

ENFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION
ENFIELD, CONNECTICUT

Time-Place:

Council Chambers
820 Enfield Street
Enfield, CT

Date: 10-10-23

7:00 PM Regular Meeting

<https://youtube.com/live/mcnvPj0v0Uc>

1. Call to Order – 7:00 PM
2. Invocation or Moment of Silence – Tina LeBlanc
3. Pledge of Allegiance – Tina LeBlanc
4. Fire Evacuation Announcement
5. Roll Call
6. Board Guest(s)
 - a. EHS Youth Vote Students
7. Superintendent’s Report
 - a. Student Representative Update
 - b. Columbus Day & Staff PL – NS
 - c. EPS Update
8. Audiences
9. Board Members’ Comments
10. Unfinished Business
11. New Business
 - a. Policy Revisions – First Reading
 - b. Approve the Schedule for Regular BOE Meetings for 2024
 - c. Action if any regarding the ESAA Contract
12. Board Committee Reports
 - Curriculum Committee
 - Finance, Budget Committee
 - Policy Committee
 - Leadership Committee
 - PK-5 School Modernization Committee
 - Joint Facilities Committee
 - JFK Building Committee
 - Joint Security Committee
 - Enfield Mental Health & Wellness Workgroup
 - Enfield Cultural Arts
13. Approval of Minutes:
 - Regular BOE Meeting Minutes: September 12, 2023
 - Special BOE Meeting Minutes: September 26, 2023
14. Approval of Accounts and Payroll:
15. Correspondence and Communications
16. Executive Session
 - For Matter(s) Related to Collective Bargaining
17. Adjournment

*Note:
Item 10c. may be
addressed after
Item #16.*



Date: October 10, 2023
To: Enfield Board of Education
From: Mr. Christopher J. Drezek
Re: Board Guests

- a. **EHS Youth Vote Students:** Tonight we welcome Enfield High Social Studies Coordinator Joel Senez, Youth Vote Advisors Tony Allegro and Sean Patrick Crane and students Rebecca Bemiss, Emily Kokoszka and Omar Atwah. They are here to discuss this year's Youth Vote events. Enclosed in your packet is additional information. Please join me by welcoming them here tonight.



Date: October 10, 2023
To: Enfield Board of Education
From: Mr. Christopher J. Drezek
Re: Superintendent's Report

- a. **Student Representative Update:** First, I would like to personally welcome our Student Representatives to tonight's meeting. Each of our Enfield High School Student Representatives may have some information or comments to share with the Board regarding events/happenings at EHS.

- b. **Columbus Day & Staff PL:** Schools and offices were closed on Monday, October 9th for Columbus Day. Today, our staff attended professional learning events and our students had the day off. All students will resume regular classes and schedules on Wednesday, October 11th.

- c. **EPS Update:** I will update the Board regarding our schools at this time.



Date: October 10, 2023
To: Enfield Board of Education
From: Mr. Christopher J. Drezek
Re: Policy Revisions – First Reading

Policy Committee members met on September 19th. They are recommending first readings for two policies. Enclosed in your packets are the two current policies with proposed revisions. These policies have been placed on the website for public input.

Policy Revisions:

- Policy #5131 Conduct and Discipline
- Policy #9160 Student Representatives

Policy Committee Chair Scott Ryder and/or Policy Committee Liaison Assistant Superintendent Longey can address any Board member questions regarding these policies.

Therefore, the Enfield Board of Education may take any action(s) deemed appropriate regarding approving the proposed new policy and policy revision as presented for a First Reading.



Date: October 10, 2023
To: Enfield Board of Education
From: Mr. Christopher J. Drezek
Re: Approve the Schedule for Regular BOE Meetings for 2024

Connecticut law requires the Board of Education to provide the Town Clerk with a listing of dates for the Board's regular meetings for the upcoming year. Enclosed in your packet is the list of regular meeting dates for 2024 in accordance with Board Policy #9321 Time, Place and Notification of Meetings that requires Madam Chairs signature.

Therefore, the Enfield Board of Education may take any action(s) deemed appropriate regarding the approval of the regular meeting dates for 2024.



Date: October 10, 2023
To: Enfield Board of Education
From: Mr. Christopher J. Drezek
Re: Action if any regarding the ESAA Contract

Note: The Board may have the need to enter into Executive Session prior to addressing this item.

I will address this item with the Board.

Therefore, the Enfield Board of Education may take any action(s) deemed appropriate regarding the ESAA Contract.

Item #6a.

October 10, 2023 Enfield Board of Education Meeting

2023 EPS Youth Vote Activities

Presenters: Rebecca Bemiss, Emily Kokoszka, Omar Atwah

Advisors: Mr. Tony Allegro and Mr. Sean Patrick Crane

Enfield High School Youth Vote Committee members are here to formally invite the Board of Education and Town Council candidates, as well as the community to the annual Meet the Candidates Night to be held on Wednesday, October 18th from 6-8pm in the EHS cafeteria.

They will also share other Youth Vote and civic engagement activities our EPS students will be participating in leading up to the November election.

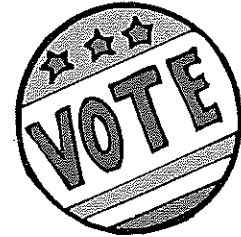
Enfield students and their families are invited to attend...

Meet the Candidates Night

Date: **Wednesday, October 18th, 2023**

Time: **6:00 – 8:00 PM**

Location: **Enfield High School Cafeteria**



This is an opportunity to become an informed voter!

Meet Candidates running for Enfield's

Board of Education



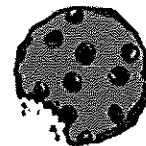
Town Council &



Town Constables

Take this opportunity to personally speak with the candidates and have your questions answered. There will be no formal presentations.

REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED



Bring your raffle ticket to enter a drawing for a Target gift card.

Name: _____

School: _____

Grade: _____

Gift Cards will be delivered to winner's schools.

**ENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Enfield, Connecticut**

Students

P5131

Conduct and Discipline

I. Definitions

- A. **Exclusion** means any denial of public school privileges to a student for disciplinary purposes.
- B. **Emergency** means a situation in which the continued presence of the student in school poses such a danger to persons or property or such a disruption of the educational process that a hearing may be delayed until a time as soon after the exclusion of such student as possible.
- C. **School-Sponsored Activity** means any activity sponsored, recognized or authorized by the Board and includes activities conducted on or off school property.
- D. **Removal** is the exclusion of a student for a class period of ninety minutes or less. A student may be removed from class by a teacher or administrator if he/she deliberately causes a serious disruption of the educational process. When a student is removed, the teacher must send him/her to a designated area and notify the Principal or his/her designee at once. A student may not be removed from class more than six times in one school year nor more than twice in one week unless the student is referred to the building Principal or designee and granted an informal hearing at which the student should be informed of the reasons for the disciplinary action and given an opportunity to explain the situation.
- E. **In-School Suspension** means an exclusion from regular classroom activity for no more than five consecutive school days, but not exclusion from school, provided such exclusion shall not extend beyond the end of the school year in which such in-school suspension was imposed. No student shall be placed on in-school suspension more than fifteen (15) times or a total of fifty (50) days in one school year, whichever results in fewer days of exclusion.
- F. **Suspension** means the exclusion of a student from school and/or transportation services for not more than ten (10) consecutive school days, provided such suspension shall not extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed; and further provided no student shall be suspended more than ten (10) times or a total of fifty (50) days in one school year, whichever results in fewer days of exclusion, unless such student is granted a formal hearing as provided below.

Students

Conduct and Discipline

I. Definitions (continued)

- G. **Expulsion** means the exclusion of a student from school privileges for more than ten (10) consecutive school days. The expulsion period may not extend beyond one calendar year.
- H. **School Days** shall mean days when school is in session for students.
- I. **Seriously Disruptive of the Educational Process** means any conduct that markedly interrupts or severely impedes the day-to-day operation of a school.
- J. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the reassignment of a student from one regular education classroom program in the district to another regular education classroom program in the district shall not constitute a suspension or expulsion.
- K. **Bullying** – ~~repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic communication such as cyberbullying, or a physical act or gesture repeatedly directed at another student in the same school district that:~~
- ~~a. causes physical or emotional harm to the student or damage to the student's property;~~
 - ~~b. places the student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to the student's property;~~
 - ~~c. creates a hostile environment at school for such student (bullying among students is sufficiently severe and pervasive as to alter the conditions of the school climate);~~
 - ~~d. infringes on the rights of the student at school, or~~
 - ~~e. substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a school.~~

~~Bullying explicitly includes, but is not limited to:~~

~~A written, verbal, or electronic communications, or physical acts or gestures that are based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, such as race, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, socioeconomic status, political ideology, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.~~

means an act that is direct or indirect and severe, persistent or pervasive which:

- a. causes physical or emotional harm to an individual,*

Students

Conduct and Discipline

I. Definitions (continued)

- b. places an individual in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm, or,*
- c. infringes on the rights and opportunities of an individual at school.*

Bullying shall include, but need not be limited to, a written, oral, or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

- L. **Cyberbullying** – any act of bullying using the internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices, or any electronic communications.

II. Scope of the Student Discipline Policy

A. Conduct on School Grounds or at a School-Sponsored Activity:

Students may be disciplined for conduct on school grounds or at any school-sponsored activity that endangers persons or property, is seriously disruptive of the educational process, or that violates a publicized policy of the Board.

B. Conduct off School Grounds:

1. Students may be disciplined for conduct off school grounds if such conduct is seriously disruptive of the educational process and violative of a publicized policy of the Board. In making a determination as to whether such conduct is seriously disruptive of the educational process, the Administration and the Board of Education may consider, but such consideration shall not be limited to, the following factors: (1) whether the incident occurred within close proximity of a school; (2) whether other students from the school were involved or whether there was any gang involvement; (3) whether the conduct involved violence, threats of violence, or the unlawful use of a weapon, as defined in section Conn. Gen. Stat. §29-38, and whether any injuries occurred; and (4) whether the conduct involved the use of alcohol.

In making a determination as to whether such conduct is seriously disruptive of the educational process, the Administration and/or the Board of Education may also consider whether such off-campus conduct involved the use of drugs, bullying, harassment, hostile environment or emotional/physical harm to any student.

Students

Conduct and Discipline

II. Scope of the Student Discipline Policy (continued)

2. When considering whether conduct off school grounds is seriously disruptive of the educational process, the term “weapon” means any pistol or revolver, any dirk knife or switch knife having an automatic spring release device by which a blade is released from the handle, having a blade of over one and one-half inches in length, and any other dangerous or deadly weapon or instrument, including any sling shot, blackjack, sand bag, metal or brass knuckles, stiletto, knife, the edged portion of the blade of which is four inches and over in length or martial arts weapon as defined below at section VI. B.

III. Actions Leading to Disciplinary Action, including Suspension and/or Expulsion

Conduct which may lead to disciplinary action (including but not limited to suspension and/or expulsion) includes conduct on school grounds or at a school- sponsored activity, and conduct off school grounds, as set forth above. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Striking or assaulting a student, members of the school staff or other persons.
2. Theft.
3. The use of obscene or profane language or gestures.
4. Violation of smoking, dress, transportation regulations, or other regulations and/or policies governing student conduct.
5. Refusal to obey a member of the school staff, or law enforcement authorities, or disruptive classroom behavior.
6. Any act of harassment based on an individual’s sex, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, disability, national origin, ancestry, gender identity or expression or any other characteristic protected by law.
7. Refusal by a student to identify himself/herself to a staff member when asked.
8. A walk-out from or sit-in within a classroom or school building or school grounds.
9. Blackmailing, harassing, threatening or intimidating school staff or students.
10. Possession of any weapon, weapon facsimile, deadly weapon, pistol, knife, blackjack, bludgeon, box cutter, metal knuckles, pellet gun, explosive device, firearm, whether loaded or unloaded, whether functional or not, or any other dangerous object.

Students

Conduct and Discipline

**III. Actions Leading to Disciplinary Action, including Suspension and/or Expulsion
(continued)**

11. Unauthorized entrance into any school facility or portion of a school facility or aiding or abetting an unauthorized entrance.
12. Possession or ignition of any fireworks or other explosive materials, or ignition of any material causing a fire.
13. Unauthorized possession, sale, distribution, use or consumption of synthetic substances, tobacco, drugs, narcotics or alcoholic beverages or any substance that may cause physical and/or mental impairment. For the purposes of this Paragraph 13, the term "drugs" shall include, but shall not be limited to, any medicinal preparation (prescription and non-prescription) and any controlled substance whose possession, sale, distribution, use or consumption is illegal under state and/or federal law.
14. Possession of paraphernalia used or designed to be used in the consumption, sale or distribution of drugs, alcohol or tobacco, as described in subparagraph (13) above.
15. The destruction of real, personal or school property, such as, cutting, defacing or otherwise damaging property in any way.
16. Accumulation of offenses such as school and class tardiness, class or study hall cutting, or failure to attend detention.
17. Trespassing on school grounds while on out-of-school suspension or expulsion.
18. Making false bomb threats or other threats to the safety of students, staff members, and/or other persons.
19. Defiance of school rules and the valid authority of teachers, supervisors, administrators, other staff members and/or law enforcement authorities.
20. Throwing snowballs, rocks, sticks and/or similar objects.
21. Unauthorized and/or reckless and/or improper operation of a motor vehicle on school grounds or at any school-sponsored activity.
22. Leaving school grounds, school transportation or a school-sponsored activity without authorization.
23. Use of or copying of the academic work of another individual and presenting it as the student's own work, without proper attribution.

Students

Conduct and Discipline

III. Actions Leading to Disciplinary Action, including Suspension and/or Expulsion (continued)

24. Possession and/or use of a radio, walkman, beeper, paging device, cellular telephone, walkie talkie or similar electronic device on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity without the written permission of the Principal or his/her designee.
25. Unauthorized use of any school computer, computer system, computer software, Internet connection or similar school property or system, or the use of such property or system for unauthorized or non-school related purposes.
26. Possession and/or use of a laser pointer.
27. Hazing.
28. Bullying.
29. Cyberbullying that creates a hostile environment at school for any student (a) infringes on the rights of a student at school or (b) substantially disrupts the educational process or orderly operation of the school.
30. Any act of discrimination and/or retaliation against a person who reports or assists in the investigation of a bullying complaint.
31. Any other violation of school rules or regulations or a series of violations which makes the presence of the student in school seriously disruptive of the educational process and/or a danger to persons or property.
32. Any action prohibited by any Federal or State law which would indicate that the student presents a danger to any person in the school community or school property.

IV. Procedures Governing Suspension

- A. The Principal of a school, or designee on the administrative staff of the school, shall have the right to suspend any student in grades 3-12 for breach of conduct as noted in Section II of this policy for not more than ten (10) consecutive school days. Students in grades Pre-K-2 can receive both an in-school suspension or an out of school suspension only after an informal hearing and the administration determines that an in-school or out of school suspension is appropriate for the student based on evidence that the student's conduct is of a violent or sexual nature that endangers persons. In such cases, the following procedures shall be followed.
 1. Unless an emergency situation exists, no student shall be suspended prior to having an informal hearing before the Principal or designee at which the

Students

Conduct and Discipline

IV. Procedures Governing Suspension (continued)

student is informed of the charges and given an opportunity to respond. In the event of an emergency, the informal hearing shall be held as soon after the suspension as possible.

2. Evidence of past disciplinary problems which have led to removal from a classroom, suspension, or expulsion of a student who is the subject of an informal hearing may be received by the Principal, but only considered in the determination of the length of suspensions.
 3. By telephone, the Principal or designee shall make reasonable attempts to immediately notify the parent or guardian of a minor student following the suspension and state the cause(s) leading to the suspension.
 4. Whether or not telephone contact is made with the parent or guardian of such minor student, the Principal or designee shall forward a letter promptly to such parent or guardian to the last address reported on school records (or to a newer address if known by the Principal, or designee), offering the parent or guardian an opportunity for a conference to discuss same.
 5. Notice of the original suspension shall be transmitted by the Principal or designee to the Superintendent or his/her designee by the close of the school day following the commencement of the suspension.
 6. The student shall be allowed to complete any classwork, including examinations, without penalty, which he or she missed while under suspension.
 7. Notice of the suspension shall be recorded in the student's cumulative educational record. Such notice shall be expunged from the cumulative educational record by the Board if the student graduates from high school.
 8. The decision of the Principal or designee with regard to disciplinary actions up to and including suspensions shall be final.
- B. In cases where the student has already been suspended, or such suspension will result in the student's being suspended, more than ten (10) times or fifty (50) days in a school year, whichever results in fewer days of exclusion, the student shall, prior to suspension, be granted a formal hearing before the Board of Education. The Principal or designee shall report the student to the Superintendent or his/her designee and request a formal Board hearing.

Students

Conduct and Discipline

V. Procedures Governing In-School Suspension

- A. The Principal or designee may impose in-school suspension for students in grades 3-12 in cases where a student's conduct endangers persons or property, violates school policy, seriously disrupts the educational process or in other appropriate circumstances as determined by the Principal or designee. Students in grades Pre-K-2 can receive both an in-school suspension or an out of school suspension only after an informal hearing and the administration determines that an in-school or out of school suspension is appropriate for the student based on evidence that the student's conduct is of a violent or sexual nature that endangers persons.
- B. In-school suspension may not be imposed on a student without an informal hearing by the building Principal or designee.
- C. By telephone, the Principal or designee shall make reasonable attempts to immediately notify the parent or guardian of a minor student following the suspension and state the cause(s) leading to the suspension.
- D. Whether or not telephone contact is made with the parent or guardian of such minor student, the Principal or designee shall forward a letter promptly to such parent or guardian to the last address reported on school records (or to a newer address if known by the Principal, or designee), offering the parent or guardian an opportunity for a conference to discuss same.
- E. No student shall be placed on in-school suspension more than fifteen (15) times or a total of fifty (50) days in one school year, whichever results in fewer days of exclusion.

VI. Expulsion Recommendation Procedure

- A. A Principal may consider recommendation of expulsion of a student in grades 3-12 in a case where he/she has reason to believe the student has engaged in conduct described at sections II. A. and II. B., above. A Principal can recommend expulsion for students in grades Pre-K-2 if the student has engaged in conduct that would warrant mandatory expulsion under Connecticut General Statute 10-233d.
- B. A Principal must recommend expulsion proceedings in all cases against any student whom the Administration has reason to believe:
 - 1. was in possession on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity of a deadly weapon, dangerous instrument, martial arts weapon, or firearm as defined in 18 USC 921 as amended from time to time; or

Students

Conduct and Discipline

VI. Expulsion Recommendation Procedure (continued)

2. off school grounds, possessed a firearm as defined in 18 USC 921, in violation of Conn. Gen. Stat. 29-35, or possessed and used a firearm as defined in 18 USC 921, a deadly weapon, a dangerous instrument or a martial arts weapon in the commission of a crime under section 952 of the Connecticut General Statutes; or
3. was engaged on or off school grounds in offering for sale or distribution a controlled substance (as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. §21a-240(9)), whose manufacturing, distribution, sale, prescription, dispensing, transporting, or possessing with intent to sell or dispense, offering or administering is subject to criminal penalties under Conn. Gen. Stat. §§21a-277 and 21a-278.
4. The following definitions shall be used in this section:
 - a. A “firearm” as defined in 18 USC 921 means (a) any weapon that will, is designed to, or may be readily converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive, (b) the frame or receiver of any such weapon, (c) a muffler or silencer, or (d) any destructive device. As used in this definition, a “destructive device” includes any explosive, incendiary, or poisonous gas device, including a bomb, a grenade, a rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, a missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, a mine, or a similar device; or any weapon (other than a shotgun or shotgun shell particularly suited for sporting purposes) that will or may be converted to expel a projectile by explosive or other propellant having a barrel with a bore of more than ½” in diameter. The term “destructive device” does not include: an antique firearm; a rifle intended to be used by the owner solely for sporting, recreational, or cultural purposes; or any device which is neither designed nor redesigned for use as a weapon.
 - b. “Deadly weapon” means any weapon, whether loaded or unloaded, from which a shot may be discharged, or a switchblade knife, gravity knife, billy, blackjack, bludgeon or metal knuckles.
 - c. “Dangerous instrument” means any instrument, article or substance which, under the circumstances in which it is used or attempted or threatened to be used, is capable of causing death or serious physical injury, and includes a “vehicle”.
 - d. “Martial arts weapon” means a nunchaku, kama, kasari-fundo, octagon sai, tonfa or Chinese star.

Students

Conduct and Discipline

VI. Expulsion Recommendation Procedure (continued)

- e. When considering whether conduct off school grounds is seriously disruptive of the educational process, the term “weapon” means any pistol or revolver, any dirk knife or switch knife or any knife having an automatic spring release device by which a blade is released from the handle, having a blade of over one and one-half inches in length, and any other dangerous or deadly weapon or instrument, including any sling shot, black jack, sand bag, metal or brass knuckles, stiletto, knife, the edged portion of the blade of which is four inches and over in length or martial arts weapon as defined above.
- C. Upon receipt of an expulsion recommendation, the Superintendent or his/her designee may conduct an inquiry concerning the expulsion recommendation.

If the Superintendent or his/her designee determines that a student should or must be expelled, he or she shall forward his/her recommendation to the Board of Education so that the Board of Education can consider and act upon this recommendation.

VII. Expulsion Hearing Procedure

A. Emergency Exception:

Except in an emergency situation, the Board of Education shall, prior to expelling the student, conduct a hearing to be governed by the procedures outlined herein. Whenever an emergency exists, the hearing provided for above shall be held as soon as possible after the expulsion.

B. Hearing Panel:

1. Expulsion hearings conducted by the Board will be heard by any three or more Board members. A decision to expel a student must be supported by a majority of the Board members present, provided that no less than three affirmative votes to expel are cast.
2. Alternatively, the Board may appoint an impartial hearing board composed of one or more persons to hear and decide the expulsion matter, provided that no member of the Board may serve on such panel.

C. Notice:

1. Written notice of the expulsion hearing must be given to the student, and, if the student is a minor, to his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) a reasonable time prior to the time of the hearing.

Students

Conduct and Discipline

C. Notice: (continued)

2. The written notice of the expulsion hearing shall inform the student of the following:
 - a. The date, time, and location of the hearing.
 - b. A short, plain description of the conduct alleged by the Administration.
 - c. The student may present as evidence, testimony and documents concerning the conduct alleged and the appropriate length and conditions of expulsion, as well as notice that the expulsion hearing will be the student's sole opportunity to present such evidence.
 - d. The student may cross-examine witnesses called by the Administration.
 - e. The student may be represented by any third party of his/her choice, including an attorney, at his/her expense or at the expense of his/her parents.
 - f. A student is entitled to the services of a translator or interpreter, to be provided by the Board of Education, whenever the student or his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) do(es) not speak the English language or is handicapped.
 - g. The conditions under which the Board is not legally required to give the student an alternative educational opportunity (if applicable).

D. Hearing Procedures:

1. The hearing will be conducted by the Presiding Officer, who will call the meeting to order, introduce the parties, Board members and Counsel, briefly explain the hearing procedures, and swear in any witnesses called by the Administration or the student.
2. The hearing will be conducted in executive session. A verbatim record of the hearing will be made, either by tape recording or by a stenographer.
3. Formal rules of evidence will not be followed. The Board has the right to accept hearsay and other evidence if it deems that evidence relevant or material to its determination. The Presiding Officer will rule on testimony or evidence as to it being immaterial or irrelevant.
4. The hearing will be conducted in two parts. In the first part of the hearing, the Board will receive and consider evidence regarding the conduct alleged by the

Students

Conduct and Discipline

VII. Expulsion Hearing Procedure (continued)

administration.

5. In the first part of the hearing, the charges will be introduced into the record by the Superintendent or his/her designee.
6. Each witness for the Administration will be called and sworn. After a witness has finished testifying, he/she will be subject to cross-examination by the opposite party or his/her legal Counsel and by Board members.
7. After the Administration has presented its case, the student will be asked if he/she has any witnesses or evidence to present. If so, the witnesses will be sworn, will testify, and will be subject to cross-examination and to questioning by the Board. The student may also choose to make a statement at this time. If the student chooses to make a statement, he or she will be sworn and subject to cross-examination and questioning by the Board. Concluding statements will be made by the Administration and then by the student and/or his or her representative.
8. In cases where the respondent has denied the allegation, the Board must determine whether the respondent committed the offense(s) as charged by the Administration.
9. If the Board determines that the student has committed the conduct as alleged, then the Board shall proceed with the second portion of the hearing, during which the Board will receive and consider evidence regarding the length and conditions of expulsion.
10. When considering the length and conditions of expulsion, the Board may review the student's attendance, academic and past disciplinary records. The Board may ask the Administration for a recommendation as to the discipline to be imposed.
11. Evidence of past disciplinary problems which have led to removal from a classroom, suspension or expulsion of a student being considered for expulsion may be considered only during the second portion of the hearing, during which the Board is considering length of expulsion and nature of alternative educational opportunity to be offered.
12. Where administrators presented the case in support of the charges against the student, such administrative staff shall not be present during the deliberations of the Board either on questions of evidence or on the final discipline to be imposed. The Superintendent or his/her designee may, after reviewing the incident with administrators, and reviewing the student's records, make a recommendation to the Board as to the appropriate discipline to be applied.

Students

Conduct and Discipline

VII. Expulsion Hearing Procedure

D. Hearing Procedures: (continued)

13. The Board shall make findings as to the truth of the charges, if the student has denied them, and, in all cases, the disciplinary action, if any, to be imposed. The Board shall report its final decision in writing to the student, or if such student is a minor, also to the parent(s) or guardian(s), stating the reasons on which the decision is based, and the disciplinary action to be imposed. Said decision shall be based solely on evidence presented at the hearing.

VIII. Board Policy Regarding Mandatory Expulsions

- A. In keeping with Conn. Gen. Stat. §10-233d and the Gun Free Schools Act, it shall be the policy of the Board to expel a student enrolled in grades preschool through grade 12, inclusive, for one full calendar year for: the conduct described in Section VI. (B)(1), (2) and (3) of this policy. The Board may modify the term of expulsion on a case-by-case basis.

IX. Alternative Educational Programs for Expelled Students

A. *Students under sixteen (16) years of age:*

Whenever the Board of Education expels a student under sixteen years of age, it shall offer any such student an alternative educational program, which shall be (1) alternative education, as defined, by C.G.S. 10-74j or (2) in accordance with the standards adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE) with an individualized learning plan.

B. *Students sixteen (16) to eighteen (18) years of age:*

The Board of Education will provide an alternative education to a sixteen to eighteen-year-old student expelled for the first time if he/she requests it and if he/she agrees to the conditions set by the Board of Education, except as follows. The Board of Education is not required to offer an alternative program to any student between the ages of sixteen and eighteen who is expelled for the second time.

C. *Students eighteen (18) years of age or older:*

The Board of Education is not required to offer an alternative educational program to expelled students eighteen years of age or older.

D. *Students identified as eligible for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA"):*

Students

Conduct and Discipline

IX. Alternative Educational Programs for Expelled Students (continued)

If the Board of Education expels a student who has been identified as eligible for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”), it shall offer an alternative educational program to such student in accordance with the requirements of IDEA, as it may be amended from time to time.

X. Notice of Student Expulsion on Cumulative Record

- A. Notice of expulsion and the conduct for which the student was expelled shall be included on the student’s cumulative educational record. Such notice, except for notice of an expulsion based upon possession of a firearm or deadly weapon, shall be expunged from the cumulative educational record by the Board if the student graduates from high school.
- B. If a student’s expulsion is shortened or the expulsion period waived based upon the fact that the student was expelled for the first time, had never been suspended, and successfully completed a Board specified program and/or met other conditions required by the Board, the notice of expulsion shall be expunged from the cumulative educational record if the student graduates from high school or, if the Board so chooses, at the time the student completes the Board specified program and meets any other conditions required by the Board.

XI. Change of Residence During Expulsion Proceedings

A. Student moving into the school district:

1. If a student enrolls in the district while an expulsion hearing is pending in another district, such student shall not be excluded from school pending completion of the expulsion hearing unless an emergency exists, as defined above. The Board shall retain the authority to suspend the student or to conduct its own expulsion hearing.
2. Where a student enrolls in the district during the period of expulsion from another school district, the Board may adopt the decision of the student expulsion hearing conducted by such other school district. The Board shall make its determination based upon a hearing held by the Board which shall be limited to a determination of whether the conduct which was the basis of the expulsion would also warrant expulsion by the Board.

B. Student moving out of the school district:

Where a student withdraws from school after having been notified that an expulsion hearing is pending, but before a decision has been rendered by the Board, the notice of the pending expulsion hearing shall be included on the

Students

Conduct and Discipline

XI. Change of Residence During Expulsion Proceedings (continued)

student's cumulative record and the Board shall complete the expulsion hearing and render a decision. If the Board subsequently renders a decision to expel the student, a notice of the expulsion shall be included on the student's cumulative record.

XII. Procedures Governing Suspension and Expulsion of Students Identified as Eligible for Services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA")

A. Suspension of IDEA students:

Notwithstanding the foregoing, if the Administration suspends a student identified as eligible for services under the IDEA (an "IDEA student") who has engaged in conduct that violated any rule or code of conduct of the school district that applies to all students, the following procedures shall apply:

1. The Administration shall make reasonable attempts to immediately notify the parents of the student of the decision to suspend on the date on which the decision to suspend was made, and a copy of the special education procedural safeguards must either be hand-delivered or sent by mail to the parents on the date that the decision to suspend was made.

A. Suspension of IDEA students: (continued)

2. During the period of suspension, the school district is not required to provide any educational services to the IDEA student beyond that which is provided to all students suspended by the school district.

B. Expulsion and Suspensions that Constitute Changes in Placement for IDEA students:

Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary, if the Administration recommends for expulsion an IDEA student who has engaged in conduct that violated any rule or code of conduct of the school district that applies to all students, the procedures described in this section shall apply. The procedures described in this section shall also apply for students whom the Administration has suspended in a manner that is considered under the IDEA, as it may be amended from time to time, to be a change in placement:

1. The parents of the student must be notified of the decision to suspend on the date on which the decision to suspend was made, and a copy of the special education procedural safeguards must either be hand-delivered or sent by mail to the parents on the date that the decision to suspend was made.

Students

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XII. Procedures Governing Suspension and Expulsion of Students Identified as Eligible for Services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”) (continued)

2. The school district shall immediately convene the IEP team, but in no case later than ten (10) school days after the recommendation for expulsion or the suspension which constitutes a change in placement was made. The student’s IEP team shall consider the relationship between the student’s disability and the behavior that led to the recommendation for expulsion or the suspension which constitutes a change in placement, in order to determine whether the student’s behavior was a manifestation of his/her disability.
3. If the IEP team finds that the behavior was a manifestation of the student’s disability, the Administration shall not proceed with the recommendation for expulsion. The IEP team shall consider the student’s misconduct and revise the IEP to prevent a recurrence of the misconduct and to provide for the safety of other students and staff.
4. If the IEP team finds that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student’s disability, the Administration may proceed with the recommended expulsion or suspension that constitutes a change in placement.
5. During any period of expulsion, or suspension of greater than ten (10) days per school year, the Administration shall provide the student with an alternative education program in accordance with the provisions of the IDEA.

B. Expulsion and Suspensions that Constitute Changes in Placement for IDEA students: (continued)

6. The special education records and disciplinary records of the student must be transmitted to the individual(s) who will make the final determination regarding a recommendation for expulsion or a suspension that results in a change in placement.

C. Transfer of IDEA students for Certain Offenses:

School personnel may transfer an IDEA student to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for not more than forty-five (45) calendar days if the student:

1. Was in possession of a dangerous weapon, as defined in 18 U.S.C. 930(g)(2), as amended from time to time, on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity, or

Students

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C. *Transfer of IDEA students for Certain Offenses: (continued)*

2. Knowingly possessed or used illegal drugs or sold or solicited the sale of a controlled substance while at school or at a school-sponsored activity; or

As used in this subsection XII. C., the term “dangerous weapon” means a weapon, device, instrument, material, or substance, animate or inanimate, that is used for, or is readily capable of, causing death or serious bodily injury, except that such term does not include a pocketknife with a blade of less than 2.5 inches in length.

XIII. Procedures Governing Suspension and Expulsion of Students Identified as Eligible for Educational Accommodations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

A. *Expulsion of students identified as eligible for educational accommodations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973*

Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary, if the Administration recommends for expulsion a student identified as eligible for educational accommodations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (a “Section 504 Student”) who has engaged in conduct that violated any rule or code of conduct of the school district that applies to all students, the following procedures shall apply:

1. The parents of the student must be notified of the decision to recommend the student for expulsion.
2. The district shall immediately convene the students Section 504 team (504 team), for the purpose of reviewing the relationship between the student’s disability and the behavior that led to the recommendation for expulsion, in order to determine whether the student’s behavior was a manifestation of his/her disability.
3. If the 504 team finds that the behavior was a manifestation of the student’s disability, the Administration shall not proceed with the recommendation for expulsion. The 504 team shall consider the student’s misconduct and revise the 504 plan to prevent a recurrence of the misconduct and to provide for the safety of other students and staff.
4. If the 504 team finds that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student’s disability, the Administration may proceed with the recommendation for expulsion.

XIV. Notification to Parents or Guardian

- A. The parents or guardian of any minor student either expelled or suspended or removed from class shall be given notice of such disciplinary action within (24) hours

Students

Conduct and Discipline

XIV. Notification to Parents or Guardian (continued)

of the time of the institution of the period of expulsion, suspension or removal from class.

- B. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall forward to the student concerned and his/her parents, or the student if he/she has attained the age of 18, a copy of this Board policy on student discipline at the time the Superintendent or his/her designee sends out the notice that an expulsion hearing will be convened.

XV. An expelled student may apply for early readmission to school. The Board delegates the authority to make decisions on readmissions to the Administration. Students desiring readmission to school shall direct such readmission requests to the Administration. The Administration has the discretion to approve or deny such readmission requests and may condition readmission on specified criteria.

The Board of Education shall, at the beginning of each school year and at such other times as it may deem appropriate, provide an effective means of informing all students, parent(s) and/or guardian(s) of this policy.

XVII. Compliance with Reporting Requirements

1. The Board of Education shall report all suspensions and expulsions to the State Department of Education.
2. If the Board of Education expels a student for sale or distribution of a controlled substance, the Board shall refer such student to an appropriate state or local agency for rehabilitation, intervention or job training and inform the agency of its action.
3. If the Board of Education expels a student for possession of a deadly weapon or firearm, as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. §53a-3, the violation shall be reported to the local police.

Legal References: Connecticut General Statutes

4-177 – 4-180 Contested cases. Notice. Record, as amended
10-74j Alternative education (PA 15-133)
10-233a through 10-233f Suspension, removal and expulsion of students,
as amended by PA 95-304, PA 96-244, PA 98-139, PA 07-66, PA 07-122,
PA 08-160, PA 09-82, PA 09-6 (September Special Session), PA 10-111,
PA 14-229, PA 15-96 PA 16-147 and PA 17-220
10-233f In-school suspension of students.

Students

Conduct and Discipline

Legal References: Connecticut General Statutes (continued)

Packer v. Board of Educ. of the Town of Thomaston, 246 Conn.89 (1998).
Public Act 98-139

Honig v. Doe, (United States Supreme Court 1988)

Individuals with Disabilities Act, 20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq. as amended by
the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997 (P.L.
105-17). Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. §
794(a).

P.L. 108-446 Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of
2004

State v. Hardy, 896 A.2d 755, 278 Conn. 113 (2006)

Adopted: May 11, 1976

Adopted: July 12, 1994

Adopted: September 27, 1994

Amended: February 28, 1995

Amended: November 12, 1996

Revised: October 23, 2001

Revised: December 10, 2002

Reviewed: September 22, 2009

Revised: January 14, 2012

Revised: June 28, 2016

Adopted: February 23, 2021

Revised:

**ENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Enfield, Connecticut**

Bylaws of the Board

9160

Student Representatives

The Enfield Board of Education acknowledges the value of the insights, opinions and information that can be provided by members of the student body. To this end, it will be the policy of the Board to seat two students from Enfield High School in nonvoting capacity at all public Board of Education meetings. Student opinion will be solicited to give an added dimension to the Board's decision-making process.

The following guidelines and procedures will be followed for the seating of the student representatives:

1. Student representatives shall attend as a guest and at the invitation of The Board.
2. Attendance at Board meetings shall be considered a school sponsored event and, as such, student representatives shall be subject to and comply with all Board policies as well as all school rules and regulations.
3. Two student representatives and two (2) alternate representatives shall be recommended by the student government body, subject to the approval of the building Principal. To be eligible the student must be a member of the Junior or Senior class in good standing (letter grade "C" average or above), cannot be ineligible for student activities and must have taken and passed a Civics course as a pre-requisite.
4. The Board of Education reserves the right to dismiss a student representative, by majority vote, who fails to attend three (3) Board meetings without being excused or other cause and call for the selection of a new representative. Student representatives may also be removed from their position of nonvoting representatives to the Board of Education by action of the building Principal, with input from the Faculty Advisor(s) of the student governing body.
5. Student representatives shall be recommended and appointed ~~in the spring of the current school year for the following~~ *each* school year.
6. The term of office for student representatives shall be one (1) school year, normally beginning with the start of the school year.
7. Student representatives shall receive credit for participation as an Independent Study and shall report back to the student governing body and the teacher assigned as the advisor to the student governing body.
8. After being appointed, Student Representatives will be given an orientation session by the Superintendent of Schools, a member of the Board of Education or their designee, the building Principal and a teacher advisor from the student governing body.

Bylaws of the Board

9160

Student Representatives (continued)

Privileges and Responsibilities

Student Representatives may:

1. Be able to attend all regular meetings of the Board of Education and may, at their option, attend special meetings or other public meetings of the Board of Education;
2. Receive copies of all regular meetings agendas, minutes and other pertinent information and publications which are made available to Board of Education members, except for Executive Session related material;
3. Comment under Board Comments on the agenda or make a report under Committee Reports;
4. Request through the Chairman or ranking Minority member to have an item placed on the agenda for a Board meeting;
5. Participate in discussion and speak on any motion or issue on the agenda unless deemed inappropriate by the Board;
6. Be eligible to sit on committees and sub-committees of the Board of Education if deemed appropriate by the Board and appointed by the Chairman.

Student Representatives may not:

1. Make motions or cast an official vote on any motion or resolution;
2. Attend executive session, "non-meetings," negotiation sessions or any other meeting deemed inappropriate by the Board.

Only those privileges and powers enumerated previously shall be regarded specifically as such; any and all other powers and privileges that might be deemed appropriate for the student representatives shall be decided upon by the Board of Education.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
9-203 Number and term of members of boards of education.

Bylaw adopted by the Board: October 24, 2017

Revised:



We make a difference in Enfield - every child, every day.

Item # 10b.

ENFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION

1010 ENFIELD STREET • ENFIELD, CONNECTICUT 06082
TEL: 860.253.6531 • FAX: 860.253.6515

DRAFT

October 10, 2023

Mrs. Sheila Bailey, Town Clerk
Enfield Town Hall
820 Enfield Street
Enfield, CT 06082

Re: Schedule of Regular Meetings for 2024 – Enfield Board of Education

Dear Mrs. Bailey:

The dates for regular scheduled meetings for the Enfield Board of Education for 2024 are herein submitted. The Board of Education plans to meet on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month on the presented schedule.

All meetings are planned to begin at 7:00 PM at the Town Hall in Council Chambers located at 820 Enfield Street, Enfield, Connecticut unless otherwise indicated.

January 9	April 23	September 10
January 23	May 14	September 24
February 13	May 28	October 8
February 27	June 11	October 22
March 12	June 25	November 12
March 26	July 9	November 26
April 9	August 27	December 10

Sincerely,

Tina LeBlanc
Madam Chair

Ref: Board Policy #9321

ENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Enfield, Connecticut

9321

Bylaws of the Board

Time, Place and Notification of Meetings

Regular Meetings of the Board – Regular meetings of the Board shall be held on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM except for the following months:

December - Second Tuesday only

July – Second Tuesday only

August – Fourth Tuesday only

Special Meetings of the Board – Special meetings shall be called by the Chairperson upon a written request of one-third of the members or whenever deemed necessary by the Chairperson. Written notice of all special meetings shall be given to the members of the Board at least 24 hours previous to the time stated for the meeting to convene. Said notice shall indicate the purpose of such special meetings; and no other business shall be transacted at such meetings except upon the unanimous vote of the whole Board.

Special meetings are to be held on other days of the week (other than Mondays) so as not to conflict with Town council meetings.

Adjournment of Meetings – Meetings shall adjourn no later than 11:00 PM. Extensions in time of adjournment may occur should two-thirds of the members present so approve (in the event five members are in attendance, it will be necessary to have 4 affirmative votes for an extension in time of adjournment; if seven members are in attendance, it will be necessary to have five affirmative votes).

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
 1-200 (2) Definitions. “Meeting”
 1-206 Denial of access to public records or meetings.
 1-225 Meetings of government agencies to be public, as amended by June
 11 Special Session, PA 08-3.
 1-227 Mailing of notice of meetings to persons filing written request.
 1-228 Adjournment of meetings. Notice.
 1-229 Continued hearings. Notice.
 1-230 Regular meetings to be held pursuant to regulation, ordinance or
 resolution.
 10-218 Officers. Meetings.

Bylaw adopted by the Board: October 24, 2017

Revised: May 9, 2023

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 12, 2023**

DRAFT

A regular meeting of the Enfield Board of Education was held in Council Chambers on September 12, 2023.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Madam Chair LeBlanc.
2. **MOMENT OF SILENCE:** Amanda Pickett
3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Amanda Pickett
4. **FIRE EVACUATION ANNOUNCEMENT:**
5. **ROLL CALL:**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jean Acree, Dr. Gerald Calnen, Janet Cushman (participated remotely), Joshua Hamre, Scott Ryder, John Unghire, and Tina LeBlanc

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jonathan LeBlanc

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Christopher J. Drezek, Superintendent & Mr. Andrew B. Longey, Assistant Superintendent

6. **BOARD GUEST(S)**

a. EHS Best Buddies

Mr. Drezek welcomed JFK Special Education Teacher Amy Santanella and EHS students Delaney and Autumn.

Mrs. Santanella thanked the Board for this invitation. She explained that Best Buddies is about friendship. She further explained how she became involved with this program that has had a huge impact on our students. She had a student that wanted to visit her friend at JFK. This student, Delaney Hutchings is now a senior now. She never wanted to see anyone sitting alone during lunch. She met Autumn LeDuke in fourth grade, and they have been friends ever since. JFK has a huge club comprised of students and staff members that support our goals. Delaney is the president of the club at EHS and has continued to spread our message of kindness, caring and friendship.

Mrs. Santanella added she nominated Delaney and Autumn as Connecticut's Best Buddies Champions of the Year. They spread kindness and inclusion. Both Delaney and Autumn are both seniors that are ready to take on the world. She thanked them for their hard work, and she is their biggest fan. Enfield is rooting for them as well as the JFK/EHS families, friends, staff members, Board and Town Council members. You are our champions.

Ms. Hutchings thanked everyone for their support. Best Buddies has made a huge impact on her life. She met Autumn in grade four and their friendship has continued to grow throughout the years. Mrs. Santanella has taught us so much and our bond has continued to grow. She also wants to be a Special Education teacher like Mrs. Santanella. Mrs. Santanella started a chapter at JFK. We have made so many friendships because of Best Buddies. We formed another chapter at EHS and Mr. Ramos is our advisor. Being nominated for this award means a lot to us. This competition raises awareness about the important work of Best Buddies. We will hold our next fundraiser event at the Raffia Road Service Station for a car wash on Saturday, September 16th and on September 23rd at Standout Nutrition from 8-3 PM. Thank

you for all your support.

Ms. Leduke spoke about how important Best Buddies is to her. She likes doing fun things. We have been raising money for Best Buddies. We collected bottles at our can and bottle drive. Thank you for your help.

Mr. Ryder stated this is amazing. What are you fundraising for? We would love to help you promote this. What are your next steps from being nominated as Champions? Will this go to a state committee next? What is the process?

Ms. Hutchings stated any money we raise goes to our team. They will announce the winner at the gala. It is basically whoever raises the most money. The money will be used for leadership training. The money will also help with other chapter fees.

Mrs. Santanella added Best Buddies is a non-profit organization. The money we raise goes back into the organization to make more chapters in schools. They are now trying to start this program at elementary schools. There is also a Best Buddies walk that will be held. They have inclusive living chapters also. Chapters have been started for adults to live at. There are integrated employment opportunities at Black and Decker who is a huge supporter of Best Buddies. They will hire individuals with any abilities, so everyone is included. Delaney and Autumn have blown this out of the water. Mayor Cressotti was at our fundraiser event at Red Robin. We had an amazing turnout. Our community cares deeply.

Mr. Ryder asked them to send him their link so he can help to spread the word. Mrs. Santanella will forward that to him. Any amount will make a difference. Thank you.

Mrs. Pickett added we are all rooting for you. You are already winners in our hearts. What you are doing is awesome. There are so many opportunities to grow this program and make partnerships. She thanked both Delaney and Autumn. You have taught her a new language about special abilities and how you are all unique and special. How much money are you trying to raise?

Ms. Hutchings stated our goal is \$5,000. We have raised around \$2,000. Mrs. Pickett added lets get our cars washed, donate our bottles and cans and get something at Standard Nutrition. She also thanked Mrs. Santanella, Mr. Ramos and staff for all their support and dedication.

Mr. Hamre would also like to promote your fundraising events. He asked about how many pairs are at JFK and EHS?

Ms. Hutchings stated we have a matching party. Each student with an ability will be matched with a regular education student. JFK has a lot of students that are paired into groups. Sometimes there are 4 in a friend group.

Mrs. Santanella added it is different at the high school. The chapter at the high school is student driven. She attends every meeting at the middle school. Delaney is the president of the chapter and Mr. Ramos is the advisor to guide them at EHS. JFK has a large number of students. At EHS, the students do things together and are very flexible. The best thing about Best Buddies is this is never forced on anyone. We do more group activities at JFK. At EHS, the students do things independently. The friendships that have formed are melded on their own. It is very flexible. When it melds and works you have what Delaney and Autumn have and it is wonderful. Having this program at the elementary schools would be more involved and would need more staff members. She thanked Mr. Ramos for being involved at the high school level. When Delaney graduates, we need someone as amazing as she is to fill her shoes at EHS. We have been talking about training sophomores and juniors and getting them involved in more leadership roles. It is different at each level, and we have a lot of matches.

Mr. Hamre added this is another example of what we are doing right in our schools. This is

very humbling. He thanked them all for coming here tonight.

Mrs. Acree thanked Mrs. Santanella for starting such a great club. She congratulated Delaney and Autumn for being nominated as Champions. It is wonderful to hear that Delaney has such a kind, compassionate heart. That was the catalyst for your teacher starting this club. Delaney and Autumn are sharing such a beautiful friendship. We need more young people to get along like this. From this friendship, you have been able to accomplish so much together. Thank you.

Mr. Unghire thanked Delaney and Autumn for coming and speaking about the Best Buddies program tonight. He thanked Mrs. Santanella for starting this organization. You spoke about friendship, kindness, compassion and caring. These are the highest of human qualities. These qualities are rooted from love. That is what is in your heart and that is what inspired you to do this. He has a lot of cans in his garage and is willing to help with your donations. Just let me know when and where. He will also look for other ways to support your program financially. Thank you.

Dr. Calnen stated what an incredible journey we have made over the past decades. We are very proud of the legislation that has passed. You have formed an intergenerational friendship. Your mutual respect is profound. This is an incredible idea and such a simple solution that is profound. He congratulated them all.

Mrs. Cushman thanked them for talking about Best Buddies and learning about this program continuing to adults with housing and employment opportunities. This is exciting that this program will be coming to elementary schools. Mrs. Santanella stated she would like to start this at the elementary level. There are opportunities where this could take off. We also have reading buddies and library helpers at the elementary level.

Mrs. Cushman asked if you have started mentoring the younger students with high school students. Ms. Hutchings stated we have some students in grade 10 that want to be involved including Delaney's brother. Last year, our club was small without an advisor. Now we have Mr. Ramos. This is a great opportunity for anyone that wants to get involved. You can have many chapter presidents.

Mrs. Cushman added you are really making a difference. Thank you for your commitment.

Madam Chair stated you have touched us deeply. This program is so impactful and touching. You are our future. One of the best things about Best Buddies is this is being led by other students. She is impressed with how this nonprofit organization offers leadership training. We all wish you a lot of luck. Please send us your link and let us know if we can do anything. Going forward, we would love to get updates from Mrs. Santanella about the Best Buddies program.

Madam Chair encouraged Ms. Hutchings to come back to Enfield Public Schools when you are ready to start teaching. It would be amazing to have you back here. It is students like you and Autumn that make the world a better place. You are the ones that are teaching us. Thank you.

Ms. Hutchings thanked the Board for this opportunity. Ms. Leduke also thanked them.

The Board gave them all a standing ovation.

Mr. Drezek commented that you will graduate this year as the class of 2024, you will also be the graduating college class of 2028. You will be a freshman again when you come back here as a teacher in 2028. Congratulations.

b. Armando Ramos – 2023-24 TOY

Mr. Drezek welcomed our teacher of the year Armando Ramos. He has attended several Board meetings last year informing the Board about our Unified Sports program. He is also Connecticut's Unified Coach of the Year.

Mr. Ramos added that was a tough act to follow. Last year was so successful because of unified sports. Last year, we did an activity with a student teacher who was visually impaired. He demonstrated this activity by using Mr. Drezek.

Mr. Ramos provided the Board with a power point presentation with inclusion events from 2022-23 that included Special Olympics on Capital Hill Day; hosting a CIAC Cornhole Tournament; being named 2023 Connecticut Unified Coach of the Year; attending the CAS Elementary Leadership Conference; attending Student Seminars; Best Buddies; Community Inclusion Events; First Responders Volleyball Tournament; hosting the Enfield Allied Stars, JFK Unified and EHS Unified Team on Special Olympic Track and Field Night; Autism Awareness Month and Inclusion Campaigns; Inclusion Rocks with Enfield street School; and spreading the word to end the word and Inclusion Campaign Pledge Day. We had a really great year.

Mr. Ramos shared his Teacher of the Year message. This job is about relationships and the relationships he has built with his students. Cultivating these relationships takes time but it is worth it. Our mission statement is to make Enfield High School a kinder, more accepting place where all students feel included and are successful. This has become our philosophy. He still remembers his favorite teacher when he was in high school and how they made him feel connected. Creating classroom environments where kids feel connected to you, their classmates and their school is the most rewarding part of this job.

Mr. Ramos stated last February, Special Olympics Connecticut asked him to join them at the Special Olympics Capitol Hill Day in Washington, DC. We brought a team to advocate for Special Olympics and Unified Sports. We shared stories about how Special Olympics has positively impacted our lives and why Congress should support Special Olympics. He also shared stories as a coach on the impacts he has seen. He shared a portion of that speech and some of his students comments they wrote for the annual State Essay Contest.

Mr. Ramos also thanked the PE Department. This honor is a team effort, and he could not have done this without them. He also thanked his students who make him look good every day and make his job awesome. These relationships are priceless to him. He never envisioned being here giving this speech and is deeply honored. His former Springfield College classmate and Rugby teammate Andy Longey said it best, not bad for a couple of knuckle heads from Springfield College. Thank you.

Mr. Ramos also received a standing ovation.

Madam Chair stated we have a special guest who would like to say a few words on behalf of the parents and what they have experienced with you and Unified Sports.

Sara Leventhal is a parent of an Enfield High student in Mr. Ramos class. As Enfield's Teacher of the Year, he becomes part of the process for Connecticut's Teacher of the Year. She shared a deeply moving letter she wrote in support of his candidacy.

Madam Chair thanked Ms. Leventhal for sharing her letter with the Board and public. It was very important to hear from a parent's perspective.

Mr. Hamre added this is one heck of a way to start our meeting. This is very humbling to have your colleagues recognize you and hear about the support from your families that you have impacted. For us sitting up here witnessing this is amazing.

Mrs. Pickett also thanked him but is not surprised because we have heard about all of the amazing things you have been doing and you deserve to be recognized. You spoke about belonging. She loves the words of togetherness. That has been the theme and she hopes to see this continue to grow. You have partnered with our Police Department and Allied. She remembers the rocks at Enfield Street. Thank you and congratulations. You are already a winner for us.

Mrs. Acree also congratulated Mr. Ramos for being Enfield's Teacher of the Year. She is a retired teacher and feels teaching is an honorable profession. By winning this award it shows that you are an excellent teacher. Hearing about all of your hard work tonight was amazing. You exhibit hard work, dedication, professionalism and respect from your colleagues. This is very rewarding and can be overwhelming.

Mr. Ramos added it is definitely overwhelming and he agrees with you. Mrs. Acree thanked him for being such a great teacher.

Mr. Unghire also thanked him for what you are doing for Enfield Public Schools and our Enfield community. Congratulations for being our Teacher of the Year and keep up the great work. How long have you been working here? Mr. Ramos stated he started teaching in 2000.

Madam Chair thanked Mr. Ramos. You make Enfield Public Schools better. She can tell that all of this attention makes you a little uncomfortable. You are doing this with your heart, and you are making Enfield a better place to live and to be a student. We are all proud of you.

Members of the Board of Education presented Mr. Ramos with a gift. Mr. Ramos thanked the Board. He is so overwhelmed. He also thanked Sara Leventhal. Your letter is very touching and sweet. This means a lot to him. He also thanked Marilyn and Brian Cressotti for recruiting him when he was at Enrico Fermi. This was the best decision he ever made. Thank you.

7. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

a. EPS Update

Mr. Drezek stated the Board will vote on Student Representatives later on the agenda. We will in-service the student representatives tomorrow so they can start attending Board meetings.

Mr. Drezek reported that our schools are off to a great start. The weather has been a bit warmer than we anticipated. We held some unplanned half days. He thanked our parents for working with us during the early release days that we held due to the temperatures at some of our elementary schools. We know it is not easy making pickup changes and juggling your schedules. Thank you for your understanding.

Mr. Drezek spoke about policy #6162.51 Surveys of Students – Student Privacy that is included in student handbooks that has caused some concerns. There is some misinformation out there. This policy is required by Federal Law. The policy was updated Federally in 2020 and we created this policy in 2021 based on legal advice. The policy gives parents the right to opt out of several different surveys. The policy is centered around student surveys but there is a section that mentions invasive medical exams. We do not conduct medical examinations here in Enfield. This portion of the policy is what is causing some concerns. Our nurses will conduct vision, hearing and scoliosis exams. Your child's physician will provide medical exams that are required to attend school. Some school based health centers can perform physicals. Our nurses do not provide or conduct physicals. If there is an emergency on the playground or inside of the school, our nurses will assess the child and if needed, they will call for an ambulance and the parent/guardian will be notified. That is their protocol. The policy does not say emergency it says non-emergency. The reason it is in the policy is because it is Federal law. Other districts may have their nurses conduct physical exams, we do not. Districts with school based health centers may do this with nurses that are PA's or NP's. The Board may

decide to review this policy.

AUDIENCES

Madam Chair stated she will allow 4 minutes for audience member participation.

Maureen Griffin, Abbe Road – Mrs. Griffin reflected about comments from the last Board meeting. Mr. LeBlanc will not be running, and it will be a loss for our community, schools and district. He truly understands what it means to be a Board member. She urged parents to raise their children with strong values. Diversity and opinions are needed. Our public schools must accept all students. She would like to see another presentation about support services offered to our students and families. She thanked Mr. Drezek for explaining the policy.

8. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mrs. Acree thanked Mrs. Griffin for her comments. She also welcomed back students, teachers and staff members. She looks forward to reporting on events and happenings at Prudence Crandall and working with the members of the Board and accomplishing great things this year. Thank you.

Dr. Calnen provided the Board with an update on events happening at Kite, ECDC, Grants, homeless population, Sparkler program, Circle of Security Training, FRC and Family Day that will be held on Sunday, September 17th from 11:30-3:00 PM. The next Kite meeting will be held on October 4th at JFK.

Mrs. Cushman thanked Mr. Drezek for the information about Policy #6162.51. She wonders if we could separate the two sections making this into 2 policies. Mr. Longey stated we can discuss this at the next Policy meeting under Items from the table. Then he can reach out to our attorney's for further direction. We cannot change the nature of the policy, but we might be able to soften up the language.

Dr. Calnen stated we can also look at the term "invasive". From a medical standpoint, that term does not make any sense. He would advise removing or revising it.

Mr. Longey asked Board members to send your suggestions to Mr. Ryder for our next Policy meeting to discuss further. He agrees that the language needs to be addressed.

Mr. Drezek stated that term came directly from the document we received from the US Department of Education.

Mr. Hamre thanked Enfield Fire District #1 for their annual 9/11 memorial ceremony. He also thanked Lori Gates and Town Hall for the flag display outside. He spoke about a resident that needs a kidney and the lawn signs "Natalie needs a Hero". There will be a musical petty zoo of instruments at Family Day for attendees to try out. He also spoke about the parking/parent drop off at Henry Barnard that is very concerning.

Mr. Hamre stated Policy #6162.51 concerns will be addressed and handled correctly at the next Policy Committee meeting. He agrees that some changes are needed.

Mr. Hamre received an email from an EHS senior about bringing back a talent show. He wished Dr. C a happy birthday. September is library card sign up/renewal month. If you are interested in renewing your library card or signing up for one, you can be entered into a drawing for a prize at "Wood n Tap". He spoke about a book he is reading – "We are going to be Lucky – A World War II Love Story of Letters".

Mr. Unghire stated Hazardville Memorial has some changes this year. Mrs. Hunter has moved on and he wishes her good luck in her new endeavors. The new Memorial principal is Kristen

Fitzsimons. He congratulated Ms. Fitzsimons and added that she is doing a wonderful job. We are all happy to see you in this new position.

Mrs. Pickett stated also at Hazardville Memorial is new Assistant Principal Kim Tait. Hazardville Memorial has truly gained a gem. She wished them good luck at your new school. Ms. Tate will be missed at Enfield Street.

Mrs. Pickett missed the last Board meeting. She spoke about our staff, new staff and the reflection of teaching. Our schools are inclusive. Going back to school is hard. She thanked all our teachers for everything they do to make our students feel welcome. Some of our staff have been working here for over 20 years even though they could accept another higher paying job in another district. Our students have graduated and have come back to teach in our district. Thank you. She is looking forward to hearing about our strategic goals. She would also like to see improvement in our buildings and facilities. We need to take pride in how our schools and grounds look. She now has children at two different schools, and it is challenging getting kids to each school. We need to ease the burdens on families and cannot wait for changes to come.

Mrs. Pickett understands the concerns Mr. Hamre discussed about Henry Barnard. There are also challenges at Enfield Street. There are no school zone signs or speed signs posted on Enfield Street by the school to make drivers aware.

Mr. Drezek stated the parking lot concerns at Henry Barnard were multiplied today due to voting taking place. We work closely with the Enfield Police Department, and they take this very seriously and monitor the traffic flow at our schools. We witness this every day at Alcorn where the bus flashing lights and signs are ignored by passing vehicles. This is a concern for our entire community.

Mrs. Pickett added signs are needed. She wasn't sure because of the historical history that would prevent signs from being put up. She agrees about the changes needed to the policy you discussed needed more context and additional communication is needed. She thanked Mrs. Griffin for her comments at the last meeting about hearing different student voices. She provided an update about happenings and events at Enfield Street school and Edgar H. Parkman. Thank you school staff for everything you do for our families.

Mr. Ryder stated there are a lot of events and school happenings. Early release last week changed the schedule for open house nights. He reminded principals to send him events and he will place them on the enfieldpto.com website. He thanked our amazing PTO volunteers for everything they are doing.

Mr. Ryder thanked Mr. Ramos for recognizing Marilyn Cressotti. Jim Malley will provide a presentation about our schools at the central library on September 14th from 6-7:30 PM. This is a good opportunity to hear more about the history of our schools. Thank you Mr. Malley for doing this.

Mr. Ryder reminded everyone about PJ Day that will be celebrated on December 8th. This will be our 6th year participating as a school district for Connecticut Children's Hospital. Last year we raised \$10K. Our district goal for this year is \$7.5K. He is sure we will surpass this amount. We have always finished in the top 5. He is in the process of contacting other Enfield businesses to participate. We will send out the donation link. He thanked everyone that participated last year.

Madam Chair stated we received a notice from Enfield Loaves & Fishes about how you can help them. This is really a community event. For more information you can go to www.enfieldloavesandfishes.org. They do an amazing job of our community. She urged everyone to get involved in our community.

Madam Chair stated she misses the crazy back to school days. She hope everyone had a great back to school. September is national suicide prevention month. Having Armondo and Best Buddies here tonight is important. We also have Rachael's Challenge with their many acts of kindness. You do not know how much your kind words or a simple smile can have such a powerful impact on someone. Check on your friends and family members. Many are dealing with mental illness and can struggle from time to time.

9. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** None

10. **NEW BUSINESS:**

a. **Approve 2023-24 Student Representative & Alternates**

Mr. Unghire moved, seconded by Mrs. Pickett, that the Enfield Board of Education approves the 2023-24 Student Representatives & Alternates as presented.

Discussion:

Mr. Ryder suggest we rotate the representatives so we can hear from them all and they can participate throughout the school year.

Mr. Hamre agrees with Mr. Ryder. This would be worthwhile exploring this further. It would be great to have the diversity from the student representatives.

Mrs. Pickett added that Policy #9160 Student Representatives should include inclusive language as part of the selection process and their roles as representatives and alternates.

Mr. Hamre thanked the students that are interested and want to do this.

A vote by **roll call – 8-0-0** passed unanimously.

b. **Discussion & Action regarding Enfield Mental Health & Wellness Mission Statement**

Madam Chair stated both Dr. Calnen and Mrs. Acree have been doing a lot of work on the Enfield Mental Health and Wellness Committee for Enfield Public Schools. Last week they met with Board Leadership about this. They have developed a mission statement and they are here to give the Board an update and their next steps.

Dr. Calnen stated he mentioned at the last Board meeting about funding and the need to have a mission statement as recommended by Senator Kissel for tapping into resources. This is more of a statement of intent vs. a mission statement because it is too wordy the way it is now. This statement was shared with both caucuses. He read the statement of intent.

Dr. Calnen added he spoke to Mr. Neville, and it was Mr. Neville's impression when they were building EHS they were going to have space for a school based health center. This is something he would like the school modernization committee to keep in mind with their plans.

Dr. Calnen stated this is our proposal to bring the concept of a Mental Health Committee to the Policy Committee. This should proceed regardless of what we do here tonight. They are two separate issues. Thank you.

Mr. Hamre moved, seconded by Mrs. Acree that the Enfield Board of Education approves the Enfield Mental Health & Wellness Committee Mission Statement.

Discussion:

Mr. Unghire stated he is not in support of this mission statement as written. The mission statement should be more succinct and explain what the mission is. This should be first fine-tuned before we vote on it. He applauds both Mrs. Acree and Dr. Calnen for recognizing mental health concerns in our schools. We need to establish a Mental Health Committee first and then look at the frame works for that committee. The document needs additional work. You are discussing expanding and enhancing our systems. We need to document our resources and effectiveness of these resources first before we enhance them. What is working or not working and can they be fixed. If they can't be fixed, then we should look at enhancing and expanding our resources. This work is extremely important. More work is needed on developing the mission statement and the function of the committee.

Mrs. Acree stated that is why this is going to go to the Policy Committee first. We decided to do this at the Board Leadership meeting to send this to the Policy Committee so they can define the responsibilities and roles pertaining to this committee. Once the Policy Committee has done this, we can move forward, and we will be able to come up with a better mission statement.

Mr. Unghire asked if this is something we are going to vote on tonight.

Madam Chair added this is a mission statement and we are discussing this now. She understands that this is a mission statement. The next step will be to form a committee. This is going to be looked at by the Policy Committee. This will be a different kind of subcommittee than we typically have.

Mrs. Pickett stated she has spoken with Dr. Calnen and Mrs. Acree. She thanked them for the work they have done. We need to look at what we are currently doing, look at the needs of our students, and better support our students. The data is clear that we need to do something. She does not feel the statement that was read needs to be formally adopted. Going through the Policy Committee first to address the purpose of the committee makes sense. There might be some concerns coming down the pike because of what is being addressed.

Madam Chair added this is a mission statement and the next step will be to form a committee. This needs to be centered around wellness. She supports the work of this potential committee but not the statement as written.

Mr. Ryder added even when Dr. Calnen was reading this, there were changes that were needed to the statement. He was editing this as he was reading it. If the motion is to accept the mission statement, he does not want to go on record voting against this because it is needed. If we could amend the motion to proceed to table this so both Dr. Calnen and Mrs. Acree can continue with your fact finding to see what we can do as a group. We need to take ownership as the Board of Education. There are other committees like this in our town and you have run into some roadblocks. We need to take ownership and give you permission to move forward but maybe not with the words as presented.

Mrs. Pickett would like to second that amendment.

Madam Chair stated Mr. Hammer had something to add first.

Mr. Hamre stated Mental Health Services are needed in our schools. Trying to work with another group did not work for the betterment of our students. The Board, along with Dr. Calnen and Mrs. Acree are working to address mental health concerns on our own accord. The statement is wordy and needs fine tuning. We need to get this moving forward. There is a staff shortage of mental health professionals and clinicians. He supports moving this forward.

Dr. Calnen stated he wanted to place this item on the agenda. That was before I met with Board Leadership. We have two related issues. He agrees with Mr. Unghire. We need to get the committee up and running and then we can address the mission statement. At least we

have a starting point for the mission statement and can amend it as needed. He also agrees that we do not fully understand what services currently exist. That should be a priority. He agrees with the suggestion to table this.

Madam Chair added we have put the cart before the horse because we didn't really have the horse yet, but now we do. When we discussed this at leadership, we discussed your next steps. We now have a starting point and direction to proceed. She is glad this was on the agenda so we could all discuss this. The Board supports this, and this is a starting point.

Mrs. Cushman thanked Dr. Calnen for mentioning that you were not sure about what services are being offered at our schools. In the school newsletters, there is a colorful page with the heading Community Health Center, Inc. The QR Code will link you to locations at our schools and the services the school may include under behavioral health where it says crisis intervention, individual counseling, group counseling, family counseling, and referrals. She wonders if this is really available at our schools. She sent a copy of this page to Dr. Calnen.

Madam Chair stated that was part of the reason we had Mrs. Acree and Dr. Calnen attend our Board Leadership meeting to discuss resources and next steps.

Mr. Drezek stated CHC is in all of our buildings as a resource with some space for them to use with some boundaries. The student needs to be a CHC client. We can have an additional conversation about what we provide our students and what they can provide. We had a 22% increase with SPED referrals or 170 kids with an increase in 504's. We partner with CHC. This is something he recently discussed with an elected official that represents Enfield at the federal level that other districts received mental health money. We hired 10 social workers with our the ESSR funds we received. Our job now is trying to maintain these additional social workers. Other districts are receiving a grant for this now. We were excluded for the sole reason that we have a better infrastructure in place than other districts. Board members make many important decisions including what we will fund and what is a priority. Last year, we provided a presentation about our SEL (Social Emotional Learning). This is all relative work that the Board needs to be aware of.

Madam chair thanked Board members for their questions and discussing this. Madam Chair asked for a motion to table this item.

Mrs. Pickett moved, seconded by Mr. Unghire that the Enfield Board of Education table this item.

A vote by **roll call 8-0-0** passed unanimously to table this item.

Madam Chair thanked both Mrs. Acree and Dr. Calnen for all the work they have done on this. She knows it has not been easy and hopes it gets a little easier as we move forward.

11. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Curriculum – Mrs. Pickett reported the Curriculum Committee will meet on September 21st. We will look at the book approval process.

Finance – Dr. Calnen reported the Finance Committee will meet on September 18th.

Policy – Mr. Ryder reported the Policy Committee will meet on September 19th.

Leadership – Madam Chair reported Board Leadership met last Thursday and we discussed the Enfield Mental Health and Wellness Group.

PK-5 School Modernization Committee – Mr. Ryder reported the SMC met on September 7th and we reviewed a presentation. Committee members present support the plan and we will present

this at a Board meeting in the near future.

Joint Facility – Mr. Ryder reported the Joint Facilities Committee will meet on September 28th at 6:30 PM.

JFK Building Committee – Mr. Ryder did not have a date for this committee’s next meeting.

Joint Security Committee – Mr. Ryder is not sure when the Joint Security Committee will meet next.

Enfield Mental Health Wellness & Workgroup – Dr. Calnen previously reported on this.

Mrs. Pickett asked if we would continue to be liaisons to that workgroup. Madam Chair stated a few years back, there were a few suicides in Enfield at the time. Mayor Kaupin and Mr. Neville got together and wanted to help the youth in Enfield. They formed a Mental Health Committee. There was a resolution, and it was well defined committee with a pediatrician, EPD representation and worked well with social services at the time. For whatever reason, it is not going in this direction anymore. The Enfield Public School piece has been lost in the shuffle. Both Mrs. Acree and Dr. Calnen will continue to work with the workgroup. We will form our own committee and they will work with the Policy Committee. She is excited to hear about this as it progresses, and they can talk to Leadership about anything you might need. This will become an actual Board committee.

Enfield Cultural Arts Commission – Mr. Hamre commended the ECAC Concert series and looks forward to future events. Open mic night will be held at the Enfield Public Library on the 1st Wednesday of the month. The ECAC community calendar can be viewed on Facebook and on the Town website. We will sponsor a community paint day to paint a mural at the Enfield Produce & Deli on Enfield Street. They are looking for volunteers. PFLAG will meet the first Monday of the month at ACC and will meet virtually on the 3rd Saturday. He gave an update on Enfield Pride and upcoming Opera House Player events.

13. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Ryder moved, seconded by Mr. Hamre that the Special Meeting Minutes of August 22, 2023, be approved. A vote by **show-of-hands 7-0-1** passed with Mrs. Pickett abstaining.

14. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS AND PAYROLL - None

15. CORRESPONDENCE & COMMUNICATION - None

16. EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

17. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Hamre moved, seconded by Mrs. Pickett to adjourn the Regular Meeting of September 12, 2023.

All ayes, motion passed unanimously. Meeting stood adjourned at 9:28 PM.

Jonathan LeBlanc
Secretary
Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 26, 2023**

A special meeting of the Enfield Board of Education was held in Council Chambers on September 26, 2023.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM by Madam Chair LeBlanc.

2. **ROLL CALL:**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jean Acree, Dr. Gerald Calnen, Janet Cushman, Joshua Hamre, Amanda Pickett, Scott Ryder, John Unghire, and Tina LeBlanc

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jonathan LeBlanc

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Christopher J. Drezek, Superintendent; Mr. Andrew B. Longey, Assistant Superintendent; and Ellen Zoppo, Town Manager

3. **INVITED GUESTS:** Gina Cekala (arrived at 7:24 PM), Robert Cressotti, Matthew Despard, Douglas Finger, Nick Hopkins, Michael Ludwick, Cynthia Mangini (arrived at 7:24 PM), Ken Nelson Jr, Marie Pyznar, John Santanella and Lori Unghire

Madam Chair explained that Johnathan LeBlanc, Gina Cekala and Cindy Mangini will be late

4. **SCHOOL MODERNIZATION COMMITTEE UPDATE & PRESENTATION**

John Dague, Director of Strategic Development and Partnerships for Enfield Public Schools provided an in-depth presentation regarding the PK-5 School Modernization – feasibility study. He provided an overview of the School Modernization Committee members progress touring each PK-5 school and consultation with the contracted design team at Russell and Dawson. He reviewed the committees goals and priorities; the scope of the feasibility study; renovate to new (71.79%) advantages & disadvantages; new construction (61.79%) advantages & disadvantages; items not estimated in assessments; key draft findings from Russell & Dawson; Hazardville Memorial & facility condition analysis rankings; estimates from facility conditions analysis for the PK-5 schools; costs could reach 100 million dollars; indoor air quality & air quality general recommendations; demography report; projected enrollment; estimated costs; site recommendations from Russell & Dawson – Stowe Early Learning Center, Eli Whitney & Henry Barnard; challenges with site recommendations; site for consideration – advantages & challenges; PK-5 School Modernization Site & Phasing proposal included use of a Town of Enfield owned land adjacent to Mark Twain; Phase 1 – Central Zone; Phase 2 – Southern Zone; Phase 3 – Northern Zone; current vs. final site use; anticipated reuse outcome benefits; challenges; systemic change; and recommendations.

Councilman Finger commented that the Town has turned down businesses that have wanted to use the wetlands behind Mark Twain. How would we proceed? This was an excellent presentation. He is behind this and wants to make sure the tax dollars will be spent wisely. This will be a major expense for our town. We renovated the high school, JFK and now the grammar schools. He has concerns with the location.

Mr. Dague responded if the Town Council authorizes a pre-referendum building committee, in that phase there would be a site assessment that would evaluate the site by hiring an environmental engineer. They would determine if this site is suitable for building on. There would also be an estimate for the cost to remediate and the cost could be considerable. All of

our sites have wetlands on them. The acceptance of a site does not 100% bind us if the site comes back unusable.

Mr. Dague added when we were looking at which site to use for the high school, the costs to remediate the soil at Enrico Fermi was extremely high due to the soil contamination. It is worth looking at the site because the benefits of our plan with the use of a swing school is excellent. A school will have a broader benefit to the community than a business when it comes to using the wetlands. We will be using a smaller portion of the site than a business would have used, which will not have such an impact on the wetlands.

Councilor Finger asked about the cost. Mr. Dague stated the costs are estimated repair costs and that is if we do nothing. We need to bring the buildings up to modern standards. We know that approximately \$42.6 million dollars needs to be spent but that does not include HVAC. If you add all of this including security and IT you could be around \$100 million for just fixing the 7 schools.

Councilor Finger added he has been in these schools, and they are in need of major repairs. He agrees with this but just wants the taxpayers to know what the anticipated costs may be for transparency purposes. Everyone needs to understand this is a good project, but the costs will be substantial.

Mr. Dague stated we are doing this responsibly. We have a feasibility study. We know that a portion will not be reimbursable. We are looking at 3 potential sites and a more significant scope is needed to include engineering and soil sampling. A lot of this work will be done in the Pre-Referendum phase. This will also include public input from the community by bringing in all the stakeholders, community members, and businesses. This will also affect sports teams if fields that are being used. The pre-referendum phase offers a lot of opportunities for communication. If the site assessment comes back at too high of a cost for using a portion of the wetlands, we still have two other sites. We would then need to look at an alternate site.

Councilor Finger stated these sites are just options to consider for use. Mr. Dague stated they are our suggestions to adopt for further study, but we are not 100% committing to these sites.

Councilor Finger thanked Madam Chair and Mr. Dague.

Mrs. Pickett added it will cost approximately \$100 million to repair our schools. This would be a capital improvement project on the taxpayers. Would we receive any reimbursements. Mr. Dague stated there is potential for some reimbursement like the roofs. When you do piece meal projects, you need to consider the full project for cost effectiveness. We will get some portions of the projects for reimbursement.

Mrs. Pickett thanked the members of the School Modernization Committee, John Dague and others for the work they have done. She appreciated this partnership approach. She is looking forward to seeing this project progress holistically for this long-term investment in our community. She is concerned about the impact on Thompsonville families. We need to meet the needs of our families. Including HVAC and security is also a must. We need to be mindful on how we repurpose unused buildings and how we will sustain our new buildings. This is a long-term investment in our community. Supporting this project makes sense. She appreciates the plan to not disrupt students. Student and staff supports will still be needed during the construction transition. She supports this plan and thanked everyone involved.

Mr. Dague stated our classrooms now are around 820 to 840 sq. feet. We can decide to take back some of the square footage to use towards additional classroom space to increase the number of total classrooms. We can also look at reducing space in cafeterias and hallway space or circulation space. One of the plans at the high school was to have open space between the 3 floors for interior lighting. This option was not chosen. The final design had

narrower hallways and less circulation space which allowed for more program space.

Mrs. Pickett asked if the sizes of the schools will vary by zone. She likes that this plan will not redistrict the zones. Does this take into consideration additional housing developments.

Mr. Dague stated the northern zone is for around 800 to 825; the central zone is for around 800 to 825; and the southern zone is for around 725 to 750. We do not have a districting problem, we have a program location problem. Henry Barnard offers a lot of special education programs where we are transporting students to. We would like these programs in each of their home buildings. We will strategically place our choice students and he does not believe we would need to redistrict. The southern zone has around 3-4 less classrooms.

Mrs. Pickett asked about the HVAC grant. Mr. Dague stated the grant application deadline is December 30, 2023 for starting projects in 2024 and completing projects in 2025. HVAC projects would be 3 separate projects. The eventual reuse of the building may impact the score with the scoring rubric. There is a potential for reimbursement. This is worth exploring.

Mr. Ryder echoed the comments about the School Modernization Committee members. He would like to bring up some of our parent volunteers on this committee to say a few words.

Kurt Stroiney – SMC Member. Mr. Stroiney discussed the many benefits about this modernization plan besides the benefits to our town, our children's education and well-being. We will potentially close 2 schools. The committee members do not want to see more vacant buildings. Re-utilizing these buildings is an integral part of our plan. We can regionalize our Pre-K programs and Eagle Academy. Our plan includes closing both Hazardville Memorial and Prudence Crandall. By closing Prudence Crandall, this can create opportunities for another housing development. This would bring more families to Enfield and increase our tax revenue. This building could also be for another Mark Twain style development housing. Mark Twain currently has a waiting list. By closing Hazardville Memorial the site could be used for more recreational space. Our parks are constantly being used and this could create more available space for our residents to use.

Mr. Stroiney added this project is different from EHS & JFK because of the children's young ages. Both the EHS & JFK projects were distracting for the students and would not be beneficial for our youngest learners to go through. Our plan will start by building our new central school at a site that would not interfere with any of our elementary schools. Once the building has been completed, students from both Eli Whitney and Hazardville Memorial will attend the new central school. This would allow us to use Eli Whitney as our swing building for another other building that is being renovated. By closing Hazardville Memorial one of the added benefits is saving taxpayer money. Hazardville Memorial needs the most work done and then Prudence Crandall in order to be operational. Repairs will be needed to make the building operational, but by building the new building first, we can minimize the costs.

Mr. Stroiney stated our plan includes opportunities for revenue. By moving the Eagle Academy to the current Enfield Street School we will be able to accommodate more students eliminating the need to bus our children to out of town programs and pay tuitions for specialized services. We will also be able to provide services for students from surrounding towns generating an income revenue source.

Mr. Stroiney stated the expansion of our Pre-K program is long overdue. The State will eventually mandate universal Pre-K program. We can accomplish this by moving Stowe to the renovated Edgar H. Parkman building and eventually moving ECDC to the renovated Eli Whitney building.

Mr. Stroiney added the renovations at EHS & JFK are two shining examples of what this town can achieve when we think about the future and work together as a community. We saw how

parents brought their children back from magnets and re-enrolled them at EHS & JFK. Let's continue phase III and make our elementary schools just as fantastic. His children will not attend the new elementary schools, but they will attend JFK & EHS. He looks forward to his grandchildren attending our state-of-the-art schools and hearing his children brag about how great our schools are. One of the most important questions homeowners ask is how are the schools.

Councilor Nelson asked if they should give their names and address before they speak.

Madam Chair stated they are not audience members, they are presenters and members for the School Modernization Committee. They are all Enfield residents or staff members and have been properly vetted.

Councilor Nelson added stating your name and address is proper protocol. Mr. Ryder added this is all part of the presentation.

Shannon Steere – SMC Member – Ms. Steere discussed some of the benefits for our youngest learners at Stowe that include Head Start, Integrated Pre-K, and STEAM and how we will be able to expand our programs including ECDC. Infant and toddler care is at a high need, and this will allow for expansion in this age group. When universal Pre-K is mandated, we will be ready. Having additional and affordable Pre-K seats will allow families to enter the workforce and will support community and social cohesion. Regionalization will allow for easier access to our programs and increase our revenue streams for Enfield.

Vicky MacLeod – SMC Member – Ms. MacLeod discussed some of the benefits to our students and families. By changing our current K-2 and 3-5 model to a K-5 model and adding a new school will ease transition changes for our students going into grade 3. It will also consolidate PTO's, open house events and student assemblies lessening the burden on parents to choose which events to attend. This will allow for more engagement at our 3 elementary schools. Our students will have more space to learn in their schools with the proposed renovations. Another benefit is we will not need to redistrict any of our schools. Using the swing school will not cause distractions to our children's day-to-day learning. This is the best decision for our children and town moving forward.

Mr. Ryder received an e-mail from the PTO's, and they said the same things that Ms. MacLeod said about combining PTO's, the many benefits and increased engagement for our students, families and staff members. Anything we do to help our staff members will help them educate our children.

Mr. Hamre thanked Mr. Dague for his great presentation. Currently Thompsonville does not have a walking school anymore and it is unfortunate. Our kids are bussed to other schools. How will this new proposed structure affect transportation and students that are walkers. Students that can walk or ride their bikes come to school more alert and ready to learn.

Mr. Drezek stated at this point we do not know about transportation. This is a recommendation. We can only go so far with this. Our current bussing structure is a 4 tier system. This system also affects athletic events and start times since other districts are also dealing with transportation issues. At this point, we do not know exactly where the boundaries will be for walkers and bussed students. With our current 4 tiered bus system, it creates a greater need for drivers and logistical nightmare getting our students to where they need to be. We have certain programs in some of the buildings and students are being transported from their home schools to these programs that are offered in other buildings. Consolidating is another advantage for this proposed plan.

Mr. Hamre added the proposed K-5 model will alleviate a lot of parent concerns and simplify transportation concerns. Our families will need to make adjustments again.

Mr. Drezek added with our current 4-tiered system we are limited. Structure changing will allow for reallocated resources and expanding transportation services with better outcomes for our families.

Deputy Mayor Cekala apologized for being late. She previously saw the presentation as a SMC member and in leadership. She thanked Mr. Dague for the presentation. It was amazing to see the ideas come together by committee members for this common goal to make our town and education system a little bit better. This is amazing. She believes this plan will reduce bussing and make our schools for the littles better. This will complete our schools comprehensive plan. We started at the high school and then JFK. She is very excited about this. Owning the property at Mark Twain is a benefit. Having a swing space to use for our elementary students is extremely important. Children that lived through the construction at EHS and JFK can deal with it better than our youngest children. She believes when we update our elementary schools, we will see an influx of people coming back to our district including students that left us to attend magnet schools. We should plan for more classrooms than 102 to accommodate this bump with enrollments. She is in favor of this plan. She thanked everyone on the committee and Mr. Dague.

Councilor Nelson added we need to look into how we acquired the industrial park land. Is this open space? Was it donated to the town? Are there any restrictions to keep this as open space? He supports the new school and K-5 model. We do not have any formal numbers, we have rough numbers. This plan will cost us less money than fixing our current elementary schools. The rough number for this project is around \$180 million.

Mr. Dague added that number does not include any ineligible costs. The number may be higher.

Councilor Nelson stated at \$180 million dollars, Enfield taxpayers will be responsible for approximately \$62 million. We currently have several bonding projects on the books. What will it take for the Town Council to fund this \$62 million dollar referendum? He would love to say this is a no brainer, but we are the ones that will write the check. We need to figure out where this money will come from so we don't break the taxpayers. He supports the project, but it is not that easy. We will have 3 new elementary schools and reconfigure back to a K-5 model. He does not believe it will be less bussing. Parkman is surrounded on all sides by neighborhoods. Stowe is not. Crandall is also surrounded by neighborhoods on all sides. Whitney is not. The industrial park is not. Every student that goes to Parkman and Crandall will need transportation. He does not want to mislead anyone. He wants this to pass next year. He would like a study for the new location to include transportation. This was not taken into consideration with the consulting firm about the industrial park. We are discussing placing a school in the industrial park. Our residents and parents should know about transportation. The \$62 million dollars is a big discussion for the Town Council members. Putting air-conditioning in a school we will tentatively close is something to consider. The deadline for the HVAC grant is December 30th. You will need a check for \$5.2 million now. Our charter only allows us to issue so much that we can spend in a year without going to a referendum. This was set up to give the people of Enfield a choice and let the voters decide on large projects. A \$20 million dollar HVAC project is a good thing for our schools, but it needs to go to a referendum so we can commit to \$5.2 million.

Madam Chair asked Town Manager Zoppo to address this. Councilor Nelson stated we will address this at our special meeting next. Madam Chair would like Mrs. Zoppo to provide an explanation.

Mr. Dague added we have asked the School Construction & Grants at DAS (Department of Administrative Services) about us having potential referendum after the grant application date. They are looking to see if this will meet the needs of the HVAC grant. The town would be

saying we are committing to a certain amount of dollars, and we plan to bring the additional funds for reimbursement for this grant and bonding purposes. We took your concern to DAS, and they are weighing in on this now.

Mr. Drezek also discussed this with the finance director who is also exploring what the Town Council's options may be and if it will become a risk for reward. Do we want to apply for a grant or not? The timeframe is very short for doing this and it is due December 30th. The finance director has mentioned there are some possibilities if the Town Council were to authorize us to do this and would meet the needs and requirements of the town charter and Town Council. There has been some diligence done about this.

Councilor Nelson thanked Mr. Dague for doing this. This is something we discussed the other night.

Madam Chair added the next steps will come from the Town Council members at your meeting.

Councilor Nelson supports this project and wants this to pass. He agrees about the plans for reusing the schools and Hazardville Memorial would be a nice park. Mark Twain is full and there is a waiting list. There is no money with renovating these schools. Look at Nathan Hale and the empty school on Brainard Road, they are just sitting there. How do we tell the residents we have a great plan when both of these buildings are just sitting there vacant. We need to do better. He would like to get this done soon rather than later so we can address questions.

Mayor Cressotti thanked Mr. Dague for the presentation and for addressing Councilor Nelson's questions. Receiving the information from DAS will be vital. Hazardville Memorial has the most problems with the building and Prudence Crandall is next. Levelling Memorial and creating more recreation space is the right idea. As far as Prudence Crandall, this is something we will discuss further. He is in favor of the school modernization plan. We will be looking at a pre-referendum committee. By having a pre-referendum committee we will receive reimbursement with the work the committee does in regard to this project.

Mr. Dague added as part of the pre-referendum work, you will have a more comprehensive design for the building and a comprehensive cost estimate for your site and systems. The feasibility study will provide you with rough estimates. Some of the designs can be potentially picked up in the final design that can be reimbursable. This depends on contracts, etc. There is potential for some reimbursements as part of the pre-referendum work. There will also be some ineligible items. You will also have some design work that could be used towards the school which can reduce some future fees for the project.

Mayor Cressotti added this is important information and this will be our next step moving forward with a resolution for the pre-referendum committee later on for the next phase of this project. He likes the regionalization and the increased revenue stream that will be generated with this project. With the Eagle Academy and Alternative Education programs, he can see the growth. Studies are showing that renovated and new facilities create a different atmosphere for students. This is what we are trying to create in Enfield by enticing families to move to our town. There are no surprises with a new building. When students and staff feel comfortable in our buildings, they are more productive and happier. That also includes students test scores. He likes all of the project proposed plans including the HVAC. You mentioned this can be done in 3 phases.

Mr. Dague stated this can be done in 3 projects for the indoor air quality study. As part of the grant, we need to submit for consideration a long-term strategic plan. He will be back to present that. The Pre-K/5 Modernization Committee final report will be an addendum to the plan to be submitted to the State. They will be looking at the long-term use of the facility and may score some of the projects higher or lower based on the eventual use. It is wise to split

this up into 3 projects. Whitney might receive a reduced rate or might not be eligible because the site will be used for ECDC. It is worth applying for it. Each project will have a separate number and application.

Mayor Cressotti thanked Mr. Dague for the presentation and the information.

Councilor Santanella thanked Mr. Dague for the presentation and for everyone that worked on this committee. We now have more questions than answers. Mr. Dague stated future studies will be needed. We need to work through the pre-referendum process to get to the final dollar amount and make sure our sites are appropriate for our schools. This is a recommendation, and it is not final.

Councilor Santanella asked to get through step #1 what are you asking for and how much will it cost us so you will be able to answer all our other questions? Mr. Dague stated for the next phase, it would be best to put out a formal bid. We will solicit bids for the scope of the work for this project that will still need to be defined further. We will receive estimates from design professionals which is one of the required criteria for possible reimbursement in the future. He cannot give a dollar amount. Both EHS & JFK needed additional allocations for additional assessments and work that was needed. Through the bid process you will be able to adopt the appropriate bid and you will know the exact amount.

Councilor Santanella stated we need to go out to bid immediately to complete stage 1, adoption of the site selection and phasing for future study and for the pre-referendum committee.

Mr. Dague stated we need to put the recommendations in order. Will you approve this, or do you anticipate or want further studies for this proposal and if you will authorize a pre-referendum building committee. In this phase, they will solicit an architectural, engineering and design firm to work on the recommendation. We did this at both EHS & JFK. We would use a similar process by moving forward with these potential sites, forming a pre-referendum committee and then come back with a full scope of the project, put it out to bid and then come back with a final number.

Madam Chair added as part of the pre-referendum committee, we will include members from the town, Enfield Public Schools staff, BOE/TC liaisons. There will be an application process for this.

Councilor Santanella understands that. The question is we are getting into a lot of detail level that is premature. We are not in a position before the pre-referendum building committee to answer with any degree of certainty. Are we agreeable with this idea, are we open to repurposing the buildings and restructuring our elementary schools and needing further investigations. It seems like that is what you are asking us, and all the other issues will flow from that point.

Mr. Dague said that is it essentially. We are just trying to be more targeted in this phase. We have made the investment to evaluate our facilities. We have selected the sites, further studies are needed which will get us to the final dollar amount and a final recommendation.

Councilor Pyznar also thanked Mr. Dague for the presentation. A lot of thought has gone into this, and you have covered a lot. She does drop off at Stowe and Memorial as a retired grandparent and we have a hard time doing this. She is not sure how parents are doing this. She is behind changing the current configuration to a K-5 model. She also has concerns like Councilor Nelson regarding Mark Twain. She was a member of Inland/Wetlands and there is a reason why the wetlands have not been used. If this site is determined unusable, do you have another site in mind?

Mr. Dague stated the town owns 2 adjoining lots. One is Memorial Park, and the other lot

backs up on the north side that backs up to the houses along the road. There are possibilities with the site. There is additional land and we have not determined any other additional sites at this time.

Councilor Pyznar is also concerned about additional funding, and this will now need to go out to bid for the pre-referendum. Regarding HVAC, the Town Council will need to discuss that further. We also need to remember the two separate referendum items that passed in 2021 that haven't started yet. This is a big number, but this is something we need.

Mr. Unghire thanked Mr. Dague and the committee for this presentation. He supports the plan and concept. Crandall is located near many neighborhoods. Now you will move this school even further from this area. This will also increase bussing for the students that live near and attend Prudence Crandall. Have you considered the property on Brainard Road, the old Noah Webster building?

Mr. Dague stated we looked at a lot of lots when we started this process. The site you mentioned is below the minimum acreage. We need at least 10 plus acres. Crandall is also below that minimum acreage. If we put a K-5 school on the current Crandall site, we would be doubling our bussing. Our site selections are around main roads so we will not be backing up onto the main roads. That is why we determined this site was not useable for a potential site.

Mr. Drezek added the families that live in that area send their K-2 students to Henry Barnard and are already receiving transportation. This is the same zone for both Barnard and Crandall students.

Mr. Unghire added this is a long way for students to travel to school. He was looking at improving things and making things more convenient for our families and students.

Councilor Pyznar added when her children were in school, the schools were K-6. Have you thought about renovating what we currently have. Mr. Dague stated it would cost more than \$100 million and you would not receive as much in reimbursements.

Councilor Mangini also thanked committee members and Mr. Dague. This has been a tremendous effort and it will produce a wonderful outcome. We have been piecemealing our roofs, boilers and buildings. We did have money set aside for these projects, but it is now gone. We need to move forward and apply for grants and referendums. She is in the schools a couple times a week working with the students. Grade 5 students are working on the Kid Governor project. One of the main themes is about how hot it is in the schools and how can we fix it. Our children are trying to learn, and they are uncomfortable. It is also uncomfortable for the teachers delivering the instruction. We need to move forward. She supports this plan.

Councilor Hopkins thanked Mr. Dague for the presentation. The committee has really done their homework. In the air quality study was there any discussion about climate change impact on air temperatures and humidity levels? This can be costly and concerning in the hotter months. We have to constantly fight with other towns for tax revenue back for our projects. If we can save millions of dollars from the State, we need to act on this. He appreciates you considering these things with the HVAC grants.

Councilor Ludwick thanked Mr. Dague for the presentation. Did the finance director give an estimate on what the town can afford for debt?

Town Manager Zoppo stated we do not have a presentation available tonight. We have reviewed the last two years of our financial statements and our debt load. We have looked at our debt level. We can do this. 2027 will be one of our peak years with our debt repayment schedule. We can have auditors attend a Town Council meeting so we can hear directly from

them about this. They are the ones that are monitoring our money.

Councilor Ludwick would like to see this in writing first. One of the reasons we couldn't do the elementary schools and JFK at the same time was because we couldn't afford to do it all at once. We need to fully understand this for our taxpayers. We need to look at the money and see if we can afford this project. He does not want this to affect our bond rating. We can all support the project, but can we afford it. We do not know how much we are on the hook for the police department. He understands the conversations about the roofs. He looks at the money first. Can we afford this? He does not disagree with the concept.

Town Manager Zoppo added we do not have an answer now. We are showing we can manage this capacity. There are other ancillaries we need to look at. We need to look into the detail on the debt, cost of other projects and revenue potential. We have revenue generating programs that were discussed tonight. We have reuse and could potentially have cost avoidance, cost effective pieces, a regional hub, revenue generation, the cost of real estate, and the reduction of footprint on our operating expenses. There is a high demand at the Annex. We know improvements are needed with ECDC for more space. The Town Council needs to discuss the overall financial picture. The debt capacity question if this project is approved tonight, the finance director will have some answers based on projections for Tuesday's meeting. He will also address the efficacy for the HVAC grant.

Councilor Ludwick would like to see that information. If we lose a bond rating, it will add a significant amount to our debt. This is something everyone needs to understand fully. Regarding the Eagle Academy, we currently have 27 students there. Can we receive an estimate regarding revenue for this now and what we saved by not sending our Enfield students to another school.

Mr. Dague stated the costs for students is based on their needs. Outplacing the students will cost around \$70K - \$150K per student. You can kind of figure out the range for a rough estimate.

Councilor Ludwick supports Eagle Academy and what we are doing. He would like to see the figures. Mr. Dague added we need around 6-8 students to break even. We surpassed that the first year. Mr. Drezek added we do not have that information on us tonight.

Councilor Ludwick would also like a copy of the demographic study. Mr. Dague stated it is currently in a draft form and we will not share any draft documents. He will only put out final documents. All this information will be posted on the School Modernization website.

Councilor Ludwick asked if you looked at the demographic study that was done around 2015 and the estimates? Mr. Dague stated we did and used those in conjunction with this demographic study. The Enfield High number was predicted to be lower. We have more students now. Our K-5 numbers are accurate. The last projection that was done is very close to the predictions. There might be some changes with the pre-referendum because we have changed the sites. If the town approves additional housing development, that will impact enrollment numbers. There are no hard answers tonight. We need to know what direction to go in for further studies. There is no commitment or referendum yet. You will receive information as this progresses. A decision for a referendum should be made in August and that would include a final number with a bonding amount and the cost share for the Town. The pre-referendum building committee will make a recommendation to this body who will make the final decision.

Councilor Ludwick added before we go out to bid, we need to know about the scope of the work. When we changed the configuration previously from K-6 to K-2 and 3-5 there were some concerns we needed to address. Do you see this as a concern now. Will the schools be multi-level buildings? He is in favor of keeping our schools in neighborhoods. What will be the

design.

Mr. Dague stated for efficiency, the schools will be multi-level. The floors will be split by the grade levels. We have seen some excellent models with clever ways to manage the flow. The first floor would be for your lower grade level students and special programs. The buildings would be either 2 or 3 floors depending on your site. An Alcorn style building is more efficient. The more surface area you have on a building, the more energy will be lost. It would increase glass coverage which is expensive, and you lose heat from them. Multi-floor buildings are better for security purposes. Circulation is also important. You can keep students in certain areas for shorter transition times between classes. As you build up, you are using less physical distance. If we were to add a wing at Henry Barnard, that would be a long distance for students to get to the library or gym. It is efficiencies with educational minutes, building materials, construction and energy use. This would give you the best return on your dollars with the best outcome for our students.

Town Manager Zoppo added it is important for everyone to understand it is going to cost the taxpayers a minimum of \$100 million dollars for needed projects at a minimum. We cannot add on, modernize or abate our buildings that are 60 years old. We cannot go up on our buildings. This is a real number from our project list, capital improvements that look at safety and abatement which are priorities adding HVAC, will bring us to \$101 million dollars. She knows there will be more costs. The question is \$100 million dollars to tread water, or do we look at our debt structure and what can happen.

Councilor Ludwick added moderate work does not mean it has to be done. We still need to be able to afford this. The taxpayers need to know this. He does not want to affect our bond rating. Mrs. Zoppo added this community is not going to put our children, staff members and teachers at risk in buildings that should have been renovated and remediated many years ago.

Councilor Unghire also thanked Mr. Dague and committee members for this presentation. She supports the K-5 model and our buildings are well beyond their years. She supports this plan. You mentioned there would be 8 less classrooms with a projected increase in attendance. Will this affect our teachers job security?

Mr. Dague stated anyone can take the square footage and enrollment numbers and use the information from the Office of School Construction and Grants to figure out numbers. We will need to make decisions on how we allocate space. There was a certain amount of un-reimbursable program space at EHS. There is a process to make sure we are utilizing the space effectively and maximize the number of classrooms. We anticipate using more than 102 classrooms.

Councilor Unghire asked about a public hearing. Mr. Dague stated the pre-referendum committee will do this once we receive more solid information about the project. For the JFK project they had renderings to show the public with accurate cost estimates. We did this for EHS and JFK and envision us doing the same for this project.

Mr. Drezek added he knows this will be a concern, we do not have enough staff now. We will not lose any staff members. We will be better utilizing our staff now. Our teachers are traveling long distances to provide services for our students. Having a more consolidated building structure will give our teachers more time to work with our students.

Dr. Calnen thanked Mr. Dague for this wonderful presentation. The plan is to move ECDC and Stowe to Parkman and eventually move ECDC to Eli Whitney. It would be great to keep these two programs together. Having early childhood services located at one building would be ideal.

Mr. Dague stated there are benefits to having the programs together. We cannot serve as many families and students as we possibly can now. If universal pre-k comes to fruition, we will

need more space. Having the space available will benefit us and we can expand both programs. If everything goes as planned, we will be able to transition services to Eli Whitney so both programs can expand.

Madam Chair explained that our Eagle Academy is a therapeutic day school. We were sending our students to out of district facilities for special education services. The cost for these services is very expensive. We moved this program to our old head start building and they are completely maxed out with 27 students. These students are being bussed to Alcorn to use the gym since we do not have one at Eagle Academy. We receive calls from other towns looking to place their students here. They will pay us instead of other facilities for these services. This long term plan captures regionalization in a positive way.

Madam Chair asked Mr. Dague to address the reason we are not using Nathan Hale. Mr. Dague stated we looked at Hale and this site does not meet the size needed.

Madam Chair stated we toured each of our buildings. Memorial was the worst and then Prudence Crandall. There are space issues in every building. We are providing services by using dividers. There is no privacy. Our buildings are maxed out and falling apart. When the committee presented, they never mentioned using a neighborhood model. They looked at using a K-5 model only.

Madam Chair stated this is about choices and what got us to this point. Our schools have been historically underfunded and taking money from CIP projects and not repairing our schools. That is why we will need a referendum and we will do it in phases to fix our schools and will need to pay more for it. We need to educate our taxpayers about how much it will cost to repair all of our buildings and keep them at status quo. During the pre-referendum committee for the high school, there was contention about using Fermi or Enfield High. The pre-referendum committees job is to compile numbers and community conversations. We were able to show people the costs and why Enfield High was the better site. We will get more answers as we progress.

Madam Chair stated Councilor Unghire mentioned reduction in staff. The pre-referendum committee met with teachers from Enfield and Fermi, and they discussed program changes.

Madam Chair asked for everyone's undivided attention. She listened to everyone speak when it was your turn. It is her turn to speak now.

Madam Chair further stated she previously spoke about Eagle Academy and Nathan Hale. The School Modernization Committee never mentioned a neighborhood model only a K-5 model. Underfunding CIP projects got us here. We have used the CIP funds to keep our taxes low. Now we have all these buildings that need to be repaired. We have been placing band aides on our buildings. Now we will need a referendum. This is what long-term vision and planning looks like. This is a proposal. The answers will come along the way. This is a starting point. We will have a pre-referendum committee to hold community conversations to discuss the costs and educate our community. We had 3 during the Enfield High School project. She was not in favor of the K-2 and 3-5 model because of what it does to our students, families and staff.

Madam Chair added one of our buildings was cited and it was Alcorn. That is when the discussion started about going to a K-2 and 3-5 model for our elementary schools. We did not need to do that. We could have just stayed as a K-5 model and the parents would have supported that. The K-2 and 3-5 model does not work. Having grade 6 at JFK has proven to be successful.

Madam Chair stated Mr. Dague suggested that when we are going through this process, we create a building reuse committee so we can identify how these buildings can be repurposed.

We have time to discuss this and how important open space is. Saying we are not being honest, or we will not inform the taxpayers is something she cannot accept. Moderate work is important work. There is urgent, high and moderate. How can you say this to our students and teachers that this is not needed. There is a reason our infrastructure is the way it is in our town. This is an opportunity to revisit the K-5 model which has been strongly supported by a committee of Enfield residents that are not elected officials. We need to start somewhere, and this is our starting point.

Madam Chair stated this is as far as we can go and as far as this committee can go. The committee has done a lot of honest work. She appreciates each one of you. We need the Town Council to tell us what our next steps will be.

Madam Chair addressed reduction of staff and as part of the pre-ref committee for the high school, each department at both high schools got together and discussed what we could offer at a combined high school. Since we combined our schools, our culinary arts program, graphic arts, and technology education programs have all grown. Everything these teachers said has happened. This would be an amazing opportunity for our K-5 teachers to talk to us about improving our K-5 model and education for our students which will bring up our test scores and be a more productive environment for student learning. Your building does make a difference as said by Mayor Cressotti.

Madam Chair thanked Town Council members for coming and sharing your perspectives. It is very important to have these kinds of group discussions together. The Town Council has bigger decisions to make tonight. She appreciates you all being here. She thanked Board members for giving up our regular meeting to be here to participate in this group discussion and to see the presentation. We are under some time constraints with the HVAC grant. She also thanked the members of the School Modernization Committee.

5. **ACTION IF ANY REGARDING SCHOOL MODERNIZATION COMMITTEE PRESENTATION** - None

6. **ADJOURNMENT**

Dr. Calnen moved, seconded by Mr. Hamre to adjourn the Special Meeting of September 26, 2023.

All ayes, motion passed unanimously. Meeting stood adjourned at 9:35 PM.

Jonathan LeBlanc
Secretary
Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary