

**ENFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MAY 12, 2009**

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

1. **CALL TO ORDER** The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by Chairman Greco.
2. **INVOCATION OR MOMENT OF SILENCE** Greg Stokes
3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** Greg Stokes
4. **FIRE EVACUATION ANNOUNCEMENT** Chairman Greco announced the fire evacuation announcement.
5. **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

6. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Ms. Hall moved, seconded by Mr. Grady that the regular meeting minutes of April 28, 2009 be approved. There was one correction on page 6, line 2. Motion passed with the corrections by a **show of hands 8-0-1** with Mrs. Lavelli-Hozempa abstaining.

7. **BOARD GUESTS**

a. Educational Technology Plan Committee

Chairman Greco introduced members present from the Educational Technology Plan - Joanne Kneiss, Steve Sargalski and Kathy Bridges. The original plan was approved by Board members and submitted to CREC. The plan was returned and has a few changes. Chairman Greco further stated that the Educational Technology Plan will be addressed later tonight on the agenda for a final Board approval. Technology committee members are here to answer any questions from Board members.

Mr. Arnone asked about K-8 training for certified staff and what is being done to improve this? Mrs. Bridges stated the previous lack of available computers hindered staff development. This should now be improved with the additional staff computers and professional development. Mr. Sargalski further stated CEU training will also be provided for certified staff members.

Mr. Arnone asked if they had a breakdown of the areas staff members were having difficulties with. Mrs. Bridges stated it was mostly the software applications. Now staff members can take the laptops home with them and get better acclimated.

Ms. Hall stated the plan was submitted to CREC and asked about their recommendations? Mrs. Kneiss stated the plan itself was fine and we let them know the teachers were going to receive their computers and that we completed a survey. The results of the survey would be

used as a building block. Our intent is to work on the plan more aggressively. Teachers will have technology at their fingertips and we can now broaden our scope as to who can be on the committee.

Mr. Arnone thanked committee members for the comprehensive report and the great job they are doing.

Chairman Greco and Board members thanked the members of the Technology Committee for their continued hard work.

b. Paul Russell

Chairman Greco introduced our Chief Technology Officer, Paul Russell. Mr. Russell reviewed technology accomplishments from July 2008 up to June 2009.

Mr. Russell stated we have accomplished a lot of technology upgrades in the Town of Enfield over the past year. Our infrastructure is strong. In July, we will replace our connection points to increase speeds. We are looking into a new financial software system that will benefit both the Town and School. We are currently testing an on-line purchase order system. We will start to replace our current phone system in the fall. We also plan to open our teacher access center for parents with ESchool Plus next year in phase II. We will unify our IT Help Desk into one system and make it more user friendly. We will look into replacing the nutrition software system. The high school computer labs will also be replaced this summer.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches asked about the parent access with ESchool. Mr. Russell stated the home access center will allow teachers to put in comments that explain the grades for parents to view on-line.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches asked about automating lunch payments at the elementary schools. Mr. Russell stated this might be done at a later phase.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches asked about the bus routing software. Mr. Russell stated we recently saw a demonstration that works with our current GIS software system. This will be presented at the next ITPC meeting.

Ms. Hall asked if the bus software system needs to go out to bid. Mr. Russell stated this will work with our current GIS software system. This is the only system that will work with our current software. Ms. Hall stated the demonstration was quite impressive.

Ms. Hall asked if teachers can add their own software to the laptops. Mr. Russell stated they are not allowed to add anything to the laptop. The laptops are the property of the Enfield Public School System. If teachers have something they would like to use, Technology will look at it and review to see if this is something that can be beneficial for other users.

Ms. Hall stated we have received some criticism for leasing instead purchasing the laptops. Is the leasing annual cost of \$450K? Mr. Russell stated that is the total cost at the end of our three year lease. The first two years are already funded. We will be looking for funding for year three.

Ms. Hall asked about the increase in the school budget for IT. Mr. Russell stated the increase is a 50/50 split between the Town and the School. Dr. Gallacher further stated that eventually, the School and the Town will both have service level agreements (SLA) with the Technology Department.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches further stated this was something we were not aware of and when we received the budget, the increase came as a shock. Dr. Gallacher stated a lot of the stimulus money is being directed towards technology. Hopefully, we can apply for some of these funds. Mr. Russell stated the emergency notification system can also be tied into this.

Ms. Hall stated the financial system went out to bid. How many bids did we receive? Mr. Russell stated we received 12 bids. We are looking for a unified system to meet all of our needs. Munis met those needs, but the price is extremely high. Dr. Gallacher stated that our current vendor Sungard did not bid. Mr. Russell stated that is correct, our current financial software vendor did not submit a bid.

Mr. Drony asked about the emergency notification system and if it is strictly for in-house use or can parents be notified with it? Mr. Russell stated the system is for in-house use only. We are looking at other systems for a reverse 911 system.

Mrs. Lavelli-Hozempa thanked Mr. Russell and stated the P.O. system will be on-line. Mr. Russell stated that is correct. Mrs. Lavelli-Hozempa stated this was recommended by the Audit Committee for transparency purposes. Can the financial software in the future be able to post check registers for both the Town and the School? Mr. Russell stated that is one of our key requisites. Mrs. Lavelli-Hozempa stated kudos to the Audit Committee. Mr. Russell stated this is what our constituents wanted to see with our financial software system. Mrs. Lavelli-Hozempa further stated this is important for transparency so taxpayers can see exactly how their money is being spent.

Mr. Johnson thanked Mr. Russell for coming to tonight's Board meeting. Will the software distribution from the central server include security and security updates? Mr. Russell stated yes. Mr. Johnson asked about the laptop users? Mr. Russell stated if they don't have the updates, they will not be able to log into the system. Someone from Technology would need to make the changes.

Mr. Grady asked if we have run into any problems with the rollout. Mr. Russell stated we did have a problem where 80 users were trying to access the system in the same area. We have added some additional access points.

Mr. Grady asked if technology can monitor the use of a computer and can it be tracked. Mr. Russell stated we can tell how many times the user has logged into the system.

Chairman Greco stated the amount of progress we have seen in the last 12 months is phenomenal. We are moving into the 21st century.

Chairman Greco asked if we received any additional projectors. Mr. Russell stated we brought in an additional 125 projectors for the entire schools system. Chairman Greco asked if they would be on carts. Mr. Russell stated 5 will be on carts and 2 will be portable at each elementary school and the 12 will be on carts and 3 portable at the each secondary school.

Chairman Greco and Board members thanked Mr. Russell.

8. CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATIONS - None

9. AUDIENCES

Bob Butler, Grandview Drive – Mr. Butler stated he is looking for full funding for 10 seats at MLC for next year. Mr. Butler's son was accepted and will participate in a shadowing program. His son is extremely excited for this opportunity. It would be short-sided to not fully fund the 10 seats for these students. The students have gone through the lottery process and it would

be heartbreaking if they were not given this opportunity. Mr. Butler would like each Board member to support funding for MLC. Mr. Butler thanked Board members.

Gina Reale, North Maple Street – Mrs. Reale stated her daughter was also accepted to MLC. Mrs. Reale stated her daughter went to the orientation at MLC last week. The principal at MLC stated that Enfield is the only district that has not set its budget. Mrs. Reale is hoping for State funding. Mrs. Reale stated her son goes to MLC and participates on the Fermi track team. We see a lot of buses that are not full. If we came up with a contract for the high school students that if they were willing to forgo the bus, we would decrease the parking fee. Students could ride the bus again if they gave the school a 2 week notice. Mrs. Reale thanked Board members for their support and stated that all children learn at different levels and deserve to go to the school of their choice.

Mary O’Connel, Brainard Road – Mrs. O’Connel stated she does not envy Board members when it comes to making decisions concerning the budget. Mrs. O’Connel stated the proposed pay-to-play fee for instrumental music will prohibit many students from playing an instrument. Students are taking music as part of the curriculum at the high school level. If the student is playing a particular instrument to help out the band, they should not have to pay a fee. We will loose a lot of participation if these fees are imposed and asked Board members to reconsider this.

Bob Tkacz, Bernadino Avenue – Mr. Tkacz stated that Enfield has too many school buses. Since we are digitizing the school system, we can do away with copier machines and paper since we are going to a paperless society. Mr. Tkacz stated we started off with 3 high schools and graduations were done differently. Mr. Tkacz read an article from 1900. The commencement ceremony in 1900 was held at the First Presbyterian Church. Mr. Tkacz stated in the past, graduation ceremonies were held at churches and should continue to be held at churches. Mr. Tkacz thanked Board members.

Sara Levinthal-O’Farrell, David Street – Mrs. Levinthal-O’Farrell stated you are playing a game with our children’s education. You are affecting our children and our town. Mrs. Levinthal-O’Farrell asked where is the revised school budget reduction plan and why isn’t it being presented tonight? Mrs. Levinthal-O’Farrell challenges Dr. Gallacher to present his plan. Changes need to be made. Transparency is needed. Quality Education is needed and our children have to matter. Mrs. Levinthal-O’Farrell thanked Board members.

Sue Braun, Light Street – Mrs. Braun stated that she heard we will receive the \$1.7 million and the Town has spent it. Mrs. Braun stated science lab updates, new textbooks and Fermi compliance updates are needed. The DAC Committee needs time to review before any changes or updates are made. Mrs. Braun was also disappointed to hear that the superintendent’s recommendations would not be heard tonight. Mrs. Braun thanked Board members.

10. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Droney stated that Fermi will have a salutatorian for the class of 2009. Mr. Droney congratulated Mr. Jeffery Pruden as the 2009 Fermi salutatorian. Mr. Droney congratulated EHS as a cool school. It was nice to see our students get some recognition.

Mr. Stokes attended the Eli Whitney Poetry night. The students put their poems in a book. They did a great job. Mr. Stokes appreciated Mr. Tkacz’s article and would like to get a copy of it. Thank you for attending tonight’s meeting.

Mrs. Lavelli-Hozempa stated that she is disappointed by the way the Board has worked during this term. We ask our citizens to volunteer and work on committees and made recommendations to close a school based on the decline in population. We had the

opportunity to close a school and the money could have been redirected to benefit the needs of the students. Mrs. Lavelli-Hozempa is disappointed that Board leadership did not make a decision to close a school. Mrs. Lavelli-Hozempa was supporting closing Alcorn School because it is the worst performing school in our district. We are doing a disservice to the students by not allowing them to attend one of the better performing schools in our district. Mrs. Lavelli-Hozempa is pleased that many of the Audit Committee recommendations have been taken. Mrs. Lavelli-Hozempa appreciates everyone coming and your comments regarding transparency. The superintendent's budget recommendation was made in public that is why some audience members spoke about closing a school and pay-for-play fees. When the Town Council sets our allocation on May 13th, Board members can start their deliberations. Mrs. Lavelli-Hozempa supports MLC.

Mr. Johnson stated EHS will have a string concert on May 16th at 2:00 PM. Music in our Town is important as is all the arts. We need to support all of our students. Mr. Johnson agrees with Mrs. O'Connell and does not want to charge a fee for a class. Mr. Johnson would like to keep the TLC program. Mr. Johnson is here for the students first, last and always. The students are what the school system is about. We need to be supportive in your child's education decisions. Mr. Johnson thanked everyone for coming.

Mr. Arnone stated Alcorn School is being exceptionally served and serves our community well. The problem with Alcorn is poverty. Let's have some humanity and not blame people. Mr. Arnone mentioned an article in the Journal Inquirer regarding the field remediation money for \$1.7 million that will go into capital improvements and not into our operating budget. We are being denied \$4 million dollars. Our children are going to lose foreign languages and pay-for-play. Everything is on the table. Mr. Arnone further stated that this is a shame.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated Hazardville Memorial was named as one of the Governor's Summer Reading Challenge winners. Kudos to everyone at Memorial. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated MLC used to have respect for our process and did not send out acceptance letters until after we had adopted our budget. This is a change in their process. We can not set the number of seats until we know what our budget allocations are. The DAC did not make any recommendations. They presented findings for the Board to make a decision. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches asked Dr. Gallacher to explain the self-insurance funding to her. She thought if Anthem Blue/Cross came in at zero, we would defer the self-insurance funding until 2010-11 and not go forward for July 1. Mr. Coppler's cut off date was April 15th not May 15th. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches thanked everyone for coming tonight.

Mr. Grady stated he attended a talent show at Eli Whitney and it was a great time. The kids were amazing. Kudos to Mrs. Ketchale, Mrs. Tarbox and Ms. Brunelle for directing the show. They will have also have a fund raiser event at McDonald's May 13th from 4-7 PM. Thank you for coming.

Ms. Hall thanked everyone for the e-mails she received during the budget season. Ms. Hall appreciates receiving each one. Ms. Hall received e-mails regarding fees for music participation and agrees that we should not ask a student to pay a fee for an instrument they were asked to play. Ms. Hall appreciates the products of all the CREC magnet schools with specialized focus areas where we pay the tuition. Students should be allowed to go to the schools of their choice but it is equally important that Enfield schools become equally exciting to attend. Our schools should be as good as any magnet school. Funding for both is a problem. We need to fund Enfield.

Chairman Greco addressed Mrs. Levinthal-O'Farrell and the agenda. The agenda is set the Wednesday before the Board meeting. This was done a week before the Council decided to meet on May 13th to possibly adopt a budget and give us our allocations. There were a lot of unknowns last week and Chairman Greco did not want Dr. Gallacher to go back thru the tiers

and redo his budget until we knew exactly how much we will be allocated. There was also a discussion regarding the \$1.7 million field remediation money and creating CIP accounts. The Town Council and Town Manager are against giving out any one time revenues. By putting it into specific CIP accounts, it will allow us to do beneficial specific projects. Chairman Greco did not want Dr. Gallacher and the Administrators to go thru the budget items until we knew the exact budget allocation.

11. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- a. H1N1 Flu Update – as presented
- b. Family Resource Grant Extension Notification – as presented
- c. Memorial Day – as presented
- d. Stimulus Applications – as presented
- e. Enfield Forum for the Future – as presented
- f. ITPC Update – as presented
- g. Grants Update – as presented

Dr. Gallacher stated he spoke to Mr. Coppler this afternoon regarding the self-insurance funding. Dr. Gallacher believes when the Board adopted this, the MOU had one language and when it got to the Council there were some revisions. Everyone was copied on the revisions with both Anthem Blue/Cross and Connecticare as zeros. Dr. Gallacher can get this information together for Board members to revisit this item. Dr. Gallacher believes if they go with self-insurance funding, it will be the full \$800K. Connecticare locked in at a 2.5% increase of \$33K.

Ms. Hall stated we passed the motion if Anthem got to a zero increase and the Town Council followed that motion. Dr. Gallacher will look into this and get the actual MOU for Board members to look at.

Ms. Hall asked about Mr. Torre. Dr. Gallacher stated Mr. Torre was on vacation and will be back to work on Wednesday and the two high school representatives are working saving money for college.

12. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS - None

13. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS AND PAYROLL - None

14. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. New Policy #5141.221 Communicable Disease and Infestation – Second Reading

Mr. Johnson moved, seconded by Ms. Hall that the Enfield Board of Education approves new policy #5141.221 Communicable Disease and Infestation as a second reading.

A vote by **roll call 9-0-0** passed unanimously.

b. Proposed New Policy #1240.1 Volunteers in Schools – Second Reading

Mr. Johnson moved, seconded by Mr. Droney that the Enfield Board of Education approves new policy #1240.1 Volunteers in Schools as a second reading.

Discussion:

Mr. Johnson stated this proposed new policy was previously presented as a first reading back

in February and changes were made.

Chairman Greco stated the policy was being referred back to the policy committee for further consideration. Is this policy truly a second reading or should it be a first reading?

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated the policy was discussed at the policy meeting. Chairman Greco questioned if this should be considered as a first reading.

Mr. Stokes stated you have a first and second reading so the public can comment on the item. The public needs to be able to view the changes.

Mr. Johnson moved to amended his original motion, seconded by Mr. Dronney that the Enfield Board of Education approves new policy #1240.1 Volunteers in Schools as a first reading.

Discussion:

Ms. Hall questioned the wording on line 15 – *and intermittently updated*. Board members agreed to drop the words on line 15 – *and intermittently updated*.

A vote by **roll call 9-0-0** passed unanimously.

15. NEW BUSINESS

a. Approve Three Year Educational Technology Plan

Ms. Hall moved, seconded by Mr. Grady moved that the Enfield Board of Education approve the Three Year Educational Technology Plan as presented.

A vote by **roll call 9-0-0** passed unanimously.

b. Approve 2010 Adult Education PIP Grant

Ms. Hall moved, seconded by Mr. Dronney approve the 2010 Adult Education PIP as presented.

A vote by **roll call 9-0-0** passed unanimously.

Chairman Greco stated that Dr. Gallacher has an item for Board consideration. Dr. Gallacher stated we received a call from Suffield Vo-Ag Interim Director regarding setting a number of seats for 2009-10. They have 13 students interested in attending. Dr. Gallacher recalls Board members wanting to set a certain number similar to MLC for 10 seats. Dr. Gallacher stated Board members can discuss this now if they would like.

Ms. Hall stated there has been a decline in the number of students that attend Suffield Vo-Ag. Dr. Gallacher stated that is correct. We have also seen numbers fluctuate at MLC. It depends on the year.

Chairman Greco stated we can wait until we get our budget allocation, or we can set 10 like we have done in the past. Ms. Hall stated we would need to add the item to the agenda. Dr. Gallacher stated this could be done because this is a regular meeting and you would need a 2/3 vote in order to do this.

Mr. Arnone asked about the tuition cost. Dr. Gallacher stated the price of the tuition at Suffield Vo-Ag is \$7,992 plus transportation costs and any special education costs. Mr. Arnone stated Bloomfield Vo-Ag also offers a program at a lesser cost. Dr. Gallacher stated the price for Vo-Ag tuitions is set by the State. Mr. Arnone stated it is still a high price to fund.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches is uncomfortable doing this since we had some MLC parents here tonight without addressing the number seats for them also. This should be done at a special meeting after the Town Council sets our budget and we know our exact budget allocations.

Board members agreed to not add this to the agenda tonight.

16. EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

17. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Stokes moved, seconded by Mr. Johnson to adjourn the Regular Meeting of May 12, 2009. All ayes, motion passed unanimously.

Meeting stood adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Joyce P. Hall
Secretary
Enfield Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary