present to the Town Council.

Mr. Wawer stated we are here to listen to the Superintendent's recommendations. We will meet on Tuesday and will vote on this. He would like us all to digest this information and will present a motion and adopt the budget on Tuesday.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated she would like them to know we have done our due diligence and this will continue. We need to do this in a thoughtful way.

Mr. Neville stated this is starting point based on the information we were presented at this time. We have had a good dialogue with the Town Council members. We are all here for the same reason of what is best for our kids and our town. We will continue to look for efficiencies and will let them know about them. We need to let them know what our needs are so the town will benefit.

Mr. Jonaitis stated the Board and the Town have worked well together for the past several years. If we ask for a 3.5% budget for education and the town has their needs and we are still looking at a large percentage when you add it all together. He does not believe we will receive an increase again like we did last year. Our taxes increased and he does not believe that will happen.

Mr. Wawer stated you are trying to recruit some of our kids back from magnet schools. Your letter is proactive and visionary. By doing this there is a movement opportunity to reduce the number of students going to magnets.

Mr. Wawer asked about supplies in the curriculum budget as well as instruction supplies in all schools. He does not see how the consolidation is working.

Mr. Neville stated they are two different things. Mr. Drezek added that the accounts were consolidated and added to the district accounts. There is still money in those line items.

Mr. Neville stated the 2013 actuals are listed you do not see what was budgeted. The actuals were consolidated at the beginning and this is creating the confusion.

Mr. Wawer stated he is looking for cost efficiencies. He also looked at furniture, fixtures and general education new equipment. Dr. Schumann stated the numbers are there but due to budget cuts needed, we are not replacing these items.

Mr. Drezek stated we carried the funding over. He believes this was used to move the funding forward to the next year.

Mr. Wawer asked if these numbers are due to line item transfers. Mrs. LeBlanc added you will begin to see how this process works in April, May and June when line item transfers are done trying to budget funds during the finance meetings when we are trying to come up with efficiencies.

Mr. Peabody asked if we have applied for all the grants with this budget request. How much is carried from year to year.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated the Literacy Tutors can only service Title I students. We apply for this grant every year. They can only service students in Title I schools. Ms. McKernan applies for this grant in September.

Mr. Wawer stated this would be helpful to know which line items are funded by grants. Mrs. LeBlanc stated you will find this information in the Board packets.

Mr. Wawer would like this information asterisked on the line items listed in the budget.

Mr. Neville stated our grants have gone down. We used to buy equipment with the grants.

Mr. Wawer asked if Head Start is 100% funded by the Federal government. Mr. Drezek stated no. There are some grant items that are funded with the local Board of Education. There are some amounts that we are responsible for like transportation.

Mr. Wawer is looking for the amount or percentage that we must cover. This would be helpful information to know. He looks at Head Start as a social service program and a preschool program.

Mr. Neville added it is an educational program.

Mr. Wawer stated that statistics have proven that this program is not doing what it was intended to do. Dr. Schumann stated that information is flawed.

Mr. Wawer stated he looks at this as a K-12 program. He views this is a preschool program. He would like to see the Town be responsible for this program and the associated costs not the Board of Education.

Mr. Peabody stated you would like the Town to be fiscally responsible for this program. They would still need to report to the education side.

Mr. Neville stated we need to apply for the grants through the education system. We exceed the goals with our head start programs. It is different in different parts of the country. We need to look at the data. There are some social goals. This is a data based program.

Mrs. Leblanc stated we have around \$150K in Head Start expenses that is basically for materials. Our Head Start works closely with the Town of Enfield. Head Start comes to us before they can apply for funding. As a member of Kite, she has seen Head Start in our community. They work with Enfield Child Development and other preschool programs. They work closely with us as well. She would hate to see them become a partner. We are an integral part of them.

Mr. Wawer asked what our legal responsibility for the Head Start program is. We are responsible for students in grades K-12 and special education students until they are 21. He is trying to get to our core mission. We need to look at the data. The numbers will drive our decisions.

Mrs. LeBlanc encourages Board members to go to Head Start and see what they are doing with our kids. They welcome you and want Board members to visit them.

Mrs. Thurston will be at Head Start on Friday.

Mr. Wawer would like Mrs. Thurston to give an update about her visit to Head Start at the next Board meeting.

Mr. Wawer stated we can make a motion on Tuesday night.

Mr. Neville would like a hard copy of the Superintendent's presentation. Dr. Schumann will send this to each Board member.

6. Action, if any regarding Adopting the FY2014-15 Budget - None

7. Adjournment

Mr. Grady moved, seconded by Mr. Neville to adjourn the Special Meeting of February 22, 2014.

All ayes, motion passed unanimously.

Meeting stood adjourned at 10:26 AM.

Vincent M. Grady
Secretary
Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary