

**ENFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 12, 2009**

A special meeting of the Enfield Board of Education was held at Enfield Town Hall in the Council Chambers, located at 820 Enfield Street, Enfield, CT on March 12, 2009.

1. **CALL TO ORDER** The meeting was called to order at 7:32 PM by Chairman Greco.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** Chairman Greco
3. **FIRE EVACUATION ANNOUNCEMENT** Chairman Greco announced the fire evacuation announcement.
4. **ROLL CALL**

MEMBERS PRESENT Joyce Hall, Vincent Grady, Judy Apruzzese-Desroches, Tom Arnone, Patrick Droney, Greg Stokes, Susan Lavelli-Hozempa, Charles Johnson and Andre Greco

MEMBERS ABSENT None

ALSO PRESENT Dr. John Gallacher, Superintendent of Schools; Mr. Anthony Torre, Assistant Superintendent of Schools and Dr. Craig Cooke, Human Resources Director

5. **CONTINUED FY09-10 BUDGET DISCUSSION:**

Chairman Greco stated that Board members will continue their discussion regarding the FY09-10 Budget. At the March 10, 2009 BOE meeting, Mayor Kaupin informed us that we are short by \$6 million dollars. Chairman Greco stated that we are here tonight as part of a brainstorming session looking for any possible reductions.

Chairman Greco stated that Town Council members would like to meet with Board members on April, 1, 2009 where we will present our Budget. Board members agreed to see if the TC is available to meet on March 31, 2009 at 7:00 PM. This will need to be confirmed by the Town Manager.

Chairman Greco stated that Board members need to set a date for a special meeting after the March 26, 2009 Community Conversation regarding closing a school.

Mr. Stokes commented that he has concerns with the community conversation. The conversation will pit school against school and parents against parents. This decision should be made by the Board of Education based on the data we have received. Board members should then have a conversation explaining how the plan will work to make a smooth transition for the parents and students. The administration should put together information regarding the four schools that are being considered for next meeting for Board members. Some community members will disagree and will want their voices to be heard.

Mr. Droney agrees with everything said by Mr. Stokes. Ms. Hall believes that everyone should have their voices heard. They may have reasons that Board members have not thought about. Ms. Hall stated that we promised the community that we would have a community conversation regarding this.

Chairman Greco stated that we made a promise to have a community conversation regarding closing a school before Board members made any decisions. Mr. Arnone agrees with Ms Hall and

Chairman Greco. Board members have been preaching transparency and we need to give the parents a chance.

Chairman Greco stated that everyone wants an answer regarding closing a school. Closing a building and displacing the student population in Enfield is an absolute last resort. It is not on the top of the list, it is on the bottom. We do not have all the information in front of us to make an informed decision yet. We are still waiting to hear back from our collective bargaining units. We know that everyone is anxious. We need to have a transition plan in place. If we don't have to close a building, we won't.

Board members agreed to hold a special meeting on March 31, 2009 after the special meeting with Town Council members. Chairman Greco stated we will meet with Council members at 6:00 PM and will hold a special meeting at 7:30 PM regarding closing a school.

Chairman Greco stated Board members will have a brainstorming session to list as many areas as possible as potential areas of savings. Chairman Greco commented that at the March 10th BOE meeting, Board members asked the administration to come up with a list of potential areas of savings.

The following list was presented by the Administration after an ADCO brainstorming session on March 11th.

Zero Percent Increase Budget	3,949,725
Town's Anticipated Revenue Shortfall	2,336,950

Proposed Budget Reductions:

Smyth Bus Concessions	-105,000
Nurses' Concessions	-27,500
Savings on 16 Retirees at \$30K each	-480,000
Sign Language Specialist	-45,277
Health Insurance Savings	-800,000
Elementary Intramurals	-17,000
Administrator Attrition Cuts	-257,000

Elementary:

Technology Teacher	-45,000
Health Teacher	-45,000
PE Teacher	-45,000
Art Teacher	-45,000
TLC	-284,670
Library Clerks (3)	-50,000
Library Books	-57,750
Head Teacher Stipends	-25,400
Department Chairs	-30,000
Elementary Teachers (15)	-675,000

Middle:

Department Chairs	-62,697
Reading	-45,000
Team	-180,000
Librarian	-45,000
World Language	-45,000
Special Education	-45,000
Music	-45,000
.5 Art, .5 FACS	-45,000

High:

Department Chairs	-111,886
FHS:	
Music	-45,000
Tech Education	-45,000
Computer	-45,000
Auto	-45,000
Social Studies	-45,000
French	-45,000
Guidance	-45,000
Latin	-45,000
Art	-45,000
FACS	-45,000
Business	-45,000
EHS:	
Latin	-45,000
Spanish	-45,000
Social Studies	-45,000
Graphic Arts	-45,000
Special Education	-45,000
FACS	-45,000
Music	-45,000
Business (.8 EHS, .2 FHS)	-45,000
Art	-45,000
System-Wide:	
Summer School	-95,622
Noncertified:	
Partnership Program	-47,700
Mentor	-11,000
Attendance Officer to PT	-23,000
JFK Secretary	-20,000
FHS Secretary	-20,000
EHS Secretary	-20,000
2.0 FTE Secretaries, Elementary	-40,000
Secondary In-School Suspension	-59,000
Total	1,391,173

Chairman Greco stated the list represents a zero increase budget of \$3,949,725 million dollars and the Town's anticipated revenue shortfall of \$2,336,950 million dollars.

Dr. Gallacher stated that the central office administrators and building principals met and produced the list. None of these are recommendations, they are simply brainstorming ideas. Dr. Gallacher further stated magnet school participation is also an area of concern. Dr. Gallacher stated they tried to safeguard any cuts in math and reading due to NCLB requirements. Dr. Gallacher stated he was thinking about reorganizing an elementary school and not closing one. The building would be still used, but not as K-6 building. Dr. Gallacher reviewed the list of possible areas of savings.

Chairman Greco stated the list includes eliminating 50 teachers. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches asked about the reading position at JFK. Mr. Neville stated the teacher is retiring – class sizes would increase.

Dr. Gallacher stated we used information from Dr. Prowda's presentation and numbers are shrinking.

Chairman Greco asked for clarification regarding the 13 elementary teachers. Dr. Gallacher stated that would be for reorganizing an elementary school and closing the building as a K-6 building. The Board would need to direct the administration – would we relocate the students or would we redistrict the remaining 8 elementary schools. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated this was one of the DAC scenarios they presented. Dr. Gallacher stated that you would still need an administrator, a secretary, a nurse and a custodian in the building if we were to use it. We would also need money for transportation.

Ms. Hall asked about the \$45K for teachers, does that number not include benefits? Dr. Cooke stated the number used would be roughly what we would need to calculate for unemployment benefits for up to 26 weeks.

Mr. Grady asked about the Auto program at Fermi. Dr. Gallacher stated this would be to eliminate the program.

Mr. Stokes asked about the stimulus package and COBRA insurance. Is this calculated into the number? Dr. Cooke stated we would be reimbursed from the federal government for this, but Dr. Cooke will look into this.

Mr. Droney asked about the secondary school music cut. Dr. Gallacher stated at FHS, the vocal and computerized music elective would be eliminated. Mr. Neville stated it would be the general music class at JFK and class sizes would increase. Dr. Gallacher stated at EHS, Band was part of the music program. Dr. Gallacher stated we also discussed the possibility of only offering music at one high school. We are looking closely at the matrices and if numbers do not dictate a full teaching load it will be reduced.

Chairman Greco asked about the number of elementary technology teachers. Dr. Gallacher stated we would have only two technology teachers.

Chairman Greco asked about the library clerks. Dr. Gallacher stated you would have six library clerks.

Chairman Greco asked about eliminating a team at JFK and the cost was higher last year. Dr. Gallacher stated last year, we eliminated a team and an art teacher. Dr. Gallacher stated we were staying with the \$45,000 number with our calculations.

Chairman Greco asked if we are contractually responsible for paying teacher stipends for head teachers and department chairs. Dr. Cooke stated that it is only if the position exists that we would need to pay the stipends.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches asked if the mentoring position was funded by grants. Dr. Gallacher stated no.

Chairman Greco asked about the \$95K for the summer school program. Dr. Gallacher stated the summer school program would be eliminated except for extended day special education students. The K-1 summer school program was done by invitation only and the Board pays for this and transportation. If students need summer school classes as part of graduation requirements, they will need to go to a surrounding town for summer school. The Board has a policy where students that do not pass their CAPT or district performance test, the Board would pay for their summer school. The policy would need to be looked at and revised to reflect this.

Mr. Stokes stated by eliminating Latin, the program would be eliminated. What other programs would be eliminated. Dr. Gallacher stated the automotive program would also be eliminated. Dr. Gallacher stated that French numbers at the middle school are also a concern. Students are not

taking French and if we eliminate it at the middle school eventually it would end at the high schools.

Mrs. Lavelli-Hozempa asked about the TLC program. Dr. Gallacher stated the TLC program would be eliminated and this would free up a .5 reading teacher to work with students.

Chairman Greco asked if the mentoring program could exist without the partnership program. Mr. Torre stated it could.

Mr. Torre stated that all cuts would be devastating and with fewer classes to choose from, it will make scheduling classes more difficult.

Mr. Arnone asked what the class sizes would look like at the elementary schools. Dr. Gallacher stated primary grades would be around 20-23 or 24 and grades 5 & 6 would be around 25-27 students. Dr. Gallacher stated students would be sent back to their home schools and the remaining students would be divided up between schools.

Chairman Greco asked for Board member recommendations for possible areas of reduction. Chairman Greco also asked for administration to add in \$33K for purchasing the bus software program if not this year, next year.

Ms. Hall asked if software was still in our budget and if this would be something our IT Department could do. Dr. Gallacher stated this was placed into a pool and we are sharing funds with IT. Dr. Gallacher will check with Mr. Russell regarding this.

Mr. Johnson asked about reorganizing an elementary school. Would you still need an administrator? Chairman Greco stated if we put Transitional Learning Academy (TLA) there, we would not need an administrator. Dr. Gallacher stated if we moved the preschool program, TLA and the Head Start overflow there, we would be in good graces with the State.

Mr. Stokes asked if we spoke to the Public Safety Academy (PSA) about them using one of our buildings. We could release or lease the building to CREC. Dr. Gallacher stated we should include the Town with this and bonding could be an issue. The payback is 10 years for a \$1 million dollar project and over \$1 million the payback would be 20 years. If we still use the building for an educational program the State has been very understanding in the past. The Town would be responsible for selling the building.

Chairman Greco asked Dr. Cooke if the unions helped us out what would be the projected savings. Dr. Cooke stated it would be around \$150K.

Chairman Greco stated that Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches, Mayor Kaupin, Council Crowley and he met with the Enfield Teachers Association (ETA) and they are not going to make any changes to their existing contract for next year.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches asked about a student activity fee instead of pay for play fee. Mr. Bernstein stated that he surveyed 40 schools and heard back from 28 schools. Out of the 28 schools, 20 use a participation fee. They also use it for band, the debate teams etc. Fees must be paid prior to starting the activity. Mr. Bernstein also has information regarding gate receipts. The average is \$5-\$7 for adults and \$2-\$5 for students.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches asked where the gate receipts go. Mr. Bernstein stated they go into a general athletic account where we can use it for official fees or other expenses that may come up at the end of the season. Mr. Bernstein stated that he is available to meet with Board members again if they have any additional questions.

Dr. Gallacher stated we are currently charging students a student activity fee for parking and some classes charge for a materials fee.

Mr. Droney asked about ice rentals. Mr. Bernstein stated ice rental goes for around \$300-\$400 per hour. We pay \$315 per hour. Our hockey students only use one hour of ice time per day for each team.

Mr. Droney asked about coaches salaries. Mr. Bernstein stated the salaries are based on varsity and junior varsity level and the number of years they have been coaching. Mr. Droney asked if they are mostly teachers. Mr. Bernstein stated our coaches are about 60% teachers. Mr. Droney asked if we allow volunteers to coach. Mr. Bernstein stated that we allow volunteer coaches, but they must go through the same requirements as a paid coach.

Mr. Stokes asked if we can contact other superintendents and see what they are doing for cuts and maybe we can help them out. Chairman Greco stated he participates with CABA list serve to see what other Board Chairs are doing and has not seen anything that we haven't already done, but looking to see about the possibility of sharing can be looked into.

Mrs. Lavelli-Hozempa asked if there are any additional cell phones that we could possibly eliminate. Dr. Cooke stated that the price per line is around \$5 per month.

Mr. Stokes thanked Chairman Greco and Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches for talking to the bargaining units. What would be the total savings if the unions gave back concessions and a step? Chairman Greco stated \$1.6 million.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches asked about the phone voice over. Do we know when this will be done? Dr. Gallacher believes the cost is around \$500K and is not sure when they will do this.

Ms. Hall asked if the buses for non-public schools are separate or are they combined with our runs. Dr. Gallacher stated some of the runs are combined. Software might be able to find additional runs that could be combined.

Mr. Droney asked if we can look into selling ads on the athletic fields or in the gymnasiums to raise revenue. Ms. Hall stated the fields are the Towns and we might be able to do this in the gyms. Dr. Gallacher stated we do have Rockville Bank on our website and we have Coke vending machines. Mr. Stokes commented that we should check with the Town regarding this.

Mr. Arnone would like us to ask the Town Council for some of the money in the contingency fund and the demutualization fund. If the Board can't, Mr. Arnone would hope that the residents of Enfield would. Mr. Arnone would like us to say no to the proposed budget cuts.

Mr. Torre commented that maybe we should challenge the magnet school costs. Our students are suffering because of these cuts.

Ms. Hall stated that other schools are fighting magnet school costs. Dr. Gallacher agreed with Ms. Hall and further stated that other schools are fighting the Hartford host magnet schools, not the CREC magnet schools. Dr. Gallacher further mentioned that back in the 70's, President Nixon put a freeze on all salaries. The State of Connecticut is predicting a \$4 billion dollar deficit for next year. What will we do next year? Dr. Gallacher believes we will get something from the stimulus package and that we should hear something by the end of the month.

Mrs. Lavelli-Hozempa supports the efforts of the Town Council. They are running the entire Town and dipping into funds would not change anything. We would still be in the same situation. It is much more intelligent to think ahead and to plan for the future.

Mr. Grady agrees with Mrs. Lavelli-Hozempa and agrees with Mr. Arnone also. If the Town helps us out this year, we can plan for next year and do it right instead of rushing into closing a school. Board members do not have enough time to make an informed decision. We are being rushed.

Mrs. Lavelli-Hozempa stated that she has been saving this for years and we are not in the position with the current economic situation. The money tree is empty. We are faced with the reality and need to deal with it. We do not have a lot of options and we need to work with the money that we have.

Ms. Hall stated that the past several years we have had bare bone budgets. Other area superintendents are making cuts that we have already done. Dr. Gallacher stated he was discussing the option of sharing a curriculum director with another Town but we have since cut that position. Dr. Gallacher met with a group regarding providing counseling services to our students. This was cut out of our budget last year. Dr. Gallacher stated that our pupil services department is working on something that might save us some money for outplacements. Once these items become concrete, we will bring them before the Board. Dr. Gallacher stated that we are trying to provide our students with services. Our ETLA program will have 2 tuition paying students next year which will bring in some revenue. We are trying to provide lighthouse programs.

Chairman Greco recapped – Board members need to sign the MOU for self insurance funding with the Town, close a school, eliminate the TLC Reading Program, eliminate head teacher and department chair stipends, auto shop, Latin, summer school, partnership & mentoring program, 50 teachers and we are still short.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated Board members are not recommending these cuts. We are just seeing what possible cuts would look like. Chairman Greco stated we would need to eliminate 65 teachers.

Mr. Stokes stated that we need to have a certain amount of money in reserve or the bonds would be in jeopardy. Mr. Arnone stated we are planning to use the demutualization money to help fund the self-insurance funding. Mr. Stokes stated that if we did not use the demutualization money to top fund the self-insurance funding we would be at risk.

Mr. Stokes asked for our Town Attorney to look into the soil remediation money that is due to us. This would make a big difference with our budget. Dr. Gallacher stated he will contact Mr. Coppler about this. Mr. Arnone asked whose money this would be. Chairman Greco stated this was discussed during budget discussions last year and the Council discussed providing the Board with a portion of the remediation money.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated the Board had to pay the employees their share of the demutualization out of the Board's operating budget. This is another item we should ask for. Mr. Stokes stated we need clarity regarding this.

Ms. Hall asked for clarification for with the magnet schools we participate with. Dr. Gallacher and Kathy Zalucki reviewed the magnet school numbers and costs with Board members.

Chairman Greco asked about the numbers in our current budget for sending students next year. Dr. Gallacher stated we are making cuts to our budget and stated that we should make cuts to the magnet schools. Dr. Gallacher stated we are also being charged for preschool magnet schools. Dr. Gallacher would like to see legislation pass something that would make the parents pay for a portion of the magnet school tuition if the student drops out. We are obligated to pay for them if they drop out after October 1.

Listed below are the additional possible cuts made by Board members.

CABE Membership	-20,000
BOE Travel	-2,500
Athletic Budget	-211,000
Lunch Aides	-100,000
Nonunion Salary Freeze	-20,000
Union Salary Freezes	-150,000

Student Body Activities	-22,000
Assistant Principal (FHS, JFK)	-200,000
Faculty Managers	-14,000
Library Aides (2)	-50,000
Total	601,673

6. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Stokes moved, seconded by Mr. Grady to adjourn the Special Meeting of March 12, 2009. All ayes, motion passed unanimously.

Meeting stood adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Joyce P. Hall
Secretary
Enfield Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary