

**ENFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 8, 2009**

A regular meeting of the Enfield Board of Education was held at Town Hall in Council Chambers, located at 820 Enfield Street, Enfield, CT on December 8, 2009.

1. **CALL TO ORDER** The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by Chairman Stokes.

2. **INVOCATION OR MOMENT OF SILENCE** Vincent Grady

3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** Vincent Grady

4. **FIRE EVACUATION ANNOUNCEMENT** Chairman Stokes announced the fire evacuation announcement.

5. **ROLL CALL**

MEMBERS PRESENT Peter Jonaitis, Tom Sirard, Judy Apruzzese-Desroches, Joyce Hall, Vincent Grady, Stacy Thurston and Greg Stokes

MEMBERS ABSENT Charles Johnson and Donna Szewczak

ALSO PRESENT Dr. John Gallacher, Superintendent of Schools; Mr. Anthony Torre, Assistant Superintendent of Schools; Enrico Fermi High Student Representative Meghan Ruff and Enfield High School Student Representative Regina Casale

6. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Sirard moved, seconded by Mr. Grady that the Special & Regular Meeting Minutes of November 24, 2009 be approved. Ms. Hall would like a clarification added to the November 24, 2009 Regular Meeting Minutes under Item 15c. Action, if any, on a Monetary Gift to the District to avoid any confusion - Those who have contested the bequest will receive \$250K to clear the way for the Board to receive what was bequeathed to us for a "gifted and talented" program. Motion passed with the clarification by a **show of hands 7-0-0.**

7. **BOARD GUESTS**

a. **Community Health Center, Inc.**

Chairman Stokes welcomed EHS World Language Department Chairperson Linda Dalpe. Mrs. Dalpe has been recognized by the CT COLT (Connecticut Council of Language Teachers) and received their Pegasus Pride Award. This award recognizes individuals that have made a significant contribution to the field of world languages.

Mrs. Dalpe thanked Board members and introduced the CT COLT President Jaya Vijayasekar to Board members. Ms. Vijayasekar thanked Board members and Dr. Gallacher for inviting her. Ms. Vijayasekar stated Mrs. Dalpe's teaching career has spanned for over 30 years. Ms. Vijayasekar admires Mrs. Daple's commitment and dedication to the students, staff in Enfield and the CT/Spain partnership. The CT/Spain partnership is a premier program. Students from here and abroad have a connection and embody some of our national standards of the 5C's (Communication, Connections, Culture, Comparisons and Communities).

Mrs. Daple is the Vice President of the CT COLT and will be the incoming President. We are proud to have her on our Board of Directors. Ms. Vijayasekar stated she teaches at Vernon Public Schools. Each year we look at all the professionals in our organization and award several scholarships and awards each year. The Pegasus Pride Award (Professionalism, Respect for Cultural Differences, Involvement or Interest in Professional Growth within the Language Field, Dedication to Students and Enthusiasm for Languages and for Teaching) was awarded to Mrs. Dalpe at our Fall Banquet. Mrs. Dalpe embodies all of this and more. Ms. Vijayasekar applauds the Board of Education and Dr. Gallacher for recognizing Mrs. Dalpe and extends her best wishes for Mrs. Daple's continued success.

Chairman Stokes asked Mrs. Daple if she would like to add anything. Mrs. Daple stated this was such an honor and surprise to receive this award.

Ms. Vijayasekar further stated that both she and Mrs. Dalpe went to the State Legislature last year regarding the reform plan for Foreign Languages and addressed Senator Gaffey and the Language Committee and made sure the document would include certain information which it did. The bill passed through the Senate but failed in the House. When the bill comes up again, Mrs. Dalpe and Ms. Vijayasekar will both be there.

Ms. Hall stated when the high school language reforms were being discussed, one of the suggestions was to add American Sign Language. Do you consider this as part of your languages? Ms. Vijayasekar stated that CT COLT has a position statement that includes sign languages. Signing has been included as a language.

Chairman Stokes congratulated Mrs. Dalpe for her passion and further stated that her enthusiasm is excellent. We compliment CT COLT on your choice for the Pegasus award. Mrs. Daple is one of our best and we thank you for honoring her.

8. CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATIONS

- a. Flyer for the Enrico Fermi High School Instrumental Music Winter Concert on Wednesday, December 16th at 6:30 PM.

9. AUDIENCES

Laurence Avery, Belmont Avenue - Mr. Avery stated he is a proud graduate of Enfield High School Class of 1972. Mr. Avery is here tonight regarding the pending ACLU lawsuit concerning graduations at the Cathedral. Mr. Avery supports holding graduations at the Cathedral. It saves money and there are plenty of seats for everyone. You do not need to worry about the weather. Mr. Avery stated the way he interprets the constitution, religion can not be brought into the school. We are just holding graduations at a place. Mr. Avery stated his niece attends Cathedral High School in Springfield and they hold their graduation at the Civic Center. It is a public building. He supports using the Cathedral for graduations. Mr. Avery also stated that it is very sad that the Enfield/Fermi Football game will no longer be held. There is not much that we can do about this. It is a shame. Mr. Avery would like to see the Enfield/Fermi Thanksgiving Football Game continue. Mr. Avery thanked Board members and wished everyone a happy holiday season.

Jack Sheridan, Buchanan Road - Mr. Sheridan is also here regarding graduations and the law suit. Mr. Sheridan stated it is amazing how so few are contesting it just because of a few religious symbols, while many would like to see the graduations continue at the Cathedral. Mr. Sheridan stated the money we are using to fight this has "In God We Trust" on it. The money we pay our teachers and the money everyone uses has "In God We Trust" on it. Mr. Sheridan does not understand why we can't hold graduations there. Mr. Sheridan stated that he has a

suggestion; we do not have to hold any graduations. Why don't we hold a graduation for those that would like to come only. This way, there will be no lawsuit. This is a matter of choice, just like using money. Mr. Sheridan has asked many students and they would like to hold it at the Cathedral. There is no law that states we must hold graduations. We can use this to our advantage.

10. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

FHS Student Representative Meghan Ruff wished everyone a happy holiday season. Ms. Ruff stated the FHS Lamplighters will hold "Ax of Murder" comedy show on December 11th & 12th in the Fermi Auditorium. Ms. Ruff further stated that there is a petition on face book to have graduations at the Cathedral. There are some students that would like graduation to be held at their own schools. The objection is not the religious symbols from the student's perspective. There are two sides to this subject. Some students just want to graduate in their own town. Ms. Ruff would like to see a survey done at both high schools again to ask the seniors where they would like to graduate.

Mr. Jonaitis stated students at JFK started a program to purchase gift cards and a portion of the proceeds will be used for the end of the year program. The JFK Winter Band Concert will be held on December 15th at 7:00 PM. The JFK Orchestra Concert will be held on December 17th at 7:00 PM. The inter-library program has started. Students can obtain books from the Central Library to the JFK library. JFK 7th graders will attend "A Christmas Carol" on December 17th at Stage West. Counselors from the high schools will visit JFK next month and urged parents to look at the course selection book with students. Mr. Jonaitis reviewed the JFK Fall Sports team wrap-up. Mr. Jonaitis congratulated the JFK Student Council President Tristan Dixon and Vice President Ryan Gates. The JFK National Jr. Honor Society will hold their induction ceremony on January 13th at 7:00 PM. JFK held "Penny Wars" where they raised \$2,400. They donated the money to Enfield Loaves & Fishes, Enfield Food Shelf and Sisters of the Poor. The staff at JFK collected 101 turkeys and they were donated to the Enfield Food Shelf.

Mr. Sirard wished everyone a joyful holiday season and a wonderful time with their families.

EHS Student Representative Regina Casale stated the EHS National Honor Society will hold a dodge ball fund raiser event on Saturday, December 12th from 1-4 PM in the gym. All proceeds will go to benefit the Enfield Food Shelf. Ms. Casale stated this was discussed in one of her classes and the religious symbols are not visible. Business meetings are also held there. It is not the religious aspect, we just want to graduate.

Mrs. Thurston stated she attended the Eli Whitney Barnes & Noble Polar Express fund raiser event. It was a huge success and we had a lot of fun. Eli Whitney will hold an ice cream social to benefit the grade 4 field trips on December 6 & 7th.

Mr. Grady stated the EHS Safe Grad will hold a fund raiser event at Wendy's on December 6th from 4-7 PM. Mr. Grady stated that Henry Barnard had a contest between the turtles and the hares. The hares won. Mr. Grady further stated our Teacher of the Year Tom Higgins and Amy Snyder at Barnard collected loose change to benefit the Enfield Food Shelf for three days and collected \$1,135.55.

Ms. Hall wished everyone a happy holiday. Ms. Hall recognized interim HR Director Carol Parmelee-Blancato. She has filled a big void in our staffing and has done an excellent job and would like to take this opportunity to commend her.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches also wished everyone a happy holiday season. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated that Hazardville Memorial held a holiday food drive "Hazardville Memorial

Cares & Shares". Memorial collected 190 pounds of food and donated it to the Enfield Food Shelf. They will send another donation next week. Kudos to everyone that participated in this program. Memorial held a concert today where the Hartford Symphony Wood Wind Quartet performed. They will hold their positive student monthly awards on December 22nd as well as their choral concert.

Chairman Stokes wished everyone a Merry Christmas, a happy new year and a safe holiday season. Chairman Stokes had a wonderful time at the Whitney event at Barnes & Noble. He appreciates their support as well as other local businesses that continue to help our schools raise money.

Chairman Stokes stated that this afternoon Dr. Gallacher, Mayor Kaupin, Council Members, staff and himself welcomed members from our sister city in Taiwan, Chung Li to Enfield. It was a wonderful experience and we welcome them here.

11. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- a. Student Performances - as presented
- b. Christmas Vacation - as presented

Mr. Grady asked if the CHC counseling program discussed at the last meeting will replace any counselors. Dr. Gallacher stated it will not replace any counselors. It would be a supportive role.

Chairman Stokes stated that Fermi held their Safe Grad Auction last Friday night. They raised just under \$8,500. The event was well attended. Mr. Bourassa did a wonderful job as the auctioneer as always.

12. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Jonaitis reported that Personnel is in the process of negotiating contracts with the Nurses and Paraprofessionals. The Alternative Education Committee has not met yet.

Mr. Sirard reported that the Finance committee met for the first time. It was mostly informational. We are working on a schedule for budget discussions.

Mrs. Thurston reported that she attended a KITE meeting. A lot of information was discussed. They will hold a meeting on January 6th at the Village Center.

Mr. Grady reported that he is the EHS liaison and was asked about the late buses. Mr. Grady would like the Board to look at this during budget discussions.

Chairman Stokes asked Board members to write down any additional items they would like to address during budget discussions.

13. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS AND PAYROLL

a. For the Month of October FY2008-09

Mr. Sirard moved, seconded by Ms. Hall that the Enfield Board of Education accepts the superintendent's certification as follows: "I hereby certify that in the month of October FY2008-09, total expenditures amount to \$67,962.84 broken down between payroll totaling \$0 and other accounts totaling \$67,962.84. All payments have been made in accordance with the approved budget and are properly accounted for within the books of accounts. Copies of

approval for check invoices are properly documented." A vote by **show of hands 7-0-0**, motion passes.

For the Month of November FY2008/09

Mr. Sirard moved, seconded by Ms. Hall that the Enfield Board of Education accepts the superintendent's certification as follows: "I hereby certify that in the month of November FY2008-09, total expenditures amount to \$21,195.51, broken down between payroll totaling \$0 and other accounts totaling \$21,195.51. All payments have been made in accordance with the approved budget and are properly accounted for within the books of accounts. Copies of approval for check invoices are properly documented." A vote by **show of hands 7-0-0**, motion passes.

b. For the Month of October FY2009-10

Mr. Sirard moved, seconded by Ms. Hall that the Enfield Board of Education accepts the superintendent's certification as follows: "I hereby certify that in the month of October FY2009-10, total expenditures amount to \$6,024,240.37 broken down between payroll totaling \$4,304,982.75 and other accounts totaling \$1,719,257.62. All payments have been made in accordance with the approved budget and are properly accounted for within the books of accounts. Copies of approval for check invoices are properly documented." A vote by **show of hands 7-0-0**, motion passes.

For the Month of November FY2009/10

Mr. Sirard moved, seconded by Ms. Hall that the Enfield Board of Education accepts the superintendent's certification as follows: "I hereby certify that in the month of November FY2009-10, total expenditures amount to \$5,515,181.01 broken down between payroll totaling \$4,346,109.03 and other accounts totaling \$1,169,071.98. All payments have been made in accordance with the approved budget and are properly accounted for within the books of accounts. Copies of approval for check invoices are properly documented." A vote by **show of hands 7-0-0**, motion passes.

c. Line Item Transfers, if any - None

14. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

15. NEW BUSINESS

a. Demographic Advisory Committee (DAC) Discussion, and Action(s) if any

Chairman Stokes stated that last year a Demographic Advisory Committee was formed to look at facility use and reported their findings to the Board in the spring. The Board anticipated keeping the committee together but after Board Leadership (Chuck Johnson, Judy Apruzzese-Desroches, Joyce Hall, Greg Stokes and John Gallacher) met, we wanted to thank committee members for their help and disband the DAC committee.

Chairman Stokes further stated that we will regroup as a new Board and prepare for what we would like to address in the New Year.

Chairman Stokes stated we can address this item now or we can table this until the next Board meeting.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches moved, seconded by Ms. Hall that the Enfield Board of Education disband the Demographic Advisory Committee.

Discussion:

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches stated this was the second DAC committee. The Board had the committee look at the physical structures in the district. The fiscal structures need to support where the district is going. Board members need to look at our goals for the district. We need to have a place that we are trying to get to and make sure the physical structures support getting there. We were a little backwards and a bit reactive. Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches further stated we need to plan forward. The committee did a lot of work and has given us a wealth of information to use.

Chairman Stokes agrees with Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches. We need to see where we are going for the future. We appreciate everything the DAC committee did and the resources they have provided us.

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

Chairman Stokes would like a letter of appreciation sent to all DAC members.

Add an Item to the Agenda:

Chairman Stokes stated that Board members have the need to add an item to the agenda to be addressed after the executive session. A resolution vote is required that would empower the Business Manager and Board of Education Chairman to sign off on the settlement bequest that was left to the School District and give \$250K to those that were contesting the will so the Board can receive the bulk of the bequest.

Mr. Sirard moved to add an item to the agenda, seconded by Mr. Grady that the Enfield Board of Education adds Item 15b. Approve the Settlement Agreement and Mutual Release Resolution. A vote by **roll call 7-0-0** passed unanimously.

16. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairman Stokes stated the Board has the need to enter into executive Session.

Ms. Hall moved, seconded by Mr. Sirard that the Enfield Board of Education enters into executive session to discuss:

- a. Matter(s) Related to Pending Claims & Litigation - Document Protected by Attorney-Client Privilege

Motion passed by a **show of hands 4-3-0**, with Mrs. Thurston, Mr. Grady and Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches in dissent.

Dr. Gallacher and Mr. Torre joined the Board in Executive Session.

Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches moved, seconded by Mrs. Thurston that the Enfield Board of Education end the Executive Session and return to Public Session at 8:45 PM.

A vote by **show of hands 7-0-0**, passed unanimously. No actions were taken while in executive session.

15. NEW BUSINESS CONTINUED

b. Approve the Settlement Agreement and Mutual Release Resolution

Mr. Grady moved, seconded by Ms. Hall that the Enfield Board of Education approves the Settlement Agreement and Mutual Release as related to the Will and Estate of Mr. Abraham Simcovitz and authorize the Board Chairman and the District's Business Manager to sign the documents on behalf of the Board.

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

17. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Grady moved, seconded by Mrs. Apruzzese-Desroches to adjourn the Regular Meeting of December 8, 2009. All ayes, motion passed unanimously.

Meeting stood adjourned at 8:47 PM.

Joyce P. Hall
Secretary
Enfield Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,