

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 26, 2021**

A regular meeting of the Enfield Board of Education was held in Council Chambers on October 26, 2021.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 7:01 PM by Walter Kruzel.

2. **INVOCATION OR MOMENT OF SILENCE:** Amanda Pickett

3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Amanda Pickett

4. **FIRE EVACUATION ANNOUNCEMENT:**

5. **ROLL CALL:**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jonathan LeBlanc, Jean Acree, Janet Cushman, John Unghire, Tina LeBlanc, Amanda Pickett, Stacy Thurston, Scott Ryder, and Walter Kruzel

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

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

6. **BOARD GUEST(S)** - None

7. **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**
a. **EPS Update**

Mr. Drezek thanked our teachers and staff. He also gave a special thank you to our nursing supervisor and COVID Coordinator Nurse Jess – Jess Spera. She has had a couple of rough days especially over the weekend dealing with quarantine cases. He knows that Nurse Jess and her team of nurses and building principals have been working tirelessly with contact tracing.

Mr. Drezek stated there have been conversations at the State about quarantine procedures and possible adjustments. He is not sure what the end result will be, but he will keep us posted. As it stands, our current quarantining procedures still stand.

Mr. Drezek stated he has received a lot of questions regarding student vaccines for Connecticut students in the age bracket of 5-11. He believes the FDA is about to approve this. There are approximately 277,000 children in this age group in Connecticut. When vaccines are approved, we will hold another school base health vaccine clinic for parents wanting their children to receive the vaccine. We are expecting to receive an update on this very soon. These vaccines are not mandatory just as they are not mandated for students ages 12 and up. We would partner with our local health department again.

Mr. Drezek stated he has also received a lot of questions regarding the weekly testing program. Nurse Jess is running this program. We have over 600 families that have opted in for weekly testing. If you have questions or want to thank her, please reach out to her. He thanked Nurse Jess for everything she is doing.

- b. **Election Day, Veteran's Day & K-12 Early Release Days** – as presented
- c. **Special BOE Meeting** – as presented

Mr. Drezek added tomorrow is an early release day for students tomorrow.

Chairman Kruzel reminded audience members to keep the background noise down. He would like to hear from the people that are talking. Please keep your comments to yourself

8. AUDIENCES

Evangeline Flaherty, Jackson Road – Mrs. Flaherty is here to advocate for critical thought in our community. She first started attending Board meetings because of an assignment her child brought home that caused her concern about our curriculum. She spoke about pink slips that were sent home with students in Family Life and Sexuality and HIV and Aids. She wonders what will be taught in both of these classes. She feels this form has no bearing based on what has occurred with other assignments. Transparency should be your number one priority. You will be discussing personal matters with our children. She would like to see the curriculum that will be taught to our children. She is prepared to withdraw her children from our school system based on past occurrences and if vaccines become mandated. She encourages everyone to questions things. Thank you.

Giselle Moore, Ryefield Drive – Mrs. Moore is here to advocate for critical thought. Parents have expressed their concerns about masks, curriculum, vaccines and funding to the Board. She asked if anyone has looked into TED or alternate options for masks. We need to get back to American ideals of equality and liberty. How can we get feedback from the Board? We need you to open up your minds and hearts and truly listen to us with dignity and respect. Our liberties and freedoms have been taken away from us with the mask mandate. We need you to fight with us. Mandates are destructive. We are all the same and unique in our own ways. It is time for us to come together. This is why parents are here. Thank you.

Colleen O'Callaghan, Midway Street – Mrs. O'Callaghan is here about COVID vaccines and the emergency authorization for children. She has sent each Board member an e-mail. We need action. This should be a parent's choice and not a mandate. She has researched the CDC website and the vaccines have been approved under emergency use. These vaccines can cause harm. She urged Board members to review the data from the CDC website. We just want to protect our children. She reviewed statistics and hopes people will look into this. Thank you.

Matt Schmitt – Bigelow Commons – Mr. Schmitt is here about advance in critical thought. Mask have been approved under an emergency order. The risks using masks are unknow. According to Federal law there are specific requirements that must be met such as the benefits and risks with emergency use products. No parents have ever received a consent form and the facts about masks. Consent forms are not partisan. He asked the Board to not discount what he has been saying. He would like to have a meaningful discussion that could lead to a mutually agreeable resolution. He does not see enemies in this room, but people that care about our kids. He would like to work together to find a better solution for our children.

Frank Rumery, Candlewood Drive – Mr. Rumery has been watching these meetings at home. He is concerned with some of our policies and curriculum. The Board creates the policies and the administration create the curriculum. He looked at our policies and reviewed our mission statement. He questions if we are providing a safe and nurturing environment. We have the same policy that another town in another state has that put a child in danger and was assaulted in a bathroom. We are putting our kids in danger with this new way of doing things. We are putting our kids into a war they should not be in. This could happen in Enfield.

Emily Hulevitch, Cutter Lane – Mrs. Hulevitch stated teachers are important. She believes in Enfield Public Schools. She grew up and attended Enfield Public Schools and is inspiring the next generation. She teaches in Enfield and sees the amazing things our teachers are doing. She is the ETA president. It has been challenging at times and we don't always agree. As a

district she hopes we can continue to compromise. During the pandemic, our staff was amazing. Mr. Drezek communicated with us during the entire pandemic and took care of us all. He would thank our staff for their dedication often and made us feel appreciated. All of central office took care of us and looked out for our mental health. Our teachers appreciate the leadership shown by Mr. Drezek. Both Mr. Drezek and Mr. Longey are approachable and understand the importance of collaboration and problem solving. When we have the support of our Board and administration, we can better support our students. Thank you.

Sheree Winans, Enfield Street – Mrs. Winans stated she is a proud life-long resident of Enfield. She has a son that is a senior at Enfield High School. She has taught in Enfield for 31 years. Her friend teaches in another town, and she told her the things that were going on in Enfield. She told me that she doesn't know what political affiliation her Board members have. She shared the many positives that are happening in our schools with the Board. We need to get on the same page and ask why are we here? Our kids are excited to be back in school and are eager to learn. They are doing so many positive things in all our schools. Being a teacher is a calling. We are hard-working highly educated teachers that are here for all our kids and are going above and beyond the expectations. She thanked our principals for supporting them. She thanked Mr. Drezek and Mr. Longey for allowing us to be the teachers our students and families expect.

Jessica Suole, Brook Road – Mrs. Soule stated this town is her home. Her parents graduated from Enfield. She bought a home in Enfield and has been teaching for 20 years and 6 years in Enfield where she lives. Enfield is an important part of her life. She has watched her students grow from what she endured from last year. She worked side-by-side with her colleagues that are equally as dedicated. The 2020-21 school year was challenging. We spent many hours working online to get the most out of our students. Mr. Drezek and Mr. Longey listened to our concerns and helped us all with remote Wednesdays. Her students are held to high expectations and standards. We have given them our personal best and deserve nothing less. Students are excited to be back in school. She has personally reached out to both Mr. Drezek and Mr. Longey. She thanked the Board for helping our students and listening to our teachers. Thank you.

Michele Wilcox, Cheryl Drive – Mrs. Wilcox stated she has lived in Enfield her entire life. She has taught for 30 years. During this time, she has worked with many Boards and administrations. She thanked Mr. Drezek and Mr. Longey for their leadership that has had such a positive impact on education and the Enfield community. She also thanked Dr. Wiley, Mr. LaMesa and Mrs. Labich for their support for a math engagement program for students at lunch bunch program that was held during the summer on Tuesdays. This program helped our students to continue to learn. Mr. Drezek cares about our community. Our community includes so many people and most importantly students. Thank you.

Amy Guzie, Weymouth Road – Mrs. Guzie stated she is also a teacher and attended Enfield Public Schools. She had great teachers when she was a student and hopefully her students will think of her in the same way. She thanked Mr. Drezek and Mr. Longey for their continued support. You do not go into teaching for the money. It is a calling. It is nice to feel valued. Mr. Drezek is the best and is doing what is best for our kids and staff members. He sends out emails supporting teachers. He loves to visit the students. We will have a Grade 3 Mini Me pumpkin contest on Thursday where Mr. Drezek and Mr. Longey will vote for the best pumpkins. They have told us going into the schools is the best part of their job. She thanked the Board for your continued support of the teachers. We appreciate you being on the Board. You are all invited to Parkman to see our Mini Me pumpkins. Thank you for your time.

Ryan Schuetz, Church Street – Mr. Schuetz is here tonight about critical thought in our community. It was said that our children will continue to wear masks until the mandate changes. He calls this an experiment. This is not science. You are experimenting on our

children. He read statistics regarding this genetic experiment. He is against masking our children and the vaccines. Taking away our freedom is not right. The parents are doing our own research. He asked for the Board to conduct their own research.

Amanda Marquez, Hoover Lane – Mrs. Marquez stated she is here about critical thinking. We have policies that have been set by the Board. When a child says they can not breathe, that is a health concern and a health hazard. Saying a medical professional says it is okay is not right. She read statistics about the dangers. We are giving up our liberties. We must stand up for our rights. We should have the right to choose what is right for our children. When will our Board start using critical thinking, analyze the data and stand with the parents?

Patrick Flaherty, Jackson Road – Mr. Flaherty is here tonight about critical thought. We have been led astray during the pandemic. Please listen to the parents and what we are saying. Our children have gone through so much and their mental health have been affected. Your job as Board members is to be here for our kids first. Finger pointing will not solve anything. Please do something and do some google searching. The executive orders have been extended six times. Wearing masks and masking our children does not make sense.

Ryan Moore, Ryefield Drive – Mr. Moore is here tonight about critical thought in our community. It has been said that if a medical professional says it is okay is not right. He thanked Board members for listening to us. He would like you to acknowledge what we are saying. There is no loss of liberties if a medical professional says it is okay. We are losing our respect for our public officials. Our society is not well. We need you to start critically thinking and be an example for our children. Courage and leadership are needed. He is advocating for his children and the truth. Thank you.

Sherry Jackson, Cottage Road – Mrs. Jackson stated people are realizing there is something not right in our health care today. Healthcare professionals have censored and discredited about immunizations and the risks associated with them. She read the statistics regarding COVID and experimental vaccines. We are crippling our schools. She urged Board members to be informed and not to gamble with our children. She thanked our teachers for everything they are doing. She also thanked the Board members for their time and the administration for what they are doing. She is a former teacher and is impressed by you all. Thank you.

Dina St. George, Misty Meadow – Mrs. St. George is here tonight because she loves our community and our children. She would like our community to embrace critical thinking. We need to understand our constitutional rights. We have fought for our freedom for years. We are losing our liberties with all these mandates. Our children will experience less freedoms if something is not done. We are doing a disservice and we need to support our beliefs and fight for our rights. She urged Board members to take a stand while we still can for our freedom of choice and the future of this country. Thank you.

Josh Hamre, New King Street – Mr. Hamre stated he is here for the children that do not have the opportunity to speak out for themselves. He read an e-mail he received about a gender identifying youth at EHS that would like for this to be taught in school. He is a transgender student that has struggled his entire life. We need to protect and educate all our students on these topics. This student also e-mailed each Board member. He was concerned because he had not heard from half of the Board. He wants them to know they are not alone.

Sue Braun, Light Street – Mrs. Braun lives in Enfield and loves Enfield. She did not send her children to Enfield Public Schools because it was not the right fit for her children. Her children have excelled with the education they received. This was her choice. As parents, you have the right to make a choice if you do not like something. She sent Mr. Drezek a thank you note. She appreciates his insightfulness during COVID. She sent several of your superintendent messages to her children's superintendent to listen to. This is a great school system with great teachers, but it wasn't the right fit for her children. Thank you.

Jennifer Breyette, Park Avenue – Mrs. Breyette stated she is here regarding masks. She is not a doctor. She has searched for information about wearing masks. They work to slow the rates of transmission. She read statistics about wearing masks. She commented about the Board mission statement and providing a safe and nurturing academically challenging learning environment for all students. Masks must be worn by all students. Connecticut is one of the safest states. This is science and she supports Governor Lamont's decision about masks in our schools. Thank you.

Mr. Jonaitis, Farmstead Circle – Mr. Jonaitis thanked everyone for speaking at the last Board meeting. Your words and passion are inspiring. He said the mentoring program should not interfere with student learning. This should be done after school. You go to your doctor because you like them and trust them. This is your choice, and you should not be told how to think. The Board does not approve every ditto. The Board should have sat down with the teachers. They work for you. You need to keep the lines of communication open. Don't play politics. Representative Hall was in Greece and could not attend the last meeting. Both Senator Kissel and Representative Hall wanted to be presented together at the Board meeting. Representative Arnone wanted to attend by himself without a back and forth debate. He would like to see the new Board adopt a second audience participation like to Town council has.

Conner St. George, Fairview Avenue – Mr. St. George stated he is here about advancing critical thought. He urged Board members to examine the science about masking our children and conduct some critical searching about the CDC data. The studies about the outbreaks are flawed and do not have accurate information. We are left with many questions. He looks forward to hearing from the Board about the research you have done and try to make sense of this together.

Maureen Snook, Buchanan Road – Mrs. Snook stated her mother had cancer and we researched everything. Her mother had the freedom to make decisions about her care by herself. We are standing up for our freedom because they are being ripped away. The vaccines were rushed and were approved as an emergency. She has seen too many negative reactions from the vaccines. More research is needed before she will have her children vaccinated. If children in the age group of 5-11 get the vaccines, they will be able to take their masks off. The students that don't will need to continue to wear their mask. We will see more bullying because of this. She would like the Board to stand up for our freedom of choice and unmask our children and stop taking our rights away.

Christina Tetreault, Green Manor Road – Mrs. Tetreault is reading this for someone else. Board members listen to what the audience members are saying. They are not giving up their rights. Our Board members are parents, and they are relying on what medical professionals are saying to keep us safe. They are relying on the experts. The Governor has a tough job, and many decisions will be challenged. The decision to extend the executive orders was not made on a whim. Our Board members have the best interest of our children in mind. Change does not happen overnight. They are intelligent and have relied on the experts over the past 2 years. Their job is to do what is best for our kids. Our superintendent is doing what is best for our kids. He did this by bringing kids back and having them wear masks. She is proud of our Board that has stood up and that are wearing masks. They care about our children and are making them safe. Please listen to what the CDC is saying.

Regina LeBlanc, David Street – Ms. LeBlanc stated she finds it appalling that people are questioning what our teachers are teaching and then clap for them after they have spoken. She also finds it appalling that the same 3 people have called out against a Board member for what was said at a previous meeting. This Board member had the courage to speak out. You say it is okay to agree to not agree but because you don't like the answer you continue to talk about it. It is appalling that when the meeting has ended, and the cameras are turned off you

are the first ones to run up to her to say you respect her. She is one the Board members that will address your concerns. When you get the answer, you do not like, you use it against her. She urged Board member to continue to fight for what you believe in. Thank you.

Marcy Taliceo, Coolidge Drive – Mrs. Taliceo stated the course of human sexuality has always been taught. She is confused why this is causing a concern this year. She thanked Mr. Drezek and Mr. Longey for what you are doing and continue to do. People in the audience are mocking us for thanking you. We will not stop. You are taking our children's lives and education seriously. Our teachers are amazing. What they have endured is heartfelt. She urged the audience not to pick and choose which policies you like and dislike. The policies are for all our children. We are different and inclusive. The history of black Americans has a rich history that should be taught. The discussion of race is a difficult conversation. Change is hard. We need to share black history with all our students. Why is teaching this so difficult and urged everyone to reflect on this.

Joe Golish, Jr., Stardust Drive – Mr. Golish complimented Mrs. Cushman and Mrs. Acree for your thoughtful solutions. He was in manufacturing and has many degrees. He is not an expert. He shared a story about race in Enfield and the black experience he saw when he was in school. His father and grandfather both fought in the war. The issue we should be concerned with is China is number one in science and math. Other countries are scoring above us. Framework can be filled in anyway. His concern is with math and science. Hard work and rigor are all that is needed.

Liz Davis, North Maple Street – Ms. Davis stated all she is hearing about critical race theory is misinformation. We do not teach this in our schools, and we are we questioning our educators and curriculum. Why are we continuing to spread false facts? She thanked our educators for everything they are doing for our kids. Our teachers are taking abuse from these false facts. This is unacceptable. She thanked them for what you are doing. You have many parents that respect, support and love you. We got your back.

9. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mrs. Pickett thanked all of our teachers for everything they are doing. You have her and her family's full support. It takes the entire village to support our schools. This includes everyone from the bus drivers, all staff including cafeteria workers, SRO's, custodians to our teachers. All of you are doing so much for our kids. Thank you.

Mrs. Pickett stated she did look into TED and many of the sources are not quite a representative of the folks that are leading the work around equity, inclusion and diversity. She reviewed what TED stands for tolerance, equality and diversity. These words have meanings. Many of the conversations we have had around DEI, we have not come up with common definitions yet. She explained why TED will not work for her. She will continue to advocate for us to stick with our equity policy and our diversity, equity and inclusion work. We are shaping our school culture by ensuring representation by giving students what they need to succeed and including them in decision making. A lot of the conversations she has heard align with this work.

Mrs. Pickett stated teaching American History is not CRT nor is teaching inclusion, problem solving, critical inquiry or relationship building.

Mrs. Pickett loves Enfield. She supports the work we have done but additional work needs to be done. We have disparity in our town. She reviewed data she has researched. She supports equity work and inclusion without placing extra burdens on our teachers and creating an inclusive environment.

Mrs. Pickett added that our kids come first. We need to work together. She understands the need for safety for those individuals that do not feel comfortable attending. She thanked Nick for his comments, and she supports you. We also received an e-mail from Olivia in support of wearing masks. She is an advocate for all voices to be heard. She thanked the audience members for speaking even if she does not agree with you. This is why we have this process, and she hopes we can become more inclusive with our decision making.

Mrs. Pickett stated Enfield Street will hold their Trick or Tunk event on Friday. She can't wait to start experiencing school events. She is very excited. Thank you.

Mrs. Thurston stated this is her last meeting. She thanked Mr. Drezek and Mr. Longey for the past two years. She also thanked her fellow Board members. We had a lot of Board members during this term. She has enjoyed working with you all. It has not been easy. She thanked them for their continued support.

Mrs. Thurston thanked our teachers in Enfield. You are all phenomenal and she truly respects each one of you.

Mrs. Thurston addressed the future Board - you need to remember why you chose to run for the Board of Education. It is not political or your own agenda. It is all about the kids. You will be part of an amazing group working with Mr. Drezek, Mr. Longey, administrators and teachers. You need to learn to work together and do what is best for our kids. She does not have any children of her own. Every child and teacher are important to her. She listens to everything that is being said. Her goal was to make sure the students and staff are safe, and they were her number one priority. Remember to think why you are doing this. She wishes you all the best.

Mrs. Thurston added she is only an e-mail away.

Mr. Ryder thanked Mrs. Thurston for everything. She stepped in for Tim Neville. He thanked both Tim and Stacy for their service to the schools and this Board. We also lost a Board member this year – Joyce Hall. He thanked Mrs. Hall for her service also.

Mr. Ryder thanked Nurse Jess for keeping our kids healthy and safe. He thanked our teachers for everything they are doing for all our students including his children.

Mr. Ryder stated last week was our first normal week in school. We were able to hold a bookfair and walk-a-thon at Eli Whitney. We held a Trunk or Treat event at Collins Creamery for Eli Whitney and Memorial students. Each event was amazing.

Mr. Ryder stated he attended the Friday Football game. He will attend the EHS football game for their senior night this week. He will be filling in for Mr. Bourassa and will be announcing the game. He asked everyone to attend. This is their last home meeting.

Mr. Ryder stated Memorial has posted their Wreaths Across America poster. This flyer can be found at enfieldpto.com. The cut off date for ordering wreaths to be placed in Enfield is November 30th.

Mr. Ryder stated PJ Day for CCMC cancer patients is a town wide event and will be held on December 10th. So many people participate in this event.

Mr. Ryder stated Memorial will hold their next PTO meeting on November 16th. We are still meeting on Teams. Picture day is being held on November 29th and report cards will also go home on this day. They also held their Jogtober event on October 25th which was a huge success. Thank you to all that participated.

Mr. Ryder stated Eli Whitney held a walk-a-thon. Their picture day will also be on October 29th and report cards will go home for students in grades K-5 that day.

Mr. Ryder reminded everyone about Meet the Candidates Night being held at the High School on October 27th from 6-8 PM. We encourage all students to attend this event and ask questions to the candidates.

Mr. Ryder stated it has been a rough term. He thanked Chairman Kruzel for his service to the students and staff and for being our chairman. We often disagreed but we worked together for our students and staff. He will see Chairman Kruzel on Thursday at Parkman when we judge the Mini Me pumpkins.

Mr. Ryder addressed audience members comments and stated that Board members do think critically. He does not agree with you about masks. He would like to see our students receive the vaccines. He added that when he was asked by an audience member why are you here, you left off the rest of his response. He was referring to them going to Hartford and not just here at the Board meetings. He took offense with a comment directed towards Mrs. LeBlanc made tonight. He appreciates everything Mrs. LeBlanc does. Mentors meet with their mentees during lunch time. Our student's education is extremely important.

Chairman Kruzel asked audience members to refrain from making comments and the back and forth dialogue.

Mrs. LeBlanc agreed with Chairman Kruzel, and we gave you all an opportunity to address the Board.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated Enfield High will hold their annual auction with a twist. They will have a Jingle Jam fundraiser event at the Elks Club on December 4th. This event will be a lot of fun. The students participated last week with their spirit week which was a lot of fun also. They will hold senior night at the Friday football game at 7:00 PM. Tickets are \$7 and if you bring in food for the food shelf, they will reduce the price by \$1 for every item. The students held their homecoming dance outside. It was a great event for our students and seeing the students dressed up. Enfield High will hold their equity meeting on October 28th from 6-7PM. This another great event to attend.

Mrs. LeBlanc she is excited to attend the Parkman Mini Me contest. It will be hard to only pick out one pumpkin.

Mrs. LeBlanc has served with Chairman Kruzel for 6 years. This term was difficult, and we didn't always see eye-to-eye. Chairman Kruzel is a dedicated member to the Board. He attends every meeting, and he supports everyone on the Board. He helped out STOWE with a project they had with bottle caps and the EHS student weights. There has been a divide with this Board. His heart is in the right place. Thank you and you will be missed. He took this job very seriously. His family will be happy to have him back.

Mrs. LeBlanc thanked Mrs. Thurston for her services. She appreciates everything you have done for us and for filling in for Mr. Neville. This was a difficult term. She appreciates your support, encouragement and kind words. You didn't always speak up but when it was needed you did on the most important issues. Thank you.

Mrs. LeBlanc addressed audience members comments. She attended the Joint Facilities meeting, and Buildings & Grounds has repaired and/or replaced multiple exhaust fans, added exhaust fans in COVID isolation rooms, opened all outside air dampers and ventilation run times in all schools, all air filters were replaced prior to the start of school and will be replaced quarterly. If you need additional information, please contact her.

Mrs. LeBlanc thanked our parents, students and staff for everything you have done. You have worked during unprecedented times. She also thanked Mr. Drezek and Mr. Longey. You communicated the direction you would be going in with parents, students and staff and kept us all safe and healthy.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated moving Head Start and the Eagle Academy was done by Mr. Drezek and his administration's idea. We wanted all our pre-k kids "the littles" in one location and to bring our outplaced students back to their hometown where they can benefit from shorter bus rides and participate in events in our schools. Thank you for providing this opportunity to our students.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated her children have attended Enfield Public Schools. You have a deeper appreciation for our schools as Board members when you have children in our school system. You establish a deep connection. These connections have been beneficial to her as a Board member. We need to put love and respect before politics. This can make a democracy great.

Mrs. LeBlanc spoke about family. Mr. LeBlanc knows where she stands, and he knows where she stands. This is okay and we can give each other space to agree to not agree with our political beliefs. It is not often that an aunt and nephew can take this journey together. Thank you for being you.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated life is short and we need to listen more. This has been a long term and we have endured so much during the pandemic. When you look around this room you will find people that have very strong feelings about issues and our kids. We all have this in common and want what is best for them. Our kids are lucky to have so many people standing up for them.

Mrs. LeBlanc stated it has been an honor to serve on the Board of Education for the last 10 years and to represent the teachers, families and students. She believes she has been able to represent some of our most vulnerable by using her voice. She thanked Nicholas for his e-mail. It has been an honor to represent our students and teachers. Thank you.

Mr. LeBlanc thanked his aunt Tina. Honestly, he did not know what he was getting himself into. He looks forward to continuing being on the Board. He thanked her for her guidance.

Mr. LeBlanc also responded to an audience member comment about why you are here. He agrees with Mr. Ryder that you need to go to our legislators in Hartford and talk to them. Our legislators gave the governor the power to make mandates under the emergency executive order or until it expires in February. They are making the decisions for us.

Mr. LeBlanc stated people from both sides spoke tonight. We can agree to disagree about masks. You know how he feels about masks. The truth is somewhere in the middle. We are all capable to make our own decisions. He feels this will eventually come into play and we will do this. The division is pretty strong now. We can come together in the middle.

Mr. LeBlanc thanked our teachers for speaking and coming to tonight's meeting. A lot of you live in Enfield. This is something you do not see in a lot of other towns. This says a lot about our teachers. You are members in this community. Enfield is a great town.

Mr. LeBlanc asked about the iPad usage in student classrooms and the amount of time students are using them. Parents are concerned about this. He can also check with Ms. Middleton about this. Mr. Drezek stated this is something we can discuss further. It may vary from grade levels.

Mr. LeBlanc thanked Chairman Kruzel for what you have taught him over the past two years.

He has gained a lot of valuable knowledge that will help him. He also thanked Mrs. Thurston for volunteering to be on the Board. You have been part of this Board as we transitioned with members leaving. You have been with us for the good and the hard times. We have found common grounds on a lot of issues. Thank you both for your service to the community, students and staff.

Mr. LeBlanc congratulated the JFK Girls Soccer Team. They just finished a tremendous season.

Mr. LeBlanc stated the KITE “We Spy” posters have been popping up around town in businesses. He hasn’t seen one yet. The next KITE meeting will be held next week on November 3rd at 5:30 PM via zoom. If you are interested, you can contact Brianna Beckstrand at bbeckstrand@enfieldschools.org. If you are interested in applying to the Parent Leadership Academy, they are still accepting applications. You can also contact Malissa Griffin at malissaroy@cox.net for more information

Mr. LeBlanc stated the STOWE FEO has bedtime boxes for families if you are interested. Families have received these and have decorated them and can share them on Flipgrid.

Mrs. Acree thanked the parents and concerned residents for coming out tonight and speaking. You care about your children’s health and wellbeing. She thanked our teachers for what you are doing for our students and families. She understands what you are doing and going through. She taught for 40 years. She added that we are listening to the parents concerns and we will discuss and research these items. Once the new Board is appointed, we can address these concerns in a timely manner in order for us to have a productive school year. She hopes these concerns can be resolved soon.

Mrs. Acree thanked her fellow Board members that are serving the students and community. It has been an honor and privilege being appointed to the Board of Education. She thanked everyone for making her feel welcome.

Mrs. Cushman expressed her thanks for serving on the Board and the many people she has had the opportunity to meet. She thanked the teachers for coming tonight.

Mrs. Cushman stated there have been some concerns and difference of opinions that have been expressed regarding curriculum. We all want what is best for our kids. Some of our policies warrant reviewing. Some parents are unable to attend for a number of reasons including fear. We need to hear from all voices. Some of the assignments at the high school have been alarming. Parents are sharing information from what their children are showing them. We need to examine how we are reaching our goals. We all want our children to learn in an environment where they are seen as equals and with value. She has submitted information to Ms. Middleton about curriculum options that focus on TED initiatives. She agrees that black history should not only be limited to one month. We have people of all races that have done amazing things and that is what makes our country the wonder place that it is. Our history has made exceptional goals that need to be celebrated. We need a curriculum that will represent everyone and celebrate our diversity. Thank you.

Mr. Unghire stated he was unable to attend the last Board meeting, but he watched the meeting and listened to those that spoke. He is impressed by how articulate you are. Mr. Unghire stated he wants to address a few sensitive topics. There is a rumor that if the republicans are re-elected, we would fire Mr. Drezek. This is not true, and it has not been discussed by any of the republican Board members. He shared this rumor with Mr. Drezek. We support Mr. Drezek and we have supported him during the most demanding of times our school system has gone through. This statement is not true, and he wonders who started this rumor.

Mr. Unghire stated we all love and support our students and teachers. What would our school be without students and teachers? He has a family member that is in the Enfield school system. Our teachers are giving and gifted individuals. Suggesting that we do not care is not true.

Mr. Unghire stated we received a questionnaire from the ETA. The republicans did not participate in a teacher event by pledging to support educators in a bargaining unit. We represent both sides. When the new Board is appointed, we can then meet with the bargaining unit and our representatives. This is how he sees this and that is why we did not participate in the zoom call due to the nature of the questions. Please do not misinterpret that we do not care about teachers. That is not true.

Mr. Unghire attended the Enfield High open house at the Career Center. He is very impressed with what our career counselors are doing for our students. They have representatives that will discuss career options with students. A former EHS student Regina LeBlanc spoke about Nursing, they had a representative from the Life Star program that also spoke. This week Dr. Bell will meet with students about the veterinary field. They will also have a representative from Asnuntuck Community College talk to students about careers. They have brought in many different guest speakers, and they are looking for additional speakers. If you are interested, please contact the career counselors at Enfield High School.

Chairman Kruzel asked the audience to stop with the back and forth comments.

Mr. Unghire stated he is concerned about the stress that is being placed on our teachers. They have been dealing with so much since the pandemic. We have teacher and substitute teacher shortages. Our teachers are getting burnt out. He would like to see this Board look into this to see what we can do to help our teachers. Thank you.

Mr. Unghire read the candidate question Board members received. He wanted to give a reason why the republicans did not support the zoom meeting. Thank you.

Chairman Kruzel stated this is his last meeting. He thanked God, his wife and his family for their support. He thanked his father and mother-in-law for their support. He ran for the Board of Education to give back to the town that he loves. His father worked in Enfield, and we started a business in Enfield. Enfield is his home even though he grew up in East Windsor. He has devoted 6 years to the Board of Education. He knew this would be his last term. He thanked his children for letting him serve. He has celebrated many family events while serving on this Board. He has attended every Building Committee meeting. He truly cares about this town and community.

Chairman Kruzel thanked Dr. Schumann and Mr. Longey for serving in this school system and community. He thanked Mr. Drezek for everything he has done. We have spent many hours talking about everything including when we lost a student. We have had the lows and highs and he has been here supporting this school system and community through it all. He has attended too many student and staff members wakes and funerals. He agreed that the Board has gone through a lot this term with re-appointments and the death of a Board member. This was the hardest term.

Chairman Kruzel thanked Mr. Drezek and his administrative team. You are a phenomenal team. God bless you all. He thanked our teachers for everything they have done and will continue to do for our students.

Chairman Kruzel thanked our Board members that do a lot of work in our subcommittees. He thanked the members on the Joint Facilities committee for all the work they have done. We started this committee, and it has grown. He will miss being on this committee.

Chairman Kruzel thanked former Board members and Vice Chairman Charlotte Riley and Wendy Costa. He thanked his current Board members Tina LeBlanc, Amanda Pickett, Stacy Thurston and Scott Ryder. He thanked his colleagues John Leblanc, Jean Acree, John Unghire and Janet Cushman. He thanked former Board Chairman Tom Sirard for passing his knowledge on to him. He misses him dearly. He was my rock. He has passed this knowledge on to Mr. LeBlanc. He will miss you all. When it was needed, we mostly agreed. Thank you.

Chairman Kruzel thanked the teachers for attending tonight's meeting and for what you are doing every day. It means a lot to him. He also thanked Mrs. Zalucki for everything she does for the Board. Thank you.

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

11. NEW BUSINESS: None

12. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Chairman Kruzel stated this is something Mr. Sirard added to our meetings. Giving committee updates is very important.

Curriculum – Mr. LeBlanc reported they met on October 21st, and we discussed a project that we are working with the Joint Facilities Committee and students.

Finance – Mr. Unghire reported the Finance committee met on October 18th. We will review Financial Reports later.

Policy – Mr. Unghire reported the next Policy Committee did not meet in October.

Leadership – No meeting was held – Chairman Kruzel had nothing new to report.

Chairman Kruzel thanked Alex Giner for everything he has done for the Board.

Joint Facility – Chairman Kruzel reported the Joint Facility Committee will meet on Thursday we will review the student projects Mr. LeBlanc spoke about.

JFK Building – Chairman Kruzel provided the Board with slides of the JFK construction progress.

Mrs. LeBlanc asked if all the students will be back in their original wings soon. Chairman Kruzel stated they are on schedule for Winter 2021 for the students to be back in their original wings.

Chairman Kruzel reported that we received approval from the State to update the library so it will go along with the rest of the renovated JFK building. He thanked the members from Gilbane and CSG for everything they have done. They are a great team.

Joint Security – Mr. Ryder reported the Joint Security Committee will meet on December 1st.

Joint Insurance – Chairman Kruzel reported the Joint Insurance Committee met online. We do not have a date for the next meeting.

Youth Mental Health – Chairman Kruzel reported no meeting was held and he has nothing new to report.

13. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Thurston moved, seconded by Mrs. LeBlanc that the Regular Meeting Minutes of October 12, 2021, be approved.

A vote by **show-of-hands 9-0-0** passed unanimously.

14. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS AND PAYROLL

Mr. Unghire moved seconded by Mrs. Thurston that the Enfield Board of Education accepts the superintendent's certification for:

- The month of September 2021 total expenditures amount to \$6,634,081.67, broken down between payroll totaling \$4,289,830.24 and other accounts totaling \$2,344,251.43; and
- All payments have been made in accordance with the approved budget and are properly accounted for within the books of accounts. Copies of approval for check invoices are properly documented.

A vote by **show-of-hands 9-0-0** passed unanimously.

Mr. Unghire moved seconded by Mrs. Thurston that the Enfield Board of Education accepts the superintendent's certification for:

- The month of September 2021, total Grant and Head Start expenditures amount to \$634,034.16, broken down between payroll totaling \$419,543.79 and other accounts totaling \$214,490.37; and
- All payments have been made in accordance with the approved budget and are properly accounted for within the books of accounts. Copies of approval for check invoices are properly documented.

A vote by **show-of-hands 9-0-0** passed unanimously.

Line Item Transfers: None

15. CORRESPONDENCE & COMMUNICATION - None

16. EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

17. ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Thurston moved, seconded by Mrs. LeBlanc to adjourn the Regular Meeting of October 26, 2021.

All ayes, motion passed unanimously. Meeting stood adjourned at 10:06 PM.

Tina LeBlanc
Secretary
Board of Education

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Zalucki, Recording Secretary