

**ENFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 25, 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 August 25, 2009.

1. **CALL TO ORDER** The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by Chairman Greco.
2. **INVOCATION OR MOMENT OF SILENCE** Patrick Droney
3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** Patrick Droney
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, Charles Johnson and Andre Greco

MEMBERS ABSENT Susan Lavelli-Hozempa

ALSO PRESENT Dr. John Gallacher, Superintendent of Schools and Anthony Torre, Assistant Superintendent of Schools

6. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Ms. Hall moved, seconded by Mr. Stokes that the regular meeting minutes of June 23, 2009 be approved. Motion passed with a **show of hands 6-0-2** with Mr. Greco and Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches abstaining.

Mr. Stokes moved, seconded by Mr. Johnson that the special meeting minutes of July 28, 2009 be approved. Motion passed with a **show of hands 5-0-3** with Ms. Hall, Mr. Grady and Mr. Droney abstaining.

7. **BOARD GUESTS** - None

8. **CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATIONS**

- a. August 25, 2009 Elementary Enrollment Figures.

Dr. Gallacher introduced Carol Parmelee-Blancato as the Enfield Public Schools Interim Human Resources Director to Board members. Dr. Gallacher stated that she has been extremely busy since her arrival and is looking forward to working with the Board. We welcome her to Enfield.

9. **AUDIENCES**

Stacy Huot, Belle Avenue – Mrs. Huot challenged Board members to try to find a way to bring graduations back in Enfield. We are spending over \$16K for graduations out-of-our Town. The money we are spending should be spent in Enfield, in our community. Please take a hard look at the money we are spending. The money we are spending could go back into some of our programs like sports. Mrs. Huot thanked Board members for listening to her.

Brian McKeown, Hemlock Drive – Mr. McKeown expressed his concerns regarding keeping the girl's varsity swimming program. Participation numbers for the girl's swimming is similar to volleyball and track numbers. Last year, Fermi's football numbers were down. This year they have around 60 students. Varsity sports enrollment numbers go up and down and can vary year from year. Competitiveness is an important part of sports. If the girls swim with the boys, they will not be able to compete or be competitive. All these extra curricular activities are important when filling out college applications. Mr. McKeown stated that the parent's are willing to do additional fundraising in order to keep the girl's program alive. Mr. McKeown thanked Board members for their support.

Sarah Gillette, Stanley Drive – Ms. Gillette stated she will be a senior at Fermi and is here to save the swim team. Swimming on a team and being part of a team teaches them life skills. This team means a lot to us academically and athletically. We are passionate about our commitment to swimming. Being part of a team is an extra curricular activity that can help students when filling out college applications. This also helps students when they apply for scholarships. Ms. Gillette stated that they are well rounded students and are attached to our team just like any other team and urged Board members to support the girl's varsity swim program. Ms. Gillette thanked Board members.

10. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Arnone addressed Mrs. Huot and stated the costs associated with holding graduations in town were more expensive than holding them at the First Cathedral. This needs to be brought out to the public again. It has been a tough budget year. Mr. McKeown made some great points regarding team sizes. Mr. Arnone supports all sports but we need to find the money somewhere else. Sports have been an important part in our schools.

Mr. Grady wished everyone a safe and productive school year for our students and staff members. Mr. Grady thanked everyone for coming.

Ms. Hall stated that she saw the Commissioner's discussion regarding the beginning of school. This year in addition to early childhood education and high school reform, there will be a new initiative called CALI (Connecticut Accountability for Learning Initiative). We will all need to be aware of this as well as RTI, data driven decision making, priority standards and common formative assessments. High school reform will require all students to take algebra. The Federal government has introduced race to the top. Our commissioner is planning to apply for funding for this. Ms. Hall asked if any Enfield students attended the Summer Institute held at the Indian Museum in Ledyard. Dr. Gallacher does not believe any Enfield students attended. The State is also going to become a member with FES (Foundation for Excellent School). The name has been changed to CFES (College for Every Student). There is also a US Decathlon with the subject focus on the French Revolution. Ms. Hall found all of these items extremely interesting and would like to start the school year on a positive note.

Mr. Droney thanked everyone for speaking and addressed Mrs. Huot by stating it is more expensive to hold the graduations in town than out-of-town but looking at alternatives is a good idea that maybe the new Board can look into. Mr. Droney thanked Mr. McKeown for the information regarding swimming and other varsity sports with similar participation numbers. Mr. Droney thanked Ms. Gillette for speaking and shares her concerns with applying for colleges. Anything students can put on their applications will help them.

Mr. Droney stated that Fermi held their freshman orientation and 262/305 attended and 67 upper classman were student guides. Everything went very well. Herff Jones Inc. provided pizza and T-shirts for all the students at the orientation. The turnout was excellent and extended congratulations to Fermi staff and students for a job well done.

Mr. Droney stated that the Fermi Instrumental Music will hold a golf fundraiser at St. Ann's Golf Course, in Feeding Hills, MA on October 4th. Contact Mike Cotnoir for additional information.

Mr. Stokes welcomed all students back to school and stated that he attended the John F. Kennedy open house. It was exciting to see the students and parents and complimented the staff. Mr. Stokes agrees with Ms. Hall and hopes to start off the school year on a good note.

Mr. Johnson stated that the State of Connecticut still does not have a budget in place. He understands the concerns with cuts that were made. Mr. Johnson appreciates everyone speaking and would like to keep the swim team. But understands how difficult this is and asked how we can afford to do this. Mr. Johnson stated it was cheaper to hold the graduations at the Cathedral and mentioned that it would not be a bad idea to look into this. In Enfield, we do not have a large enough venue to hold graduations and you also have to contend with the possibility of rain if graduations are held outdoors.

Chairman Greco hoped that everyone had a great summer and is looking forward to the start of a new school year.

11. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- a. Start of School – as presented
- b. H1N1 – as presented
- c. Subs Wanted – as presented
- d. Budget Status – as presented
- e. Grants Update – as presented
- f. Magnet School Update – as presented
- g. Personnel Report – as presented

Chairman Greco asked Dr. Gallacher to update the Board regarding the 2008-09 Budget meeting. Dr. Gallacher stated we still need to settle the 2008-09 Budget. We are trying to settle the dollar amount for the IT and Excess Cost funds. Dr. Gallacher stated that both he and Ms. Chemerka will sit down and discuss this with Matt Coppler and Lynn Nenni from the Town and will bring the solution back to the Board prior to October 1.

Ms. Hall agrees with Ms. Chemerka regarding being able to make line item transfers throughout the year.

Dr. Gallacher reminded Board members about the maintenance of effort with ARRA funds.

Chairman Greco asked for clarification regarding the staffing number offsets. Ms. Chemerka stated we are having difficulties with some Title I funds and exactly how much we will spend for magnet schools, technology, transportation and textbooks. IDEA has stipulated how we can use the funding exactly. Ms. Chemerka stated we have shuffled items around in order to accomplish this.

Ms. Hall stated that she is concerned with Barnard's Title I allocation of funding. If we have to single out students because of certain categories it would amount to segregation which is wrong.

Dr. Gallacher stated we have explained this to them and this only applies to first year Title I schools that are below 40%. This is a Federal program.

12. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Johnson reported that the Policy Committee met earlier tonight and we will address several policies later on the agenda tonight.

13. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS AND PAYROLL - None

14. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a & b. Policy Revisions #6142.1 Driver Education – Senior High and #6155 Live Animals in the Classroom – Second Reading

Mr. Johnson moved, seconded by Ms. Hall that the Enfield Board of Education approves revisions to policies #6142.1 Driver Education – Senior High & #6155 Live Animals in the Classroom, as a second and final reading.

A vote by **roll call 7-0-0** passed unanimously. Mr. Grady was not present during the vote.

Mr. Johnson stated that the Policy Committee reviewed the following policies and would like the administration to change the reviewed date to August 25, 2009:

#1120 Board of Education Meetings – Audio Tape Recording of; #1240 Parental Involvement and Responsibilities; #1311 Political Activities of School Employees Rights and Obligations; #1316 Conduct on School Property; #1322 Contests for Students; #1330.1 Use of School Equipment; #1330.2 School Grounds and Parking Lots; #1330.3 Policy for Community Use of Swimming Pools; #1411 Relations with the Enfield Police Department; #4000 Personnel – Smoking Restriction and #4112.6 Personnel Administration – Personnel Records.

15. NEW BUSINESS

a. CABE Membership Discussion

Chairman Greco stated that Ms. Hall asked for this item to be placed on the agenda for discussion.

Ms. Hall stated that Enfield Public Schools has benefited from our membership with CABE for many years. The membership provides Boards with sample policies, Federal and State information and the ability to attend numerous workshops. Networking is also another advantage that comes along with the membership. We also receive information from the National Association of Schools with our membership to CABE.

Ms. Hall moved, seconded by Mr. Grady that the Enfield Board of Education rejoins CABE.

Discussion:

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches asked about the cost. Dr. Gallacher stated the cost is around \$20K.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches understands the benefits of joining CABE, but we have the swim team here and know we are also looking at smaller participation revenues and class sizes are up. Where do we find the money to support this.

Ms. Hall stated new Board members are also given training that is extremely important.

Mr. Droney asked how many other towns belong to CABE. Ms. Hall stated around 117 towns belong to CABE.

Mr. Arnone stated networking is important. CABE is where he found out that Board members are liable if we are short in our budget we are liable for the funds.

Mr. Johnson agrees with what has been stated tonight. This has been a tough budget year. Mr. Johnson stated he could not look at Mr. McKeown if we funded CABE and not swimming.

Ms. Hall asked Mr. Johnson if he found the information provided by CABE helpful. Mr. Johnson stated the information provided by CABE has been useful. We have cut a lot of useful things. Mr. Johnson would rather make sacrifices Board members use than cut things the students need.

A vote by **roll call 2-6-0**. Motion failed with Mr. Stokes, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Grady, Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches, Mr. Arnone and Mr. Greco in dissent.

b. Swim Team Discussion

Chairman Greco asked that this item be placed on the agenda for discussion. Members of the Town Council have also been approached by swim team parents. Mr. Bernstein is here to discuss separating the two teams, what the participation looks like, what additional costs we will incur for having two teams and where do we get the funds to accomplish this.

Mr. Bernstein reviewed his Tier III of cuts where swimming was listed. Cutting swimming does not make sense from a varsity sport aspect. The amount to run the program is \$7K. We can take the assistant coaching positions from JFK and use the funds towards the swimming funds. We would cut the boy's and girl's paid assistant basketball positions and use the funds towards the swimming program. Dr. Gallacher stated the total amount budgeted for the assistant basketball coaches at JFK is \$6,156. Mr. Bernstein stated the swim team parents are willing to raise the additional \$1,500 towards the swimming program.

Chairman Greco asked if eliminating the assistant basketball coaches would hurt the basketball program at JFK. Mr. Bernstein stated the average number is 18-20 for middle school sports. They could bring on an unpaid volunteer assistant to help out.

Dr. Gallacher stated if we start using this position with volunteers, it could become a union issue.

Chairman Greco asked if the two assistant coaches are teachers. Mr. Bernstein stated they are both teachers.

Mr. Droney asked if there would be any problem with getting team schedules. Mr. Bernstein stated this would not be a problem.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches asked how the girl's swim team funding is broken down. Mr. Bernstein and Dr. Gallacher stated coaching salaries \$4,103; officials \$802; uniforms \$570; equipment \$284 and transportation \$1,957 for a total of \$7,716. Mr. Bernstein stated this is a bare bones operation.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches asked if we paid any assistant coaches at the high school level. Mr. Bernstein stated the JV coach is also the assistant coach position and they are paid. Anyone else would be a volunteer except for football and basketball they have varsity, junior varsity and freshman teams.

Mr. Grady stated that he has confidence that the swim team parents can raise the funds but what guarantee as a Board do we have. Mr. Bernstein would like to discuss this with the parents.

Mr. Arnone asked about the boy's team. The boy's team has already submitted their budget and they are fully funded. Mr. Arnone does not know how we can legally say we will fund the

boy's and not the girl's team.

Mr. Arnone asked if we can raise the participation fee to cover the shortage amount this way the Board is not liable. Mr. Bernstein stated if we are going to access the program, we would include the boy's in this reassessment. Chairman Greco stated we can not charge the girl's more than the boy's for the same program. Mr. Bernstein stated the boy's & girl's numbers are pretty close.

Mr. Johnson asked how much is funded for the swim program. Mr. Bernstein stated it is around \$15K for two seasons. Mr. Arnone stated we are short around \$1,500.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated we passed a budget that was not balanced and we have a participation fee that we will be discussing later on the agenda that potentially will be short. This is still an item that we do not have the funding for. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches does not know how we can discuss this without looking at the whole athletic budget.

Mr. Droney stated swimming is one of the least expensive sports and does not see how we can charge only swimming an additional participation fee. We are treading down a slippery slope. Mr. Droney has every bit of confidence that the swimming team can raise the additional money.

Mr. Stokes stated that Mr. Bernstein is confident that the funding can be raised and we should have the boys and girls raise the same amount. Mr. Arnone stated we need to set the participation fee a little higher across the board.

Ms. Hall stated you considered cutting freshman sports, cutting JFK sports and have intramural sports instead at JFK. It seems to me that the girl's swim team is taking a major hit on this. Ms. Hall asked if swimmers can make their times by swimming at "Y" pools for potential scholarships. Mr. Bernstein stated that athletic scholarships are fewer and fewer. It depends on the size of the school and funding sources to defer costs. You can obtain times at other venues like "Y" pools. Swimmers will loose out by not swimming on a team. Mr. Bernstein stated the girl's swim team should not have been hung out.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches agrees but we are supposed to be doing so much more than just athletics.

Mr. Arnone moved, seconded by Mr. Grady that the Enfield Board of Education eliminates the two assistant coaching positions at JFK and raise the participation fees for swimming to make up the difference to fund the two programs.

Discussion:

Mr. Johnson would like to see the motion split into two parts. We need to eliminate the paid positions first.

Mr. Arnone moved to amend the original motion, seconded by Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches that the Enfield Board of Education eliminates the two paid assistant basketball coaches at JFK.

A vote by **roll call 7-1-0** passed with Ms. Hall in dissent.

Ms. Hall is concerned with the potential union issues if we already have contracts with these individuals.

A vote by **roll call 7-1-0** passed with Ms. Hall in dissent.

Mr. Johnson moved, seconded by Mr. Arnone that the Enfield Board of Education take the funds from the JFK Assistant Basketball Coaching Positions and add it to the Boy's and Girl's

Varsity Swimming Program for a total of \$15K.

A vote by **roll call 7-1-0** passed with Ms. Hall in dissent.

c. 2009-10 Athletic Participation Fee Program

Chairman Greco stated Board members will need to address reducing the participation fee for free and reduced lunch based students and should cheerleaders pay more since they participate in more than one season.

Mr. Bernstein stated cheerleading according to the CIAC is an activity governed and covered by the CIAC not as a competitive sport, as part of the athletic program. They participate in the fall and winter season. The majority of the schools charge a one time participation fee for the two seasons. The third season they represent the Town not the school when they compete. The coaches do not get paid for the third season.

Ms. Hall asked if the cheerleaders cheer at all the games. Mr. Bernstein stated varsity cheerleaders cheer at varsity football games, junior varsity cheerleaders cheer at home junior varsity football games and the entire cheerleading team cheers at all home basketball games.

Mr. Arnone moved, seconded by Mr. Stokes that the Enfield Board of Education set one participation fee for cheerleaders for the entire year.

A vote by **roll call 5-2-1** passed with Mr. Dronney and Mr. Grady in dissent with Mr. Greco abstaining.

Mr. Arnone moved, seconded by Mr. Stokes that the Enfield Board of Education reduce or waive participation fees for students that are eligible for free or reduced lunch.

Discussion:

Mr. Johnson asked how the fees could be reduced. Chairman Greco stated they would be based on a sliding scale. If the student receives a free lunch, there would be no participation fee. If the student receives a reduced lunch, the participation fee would be reduced.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches asked if we are setting a precedent by reducing fees based on the free and/or reduced lunch scale. We do not reduce fees for any other student activity fees. There are a lot of families that need assistance.

Mr. Arnone stated band students receive credit for band but you need to take gym. Sports need to be added to the curriculum. Some students go to prom and some don't just like purchasing year books.

Ms. Hall referred to the Athletic Participation Fee for 2009-2010 form. Item #A states "Students who have a special family situation may apply for a fee reduction." This will allow families to apply for a fee reduction. There will be other families with circumstances that will need to apply.

Chairman Greco stated anyone can apply for a reduction.

Mr. Arnone asked if Mr. Bernstein will make that decision. Mr. Bernstein stated he has received 17 written requests and is waiting for the Board's response. Mr. Arnone stated anytime we apply for assistance there are guidelines that need to be followed. These are pretty fuzzy guidelines. This is not Barry's job to check income status. Using the free and/or reduced lunch application is an easy way.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated the season will start before the applications are received. Chairman Greco stated if the student is a returning player, they will have an application on file if they are receiving free and/or reduced lunches.

Chairman Greco agrees with Ms. Hall, we do not need to make it automatic. They can apply for assistance if they need it.

Mr. Bernstein stated several Towns list on their participation form if they need financial assistance they can do it in writing.

Chairman Greco stated if we automatically do this, we will take a huge cut in the participation fee fund.

Mr. Arnone stated this was discussed previously and Board members knew there would be some kind of sport participation fee reductions. Guidelines need to be set – that is the free and/or reduced lunch application. Dr. Gallacher stated we have around 25% free and/or reduced lunches at JFK and around 22-23% at the high school. You will most likely reduce your fees around 25%. Chairman Greco stated the participation fee amount will probably come in around \$150K.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches asked if Park and Recreation have reduced sport fees. Mr. Bernstein stated most fees are set with a one time fee. Mr. Arnone stated some recreation students do receive sponsorships in order to participate.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches asked how payments are being made this year. Mr. Bernstein stated this season, the coaches are receiving the payments. Payments can be mailed to Central Office or given to the coach. We will keep the checks in the safe until the rosters are made. If a student does not make a team, the check will be returned.

Ms. Hall asked if this will be the only situation that will allow a reduction with fees. Mr. Arnone stated we are basing this on personal finances based on free and/or reduced lunch applications.

Mr. Stokes stated we should form another category for hardship cases.

Dr. Gallacher stated Mr. Bernstein was looking for direction from the Board and if we left the form alone and if a letter comes in stating they are on free and/or reduced lunch, the matter would be resolved. Do you want Mr. Bernstein to say if you are receiving free lunch there will be no participation fee and if they are on a reduced lunch, they will pay a reduced fee? This is what we are looking for. Additional hardships would be addressed.

Ms. Hall stated no change would need to be made. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated if no changes are needed, the motion can be withdrawn or rescinded.

Mr. Arnone does not want this to be based on one person's decision. This should be based by income standards. If there are any other extenuating circumstances, you can refer them to the Superintendent to handle.

Dr. Gallacher stated once you complete a free and/or reduced lunch application, you automatically receive a free and/or reduced lunch. On or about October 1 they are audited and this is when changes will be made. If you received this service last year, students will come in and receive a free and/or reduced lunch until we are told differently.

Mr. Stokes stated we can vote on this with the motion that was made. If a hardship case arises, we can deal with it. This will get us started with some kind of guidelines.

Mr. Johnson agrees but we need an outline for the administration to use and the language in the document applies and if there are hardship cases should be handled by the administration with set guidelines.

A vote by **roll call 5-3-0** passed with Mr. Johnson, Ms. Hall and Mr. Greco in dissent.

d. Approve Regular Meeting Dates for 2010

Mr. Grady moved, seconded by Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches that the Enfield Board of Education approves the Regular Meeting Dates for 2010.

Discussion:

Mr. Stokes would like to start the meetings at 7:00 PM. Mr. Arnone agreed. Mr. Greco stated the policy would need to be revised.

Ms. Hall stated the advantage to having the Board meetings at 7:30 PM is that we can hold committee meetings prior to the Board meeting.

A vote by **roll call 7-0-0** passed unanimously.

16. EXECUTIVE SESSION -

Mr. Dronney moved, seconded by Mr. Stokes that the Enfield Board of Education enters into executive session to discuss:

- a. Document Protected by Attorney-Client Privilege – Pending Claims & Litigation;
- b. Matter(s) Related to Grievance – ETA Medical Self-Insurance Grievance.

Motion passed by a **show of hands 6-2-0**, with Mr. Grady and Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches in dissent.

Dr. Gallacher and Mr. Torre joined the Board in Executive Session at 9:37 PM.

Mr. Arnone moved, seconded by Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches to end the executive session and return to Public Session at 9:52 PM.

A vote by show of hands 8-0-0 passed unanimously. No actions were taken while in executive session.

17. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Johnson moved, seconded by Mr. Grady to adjourn the Regular Meeting of August 25, 2009. All ayes, motion passed unanimously.

Meeting stood adjourned at 9:53 PM.

Joyce P. Hall
Secretary
Enfield Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary