

**JBOARD OF EDUCATION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
MARCH 12, 2019**

A regular meeting of the Enfield Board of Education was held at Town Hall in Council Chambers, located at 820 Enfield Street, Enfield, CT on March 12, 2019.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Walter Kruzel.
2. **INVOCATION OR MOMENT OF SILENCE:** Tina LeBlanc
3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Tina LeBlanc
4. **FIRE EVACUATION ANNOUNCEMENT:** Walter Kruzel announced the fire evacuation announcement.
5. **ROLL CALL:**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Ashley Depeau, Charlotte Riley, Tina LeBlanc, Sarah Hernandez, Tim Neville, Scott Ryder and Walter Kruzel

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Chris Rutledge and Rich Regnier

**ALSO PRESENT:** Mr. Christopher J. Drezek, Superintendent; Mr. Andrew B. Longey, Assistant Superintendent and Student Representatives Matt Campo

6. **BOARD GUEST(S)**

Mr. Drezek stated the winter student athletes will attend the next Board meeting.

a. **Enfield Youth Services**

Mr. Drezek welcomed Enfield Together Coalition members Joan Lawson, Jean Haughey, Youth Services Director and Bonnie Smith from MPH.

Mrs. Haughey thanked the Board for the invitation to attend the Board meeting. They will present data from the student survey tracking substance use trends, areas they should be concerned about and if we are making any positive impacts. We have added questions about depression, bullying and suicide to the student survey.

Mrs. Haughey introduced Joan Lawson, the chair of the Enfield Together Coalition. She will review our ETC mission and Bonnie Smith will go over the data we have obtained.

Mrs. Lawson has been involved with ETC since the beginning and is privileged to be part of this organization. She reviewed their vision and mission with the Board. Our target area is youth from 8-18 and parents. We have 12 sectors that make up our coalition and we meet monthly. We have seen growth with the people that attend these meetings. What we are doing is starting to make a difference. We are data driven. Last year we put out an info brief for students in grades 6-12 and we made table tent messages about using marijuana. Shop Rite has these at their cash registers. She will give Board members copies of these two items. She represents our Faith Community in our coalition group. We are seeing things changing in our community. She would like to see ETC become a household name.

Ms. Smith is the evaluation consultant for ETC and has worked with Youth Services for the past 18 years. She has seen ETC grow and they have been able to obtain funding through grants. She also does this work in other communities and uses ETC as a model for the other

coalitions she is part of.

Ms. Smith reviewed the risk factors that increase youth's vulnerability to substance misuse. She reviewed the 2017 youth survey process over the past month/30 day use of drugs for students in grades 6-12; the students source of alcohol for students in grades 6-12; how much do you think people harm themselves, physically or in other ways for students in grades 6-12 by using alcohol, cigarettes, marijuana, Rx drugs, gambling & heroin; how wrong do your parents/guardians feel it would be for you use alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, Rx drugs, gambling & heroin for students in grades 6-12; past month/30 day use rates – year trends of core drugs for students in grades 9-12. She reviewed cigarettes and e-cigarette use for students in 9-12. She reviewed bullying frequency by grade levels for students in grades 6-12. She also reviewed depression for students in grades 6-12.

Mrs. Depeau asked about life time bullying responses that have declined. Ms. Smith stated the survey is done every two years. She believes during the two year's the students have not checked this item as being a lifetime concern. Once you get to tenth grade, this might be something you are not as concerned with as a lifetime event.

Mrs. Depeau asked if grade 8 responses are truly the most accurate? Ms. Smith believes it is more accurate of what students are experiencing. It is defined in the survey and is consistent with other communities are also experiencing. She reviewed the definition of bullying. She will also share this report with Board members.

Ms. Smith reviewed sad and hopelessness for students in grades 6-12.

Mr. Neville asked if you are testing the same students or is this a cohort for making comparisons. Ms. Smith stated there are no sampling strategies here. Anyone in grades 6-12 that is in school and agrees to participate or didn't have a parent opt them out takes the survey. If the answers are inconsistent, they are removed from the sample core. This reflects a cross cut of responses from students that are in school over a series of days.

Mr. Neville asked about the percentage of parents that opt their child from taking the survey. Mr. Longey stated it is very few. Ms. Smith agreed with Mr. Longey that very few students will opt out.

Ms. Smith reviewed suicide indicators for students in grades 6-12.

Mrs. Haughey stated we have done a lot with our partnerships. We are looking at the risk factors and are concerned about substance use and misuse and depression. Enfield has hired two clinical social workers so we can start our intervention earlier by educating students sooner and to see the warning signs earlier before they are in a crisis. We started screening and monitoring for mental health concerns with our students. We are working with the schools and JRB to work with our students and to help them understand why they are starting to use substances. We are helping them to change their environment to make them healthier. Schools are very important to our youth.

Mrs. Haughey thanked Mr. Drezek and Mr. Longey for their assistance with applying for grants. She thanked them for allowing them to gather data from the students. This data has helped them obtain many grants and how we can support our students in our community. Funding helps us with cutting edge trending initiatives.

Mrs. Haughey stated our Suicide Preventing Steering Committee has morphed into our Youth Mental Health & Wellness Advisory Committee. We will work with the Town to sustain our funding and our continued work with this initiative. Our Police Department is working with our students. We also have our Trauma Informed School Mental Health program. We have also been working the Connecticut Child Health & Development Institute. We are all working together.

Mrs. LeBlanc thanked them for the work you are doing. She is a huge documentary buff whether it is a book or a movie. She recently read a book called "Victoria's Voice". This is about a girl who died at 21 from an overdose and she wrote a diary. The family published her diary. It all started with alcohol and marijuana and progressed to her using prescription drugs and heroine. Some of her entries did not make sense and her anger came out. The book was phenomenal. She also saw the movie "A Beautiful Boy" and another journal was kept. This journal had pictures about how he was feeling inside. She is so glad you are here in our community. Thank you for all the work you are doing. The work you are doing matters. What you are saying makes sense.

Mrs. Riley also thanked them for what you are doing. On the survey that addresses mental health, bullying and suicide, can you put a disclaimer on the pages if you are feeling this way contact us at...or resources are available at... Ms. Smith stated there is a statement at the end of the survey that lists resources for assistance.

Mrs. Riley asked if starting at ages 8-18 is early enough to start talking about this. Should this conversation be started sooner? Ms. Smith stated some of the grants we apply for have age and time limits. This is something parents should be discussing with their children.

Mrs. Haughey stated kids start using in the middle school. Communication is important about self-care and identifying feelings. We have tools available for students. Communicating with them once they start getting into trouble is hard. There is no harm starting this dialogue earlier. It is important to build relationships earlier.

Mrs. Riley asked about DARE and if this program still being used. Mrs. Haughey stated it is still around, but we are not using it. The grants have frameworks that we follow and are working with community level changes. We are changing perceptions and are targeting parents as the major influencers. There is curriculum from the DEA that our school resource officers are interested in. Our health curriculum professionals have also reached out for evidence-based curriculum to bring into our schools. It is important to start earlier and continue this education every year. We should be doing it all.

Mrs. Riley thanked them for addressing her questions and for what you are doing for our students.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated we have Board guests that are so proud of the work they are doing. You can see that from you. You really care about what you are doing. This is wonderful for our town. Thank you.

Mrs. Depeau also thanked them for the important work you are doing. Regarding depression and suicide, can you add a question about feeling nothing at all? Clinically, there can be that feeling of nothingness. This is a characteristic of depression. Some students lack drive and are not engaged. This is an important concern. Ms. Smith stated we have not captured this yet. Our next target area will be looking into mental health and we will be addressing anxiety. We can develop a tool for this and will look at this for the next survey we conduct.

Mrs. Haughey started we can add any question at any time to the survey. We would not have any baseline history. We can add any question that you feel is important.

Mrs. Depeau stated the suicide data is high. It almost seems like there could be a discrepancy. She likes the information about building relationships. This is very important. Some students do not know how to express their feelings or concerns. Some students say they are mad and that is not really what is going on. They need to know how to articulate their feelings.

Mrs. Depeau asked about global survey honesty. Ms. Smith stated there is a sense of mistrust but the data we have mirrors responses from the state and federal level. The data we have is

similar from around the country.

Mrs. Depeau asked about what you are doing to reach our youth? Mrs. Lawson stated we have students working on PSA's (public service announcements) at Asnuntuck Community College. The students are speaking to their peers about alcohol and drugs use. They are doing a phenomenal job getting the word out. We also have videos.

Mrs. Haughey added we have peer to-peer messaging about positive messages that have been nationally recognized. She will send you the link. They also did a gambling PSA.

Mrs. Depeau would love to have the students come to a Board meeting about their PSA's. Mrs. Haughey will work this out with Mr. Drezek.

Mrs. Riley asked if they put the PSA's on the TV's at the high school? Mrs. Haughey knows they put the PSA with the coaches on the TV's about substance abuse.

Mr. Neville also thanked them for the work they are doing. He would like a copy of the table tents. He is glad you are reaching out and sharing these in our community. Are these at our schools? Mrs. Lawson stated we ran out of them but will get them out to the schools.

Mr. Neville would also like to receive this survey information and your presentation. He asked about gambling and what are you looking at? Mrs. Haughey stated we are talking about video gaming. Ms. Smith added we are also looking at games of chance. We are looking at risky student behaviors and on-line gaming is very similar to substance abuse.

Mrs. Haughey added middle school students are experiencing conflicts playing Fortnite. Principals are concerned with this and bringing the conflict into schools. We will look at this further with our next survey.

Mr. Neville stated the surveys are taken every two years. You are looking at trend data. You are offering a lot of programs to our students and community members. Can you come back and give us an update about these programs. You are having such an impact with parents and students. We have educated so many students, parents, educators, police officers and community members. Students are now reaching out to us for help. Your engagement in our community is making changes. This needs work to continue and for this program to be able to sustain. Sustaining is very important. Thank you for informing us about these concerns and keep up the good work.

Mr. Ryder also thanked them. The event you held for middle school parents was lightly attended. He looked at this data you presented at that presentation about gaming, vaping, gambling, bullying and anxiety a couple of months ago. If we hold this event again, we need to get more parents to attend. If they knew what to look for, it could be extremely helpful. We are educating our administrators and staff. We have trends in our lives that are positive and negative. More parents need to be educated about this.

Mrs. Hernandez stated if you are having difficulties expressing your feelings your answer would be nothing. Autistic people are at a higher risk for suicide. Communicating is hard for many. This is true for most children. She thanked them for this information. Substance abuse can be a coping mechanism and strategy. It is our responsibility to offer healthy choices. Thank you for providing them with the tools and supports.

Mrs. Hernandez asked about the positive messages she has heard about CBD use and the benefits? Is this sending mixed messages and what strategies do you have? This can be confusing for our youth. Mrs. Haughey stated we do not want to get into the medical benefit. We know that marijuana use for youth impairs their brain development. Marijuana lowers students IQ and raises anxiety levels. It sets-up a path of concern for us with any kind of substance use and abuse.

Mrs. Hernandez stated the media is talking about the positives and she can see how this can change parent and student's perception about this.

Mrs. Haughey added we are seeing this at the Juvenile Review Board. When we talk to the student's we ask them about their hopes and dreams and what they want to do when they graduate high school. They just don't know. They have lost their hopes and dreams. There are reasons why kids start using. They are coping the only way they know how.

Mrs. Hernandez asked if the survey is given to all students or are, we are missing some students. Ms. Smith stated the survey is given to all students that are attending school at the middle school and high school. She is not sure about students that attend the alternative schools.

Mrs. Depeau asked about students in social economic groups showing any indicators? You can only ask so many things without the survey becoming too personal. Mrs. Haughey stated we do not ask that question. We took it out. Ms. Smith added that some students did not understand the question. We know the risk factors for social economic indicators. We have data on free and or reduced lunches. We can implement strategies to address this.

Chairman Kruzel thanked them for the presentation and for the information. You are doing a great job for our students and our community.

Mr. Drezek appreciates everything Mrs. Haughey and the ETC are doing for our students.

## **7. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

- a. Student Representatives – as presented
- b. 3-5 Family Math Nights – as presented
- c. Invention Convention – as presented
- d. March Events – as presented

## **8. AUDIENCES - None**

## **9. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Mrs. LeBlanc stated the Enfield High School faculty vs. student's basketball game will be held last week and she heard Mr. Longey participated. She heard you did great, but the faculty lost. Mr. Longey stated we have never beat the students. Maybe next year will be our year. Mrs. Leblanc added the students love it when Mr. Longey comes back to the high school.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated John F. Kennedy Middle School will hold their faculty vs. student's basketball game on Friday, March 15<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated the Enfield High Safe Grad will a Purse Bingo on Friday, March 22<sup>nd</sup> at the American Legion at 6:00 PM.

Mrs. Hernandez stated April Autism Awareness Month or as she calls it Autism Acceptance month. She spoke about the Asperger's and the classification of students with autism. Hans Asperger discovered this, and Asperger's Syndrome was named after him. She discussed the history of Hans Asperger. She added this diagnosis will be changed and reclassified by 2020. Every Board member knows the value and importance of people with disabilities. It is important to talk about history. She encouraged everyone to wear blue and gold during the month of April for Autism Acceptance month.

Mr. Ryder stated in March we start SBAC testing. Principals have sent home letters to parents about this.

Mr. Ryder stated Eli Whitney will hold their PTO Night at Nomads on March 15<sup>th</sup>. We will also hold a fund raiser event at Red Robbins on March 13<sup>th</sup>. The proceeds will go to the Jacob Carlander Memorial Scholarship fund.

Mr. Ryder added 2 Moms on a Mission will hold a Designer Purse Bingo Night on March 15<sup>th</sup>. The proceeds from this will go to the Town-wide Easter Egg Hunt on April 20<sup>th</sup>.

Mrs. Depeau stated Enfield Clean-Sweep will be held on April 20<sup>th</sup>. If you would like to attend, please meet on the Town Green at 10:30 AM.

Mrs. Depeau stated the Enfield Street PTO will meet on Thursday, March 14<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 PM.

Mrs. Riley stated the First Readers event last night was fantastic. Both my son and Ashley's son were recognized. We certified around 100 first readers. Mayor Mike had the students pumped up and did a great job. The kids had a great time. The video has been placed on YouTube already. She thanked E-TV for doing this so quickly.

Mrs. Riley stated the Henry Barnard PTO meeting was held earlier tonight. We will hold our Special Persons Dance on March 23<sup>rd</sup>. There will be two sessions one at noon and one at 2:30 PM. Volunteers are still needed for this event.

Mrs. Riley shared the numbers for CREC tuition increases.

Mrs. Riley thanked Mrs. Hernandez for the history lesson on Autism. She asked if they will change the name? Mrs. Hernandez stated they will change the level of supports. It really depends on how the person would like to be referred to. She prefers to be identified as Autistic. Level 1 is minimal supports. There are Levels 2 and Level 3. Level 3 needs the most supports.

**Suspend the Rules and Add an Item to the Agenda:**

Mrs. Riley moved, seconded by Mrs. LeBlanc that the Enfield Board of Education suspends the rules and adds Item 11b Cancel April 9, 2019 Board of Education Meeting to the agenda.

A vote by **show-of-hands 7-0-0** passed unanimously.

Chairman Kruzel agreed that the First Readers ceremony was a huge success and Mayor Mike added to the excitement. The kids were awesome. He thanked the staff for a great job.

**10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None**

**11. NEW BUSINESS**

**a. Appoint Joint Facilities Committee Elector - Tabled on 02-26-19**

Mr. Neville moved, seconded by Mrs. LeBlanc that the Enfield Board of Education places this item back on the table.

A vote by **show-of-hands 7-0-0** passed unanimously.

Chairman Kruzel opened nominations for the Joint Facilities Committee Elector.

Mr. Neville moved, seconded by Mrs. Riley that the Enfield Board of Education nominates Ralph Lazzara to the Joint Facilities Committee.

There were no other nominations.

Mrs. LeBlanc moved, seconded by Mr. Neville that the Enfield Board of Education close nominations for the Joint Facilities Committee Elector.

A vote by **show-of-hands 7-0-0** to close nominations passed unanimously.

Chairman Kruzel asked for a roll-call vote on the main motion.

A vote by **roll-call 6-0-1** passed with Mrs. Hernandez abstaining.

Chairman Kruzel stated he will notify the Town Manager's secretary of the appointment of Ralph Lazzara to the Joint Facilities Committee.

**b. Cancel April 9, 2019 Board of Education Meeting Agenda**

Mr. Neville moved, seconded by Mrs. Riley that the Enfield Board of Education cancel the April 9, 2019 Board of Education meeting.

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

**12. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS**

a. Curriculum Committee

Mr. Neville reported the Curriculum Committee will meet on March 14<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Dague is working on finalizing the details. We will present this to the entire Board and public at an upcoming meeting. These programs will enhance opportunities for our students.

Mrs. Depeau stated this is for the new credit programs. Chairman Kruzel stated we can place this on the April 23<sup>rd</sup> agenda.

Mr. Neville is happy we can move this along and bring this to the Board for their consideration.

b. Finance, Budget Committee

Mrs. Riley reported the Finance, Budget Committee will meet on March 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM in the Business Manager's office.

c. Policy Committee

Mr. Ryder reported the Policy Committee finished reviewing the remaining 4000 series and have sent them to CABB. We will have a first reading of the remaining 4000 policies at our March 26<sup>th</sup> meeting. We will next move onto the 5000 series. Our next meeting will be on April 3<sup>rd</sup> at 5:30 PM in the Superintendent's office.

d. Leadership Committee - None

e. Joint Facilities Committee

Chairman Kruzel reported we have short listed the applications and will conduct interviews on March 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM in the Enfield Room. We are moving along on the second phase of the Barnard roof.

f. JFK Building Committee

Chairman Kruzel reported the JFK Building Committee will start the architect interviews on March 16<sup>th</sup> at JFK at 8:00 AM. We are trying to fast track this project to avoid any conflicts with the Governor. We need to have this in to the State by April 1<sup>st</sup>. We do not want to have

any delays with this renovation.

Mr. Neville added we will meet on Thursday, March 14<sup>th</sup> to discuss the RFP's for the owner representative.

g. Joint Security Committee

Mr. Ryder reported the Joint Security Committee will meet again in May.

h. Joint Insurance Committee

Mrs. LeBlanc reported the Joint Insurance Committee met last week. This committee has done such a great job. The mayor would like to let the public know how well this committee has been working together. We will do this at a meeting in August.

Chairman Kruzel stated we will have an RFP for a new consultant.

Mr. Neville stated since this is a joint committee, shouldn't we have a joint meeting? Chairman Kruzel stated this will be a joint TC/BOE meeting at 6:00 PM and we will present this information to the community before a Town Council meeting. Hopefully we will have a new consultant for this committee to introduce.

i. Any Other Committees - None

**13. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mrs. Riley moved, seconded by Mrs. Depeau that the Regular Meeting Minutes of February 28, 2019 be approved. A vote by **show-of-hands 7-0-0** passed unanimously.

**15. CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATIONS** - None

**16. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mr. Neville moved, seconded by Mrs. Depeau that the Enfield Board of Education enter Executive Session for Matter(s) Related to Personnel & Collective Bargaining.

A vote by **show-of-hands 7-0-0** passed unanimously.

The Board remained in Council Chambers for the Executive Session. Both Mr. Drezek and Mr. Longey joined the Board in Executive Session.

No Board action occurred while in Executive Session.

**17. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Neville moved, seconded by Mrs. Hernandez to adjourn the Regular Meeting of March 12, 2019.

All ayes, motion passed unanimously.

Meeting stood adjourned at 8:55 PM.

Tina LeBlanc  
Secretary  
Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary