

**ENFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION  
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
JUNE 7, 2010**

The Enfield Board of Education held a Special Board meeting on Monday, June 7, 2010 in the multi-purpose room at Henry Barnard Elementary School located at 27 Shaker Road, Enfield, CT.

1.     **CALL TO ORDER**             The Special Meeting was called to order by Greg Stokes at 7:30 PM.

2.     **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**         Greg Stokes

3.     **FIRE EVACUATION ANNOUNCEMENT**     Greg Stokes

4.     **ROLL CALL**

**Present:**             Judy Apruzzese-Desroches; Vincent Grady; Joyce Hall (arrived at 7:20 PM); Stacy Thurston; Peter Jonaitis; Tom Sirard; Donna Szewczak; Chuck Johnson and Greg Stokes

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

5.     **WORK SESSION FOR ARRIVING AT THE ADOPTED BUDGET FOR FY10-11**

Dr. Gallacher distributed handouts from the last meeting and handouts regarding lowering class sizes and support staff. We are taking from Peter to pay Paul on the white sheets. Administrators looked at the out-of-district students and tried to stay within 15-20 range in grades K-2. We moved some of the students around to accommodate this. We did not move all of the out-of-district students. If we moved all of them, it would increase class numbers elsewhere. Dr. Gallacher stated we have contacted CREC and the Hartford Host Regional Office and are still waiting for magnet numbers. The numbers are spread out. They are still recruiting students.

Mr. Sirard asked about the drop in CREC magnet numbers and if they came back to us? Dr. Gallacher stated at this time, we are not sure. We need to receive the names. It is common for students that move into our district that were attending either a CREC or Hartford Host magnet to continue with that magnet school.

Dr. Gallacher reviewed the elementary support staff with Board members. We would recommend not moving the students around until we reconfigure in 2011. The administration would like Board direction regarding moving some of the students to reduce class sizes or keep the class sizes as they are for a year.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches asked how can we move only some of the out-of-district students. This is unconscionable. Dr. Gallacher stated we looked at the four classes that had 30+ students and reduced the number of students to under 30 by moving the out-of-district students back to their home schools. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated we do not know if they have siblings or not at the schools they are attending. Dr. Gallacher further stated out-of-district parents should have received their yearly letter stating we have the right to send them back to their home schools. Parents agreed to this condition.

Mrs. Szewczak stated we agreed to wait one year. There will be larger class sizes for one year. To move some of the students would be counterproductive. We need to live with what we have.

Chairman Stokes stated Board members dealt with this last year with some of the students at Whitney. This would be a disservice to move the students two times. Parents understand there may be some large classes until we reconfigure.

Mr. Jonaitis does not agree with a class of 34 when we have another class of 12 students. How can the Board justify this? Mr. Jonaitis agrees about the letters going home to the out-of-district students. We need to draw a line in the sand for no more than 29 students in a class.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches asked if there are out-of-district students in the classes of 30+ students. Mrs. Berger stated yes there are two out-of-district students in her grade 6 class. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated we should move only those two students. Mr. Jonaitis agreed. Dr. Gallacher stated we don't know if these students have been at Alcorn from grade 1 or not.

Chairman Stokes is concerned if we move students this year and next year they will move again. Is there anywhere else in the budget that we could do without that we haven't looked at? Dr. Gallacher does not believe there are other areas for reductions. We are robbing Peter to pay Paul.

Mr. Jonaitis asked if we could get a para to help with some of the large classes. Dr. Gallacher stated there are some paras, but some will move with the students. Dr. Gallacher would prefer to wait and see what happens with our magnet numbers. We have seen movement in the past.

Mr. Jonaitis remembers moving from one school to another the day before school started. He had a large class size and it was not easy to work with that many students.

Chairman Stokes stated Board members need to decide on moving students around to accommodate smaller class sizes or wait and see what happens with our magnet numbers.

Mr. Grady asked about the part time secretary positions. Is it possible to eliminate a lunch aide and use that money to make up the difference at a reduced number of hours? Mrs. Szewczak suggested having them share the position of the lunch aide.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated some of the elementary principals are shaking their heads no.

Mr. Jonaitis stated a lot can happen in the lunch room. Mr. Grady stated there are issues that can happen in the office also.

Mr. Johnson stated there is a salary differential. Some work for 2 hours and some half a day. Mr. Grady stated we could make the difference up by reducing the number of hours the part time secretary works. The office at times is a mad house.

Chairman Stokes stated both positions have value. He would defer this to the elementary school principals.

Ms. Hall would like to hear from the principals regarding reducing a lunch aide in the elementary schools. Mrs. Sampl stated she would be concerned for safety in the lunch room and in the office.

Mr. Sirard stated in order for this to work, the part time secretary would need to work an hour and a half for a budget wash.

Dr. Gallacher asked Mrs. Chemerka to further explain the budget adjustments made to the 2010-11 Summary of Proposed Budget Adjustments. One is regarding health insurance and in athletics. Dr. Gallacher distributed goldenrod copies with the changes.

Mrs. Chemerka stated we looked at the health insurance numbers for year-end totals and adjusted it accordingly. We received more revenue on the athletic pay-to-play. We also added a technology line item reduction.

Dr. Gallacher stated the proposed budget is tied to the excess costs.

Chairman Stokes stated he would like to adopt the Budget on Tuesday. He asked Board members to let Dr. Gallacher know if you have any questions. We also need to decide if we will adjust the elementary large class sizes or keep them as is.

Ms. Hall asked what will happen in September with our numbers, we are projecting them. How close will we be? Dr. Gallacher stated in some cases we are right on target and some we will need to make adjustments. There could be movement during the summer. Dr. Gallacher would like the Board to set the budget tonight if Board members are ready. We are running out of time. The budget before us equates to zero percent increase. Dr. Gallacher further stated we would never hire any staff positions without notifying the Board. If we needed additional staff, we would request that from the Board. If we had to move staff due to lower kindergarten numbers we might have a full time position that could be used in another grade to help with large class size numbers.

Ms. Hall stated our classes will balance down with our magnet numbers and if a significant change is needed, we could wait until September.

Dr. Gallacher stated if we knew our grade structure it would allow us to focus on our specialist schedules for planning and prep times.

Ms. Hall stated when we started the elementary computer program we were planning to add a teacher each year. Now we are going down to two. Ms. Hall would like us not to make any class size changes. Dr. Gallacher stated that would be the original proposal.

Mr. Sirard does not understand the whole CAFE membership. Dr. Gallacher stated CAFE is our professional organization for the Board. You will get support from them for policies. They have a staff attorney that we could get support from. They will also represent us at the legislation and federal levels. Dr. Gallacher believes it is money that is worth spending. Dr. Gallacher further stated he put this back in the budget along with head teachers at the elementary level. This is Dr. Gallacher's recommendation and merited serious consideration from the Board.

Ms. Hall is supportive of maintaining a membership with CAFE. We gain valuable information from other towns. Their workshops provided needed information. Ms. Hall received information on the legislative review because of her connections with CREC. Mr. Johnson found this helpful with policy information.

Mrs. Szewczak stated we are trying to find a way to support Mr. Grady's request for the part time secretaries. Ms. Hall believes it is important to belong to CAFE.

Mr. Jonaitis stated Dr. Gallacher does not ask for much and he would be willing to support his request.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated she has attended CAFE workshops in the past and has found that the new Board member workshops were extremely helpful. She would encourage Board members to attend them. She found the sample policies useful and talking with other Board members from other towns helpful. They are our spokesperson at the legislative level. They have professional staff that can lobby for us.

Mr. Johnson stated CAFE is important and we did receive valuable information from them. Mr. Johnson stated that \$21K is important to help keep programs in our budget. Mr. Johnson does not want to take away from the students.

Ms. Hall stated CAFE is looking for proposals for resolutions to let our legislators know what to lobby for. This would be a time to let CAFE know about Mr. Sirard's suggestions for unfunded mandates. If we are not members, they will not listen to us unless we are a member.

Mr. Grady also supports CAFE. We can save the money in other areas.

Mrs. Thurston supports the new member workshop and would attend it.

Chairman Stokes asked if we are prepared to adopt the budget tonight. Should we include anything in the motion? Dr. Gallacher stated we need to include the grand total of \$52,711,007.00 in the motion.

Mr. Jonaitis asked how many teachers will be laid off by this proposed budget. Dr. Gallacher stated he believed it would be 27 with 25 non-tenured and 2 tenured positions. Dr. Gallacher asked Mr. Drezek if the assistant principal was included in this number.

Mr. Drezek stated 26 teacher positions, 1 assistant principal would equal 27 positions. Dr. Gallacher further stated 24 will be non-tenured teaching positions, 1 assistant principal position and 2 tenured teaching positions. We did not fill 8 of the retiring teacher positions.

Ms. Hall asked if there are any non-certified positions. Dr. Gallacher stated there are 20 positions and the 9 secretarial positions are part time positions. This would also include lunch aide positions.

Chairman Stokes asked Board members which projected enrollment sheet they preferred. Board members agreed to use the tan original projected elementary enrollment without reducing class sizes.

Chairman Stokes asked Board members for a consensus regarding CAFE. Board members agreed to keep this in the budget. Chairman Stokes stated he will attend the workshops with Mrs. Thurston.

#### **6. ACTION, IF ANY, ON REQUESTING FY09-10 EXCESS COSTS FUNDS**

Mr. Sirard moved, seconded by Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches that the Enfield Board of Education request \$250,000.00 from Excess Cost Funding to support the Board of Education's 2009-10 Special Education deficit.

#### **Discussion:**

Mrs. Chemerka explained to Board members that we pay for 100% of the Special Education bills. After we exceed a certain amount or percentage, the State will give us money back to offset funds spent for Special Education. The State will send the money to the Town and we need to request the funds we are short from them.

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

**7. ACTION, IF ANY, TO APPROVE THE BOARD'S FY10-11 ADOPTED BUDGET**

Ms. Hall moved, seconded by Mrs. Szewczak that the Enfield Board of Education approves the Board's FY2010-11 budget of \$62,711,007.00 as presented.

**Discussion:**

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated she does not like anything about this budget. She would have preferred receiving a 1.24 % increase. It is appalling what we will be doing to education in Enfield. She doesn't like it at all.

Mr. Grady applauds the administration for the job they have done getting to a zero budget. Mr. Grady can not support this budget. We could have done better for students and education in this town.

Mr. Jonaitis also thanked the administration and staff for their hard work. He also does not like the budget but he will support it because we do not have a choice.

Mr. Sirard stated the Board is not doing this. It is the current economic situation we are in and the unfunded mandates that are doing this to us. We are dealing with the circumstances at hand.

Chairman Stokes thanked the administrative staff and the principals for all the work they have done. Chairman Stokes complimented everyone involved with this and helping us to move forward. We have accomplished a lot together. It is greatly appreciated. We thank everyone.

Chairman Stokes stated those employees that will be laid off because of this budget, none of the Board members want to see this. We all thank you for your service to our students, the school system and the community. It is unfortunate due to the economic situation we are in. We thank you all for your service.

A **vote by roll call, 7-2-0**, passed with Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches and Mr. Grady in dissent.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Grady moved, seconded by Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches to adjourn the Special Meeting of June 7, 2010. All ayes, motion passed unanimously.

Meeting stood adjourned at 8:22 PM.

Joyce P. Hall  
Secretary  
Enfield Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary